

“Both optimists and pessimists contribute to society. The optimist invents the aeroplane, the pessimist the parachute.” George Bernard Shaw

EMPLOYEES BECOME SHAREHOLDERS AT MABETE CITRUS IN LIMPOPO

This month, we share another industry transformation story that was submitted via the CGA’s “Transformation Survey” sent to growers earlier this year. Komati Group Holdings in Limpopo, took advantage of Land Redistribution and Agricultural Development (LRAD) funds made available by national government 18 years ago to enable selected farmworkers of Mabete Citrus (Pty) Ltd and Bosveld Citrus (Pty) Ltd to become shareholders in one of his businesses namely, Mabete Citrus.

The LRAD fund, which was originally launched in 2001, has focused on enabling black South African citizens to access land specifically for agricultural purposes. This grant was to be used to cover expenses associated with land acquisition, land improvements, agricultural infrastructure investments, capital assets and short term agricultural inputs among other costs.

Since then, 128 permanent employees have become shareholders in the business. Most significantly, over 60% of these shareholders are women. This opportunity has been made available to all staff members from irrigation and sanitation workers to production and packhouse managers.

“We decided to undertake this exciting initiative many years ago because we wanted to show our farm workers that we acknowledged their value as well as the role that they played in building up the two companies into what it is today. We have been in operation since the 1950’s but only expanded purposefully back in 2004. Now we are exporting our fruit to Europe, the Middle East, Japan, Russia and China, with 240 permanent employees, and an additional 350 seasonal workers for picking and pruning seasons” shares Piet Smit. Employees at Mabete Citrus currently hold 26.1% of shares in the business, and have received dividend pay-outs over and above their salaries and bonuses every year. The shareholding structure is currently held by the Bosveld Citrus Black Employees Trust.

The CGA commends the Mabete Citrus Farm in Limpopo for being a transformation front runner by undertaking this initiative over 18 years ago. This is a great example of how we can financially empower farm workers to become business and land owners within our local citrus industry.

Citrus growers who would like to share their own transformation initiatives with us are encouraged to complete the short online survey that can be accessed [at this link](#).

SCHALK BURGER TO SHARE EXPERIENCES AT CGA CITRUS SUMMIT

There are many similarities in the factors that lead to a winning sports team and a winning business or industry. Factors such as teamwork, management, coaching/training, psychological preparation and many more. The CGA is delighted to have Schalk Burger (Jnr) (sponsored by Mpact) to address the CGA Citrus Summit in Port Elizabeth from 14-16 March 2023. Register on this link to attend: <https://uppe.flockplatform.com/ep/?event=4th-CGA-Citrus-Summit>

