



ED'S NOTE

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September marks the start of spring in southern hemisphere and also the winding-up of the citrus export season. It is safe to say that our industry has had a lot of ups and downs this year. While all growers have been faced with a number of challenges that have negatively impacted their revenue, we know that the smaller black citrus growers are amongst the hardest hit.

CGA CEO Justin Chadwick, kicks off our September newsletter with a review of the citrus season so far and the perfect storm of challenges currently faced by our industry. With industry experts forecasting that less than 20% of the industry is likely to end above break-even returns at the end of 2022, it is clear that the support and assistance offered by the CGA-GDC to growers is even more critical if we want to ensure the long-term survival of the sector.

I am therefore extremely proud that this edition of our newsletter comprises articles written by members of the CGA-GDC team about transformation programmes that have made a direct impact on black growers in our sector, with a specific focus on women-owned farms.

This includes our Enterprise Development Grant Fund, which has ensured the successful establishment and growth of Manini Holdings in Limpopo. CGA-GDC Production and Technical Support Manager Andrew Mbedzi has written more about this initiative.

Partnering with government to provide support and assistance to black growers remains a key priority area for the CGA-GDC and Business Support Officer Nomonde Ntloko shares more information on the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform's Land Development Support Programme and how it has benefitted a land restitution project called ThreePence Farm in Hankey, in the Eastern Cape.

Our organisation has also partnered with the Western Cape Government's Department of Agriculture towards implementing a commodity approach in terms of providing universal access to agricultural support services for citrus growers in the province. You can read more about this in Business Support Manager, Yolanda Ntlakaza's article.

Recognising and supporting women in our industry is another key focus area for the CGA-GDC and Zamazima Njili shines a spotlight female trailblazer Nomfundo Mpahla – the manager of the Riplimead packhouse in the Eastern Cape.

CGA-GDC Extension Officer Melton Mulaudzi also profiles several leading women in the citrus growing sector namely, Tshirema Talelani Annah, Luambo Gloria Mutele, Lerato Moilwa and Segomotso Letebele. We hope our readers are inspired by their passion and determination to run successful businesses in a predominantly male-dominated industry.

Finally, we also focus inwards with Financial Manager Mathapelo Mello writing about some of the latest appointments made by the CGA-GDC this month and our commitment towards the development and promotion of our staff.

I would like to thank members of our team for their contributions to the September newsletter. With growers facing extremely tough economic challenges currently, the CGA-GDC remains committed to providing assistance and support to black growers in order to ensure their long-term profitability and survival and continued progress when it comes to achieving inclusive transformation within South Africa's local citrus industry.

Lukhanyo Nkombisa

General Manager of the CGA Grower Development Company

MESSAGE FROM THE

CGA CEO



With just under a month left of the current export season, our predictions are that the industry will have exported around 4 million cartons less than what was predicted at the start of the year.

While the predicted final figures for 2022 still show steady growth when compared to previous years, a number of serious challenges means that the majority of local growers are faced with the very real prospect of significant earnings losses this year. As a result, less than 20% of the industry is likely to end above break-even returns at the end of the 2022 season. This poses a major threat to the sustainability and profitability of the sector and the 130 000 jobs it sustains as well as the R30 billion in export revenue it generates annually.

The most serious challenge facing growers, which is having the biggest impact on their bottom line is price hikes across a number of inputs as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. For example, fertilizer prices increased just over 56% between 2020 and 2021 and fuel prices are up by 53%. Of even greater concern is record high freight rates, with shipping lines hiking their prices by 128% between 2020 Q1 and 2022 Q1. This means growers are having to pay two times more to ship their fruit, than what it cost to produce it over the course of an entire year. In order to guard against further price hikes and ensure price stability in the future, the CGA has been engaging with other fruit sectors on potentially taking control of their shipping, with a feasibility study expected to be completed by the end of September.

At the same time, there has been a decline in real export prices across all varieties which is expected to continue for the next few years. This challenge has been further compounded by the recent unjustified and discriminatory False Coddling Moth (FCM) regulations passed by the EU, which will require exporting African countries to implement a drastic mandatory cold treatment for oranges headed to the region. These new regulations recently saw up to 1350 containers of citrus

detained at EU ports for a number of weeks, which resulted in local growers incurring over R200 million in losses.

The long-term enforcement of the new FCM regulations remains a serious threat to the industry, which is why the Department of Trade and Industry's application to start a WTO consultation process remains critically important. The CGA's position remains that the cold treatment prescribed within the new regulations is contrary to scientific evidence, making it an arbitrary and unnecessarily trade restrictive measure and accordingly contravenes international requirements for such phytosanitary trade regulations. The CGA will make all resources available as required by the DTIC and DALRRD during the upcoming WTO consultation process.

All of these factors along with the current economic constraints in South Africa including ongoing fiscal pressure, persistent load shedding, high unemployment rates and low levels of consumer and business confidence means that growers are under severe pressure.

In light of these serious headwinds, it is positive news that South Africa's ports have been operating fairly smoothly over the past few months with any blockages being addressed speedily by the relevant role players, including Transnet.

The CGA remains committed to continue working with government and other value chain partners, including the CGA-GDC, in order to ensure local growers are able to survive over the short-term so that the industry remains a key economic and job contributor in the country.

Justin Chadwick
CEO of the Citrus Growers' Association
of Southern Africa

CGA GROWER DEVELOPMENT COMPANY SUPPORT TO

NEW ENTRANTS



by Andrew Mbedzi

Since its establishment, the CGA-GDC has provided funding and technical support to a number of black growers who were just starting out in the industry.

One of these growers is Thabo Moripane from Manini Holdings from Marble Hall in the Limpopo province. Thabo was introduced to citrus farming in 2017 by a neighbour in Dullstroom, who knew a few people from the ANB Investment Group. They consequently put him in touch with their technical specialist at Citrogold Marketing and Research - this being the first step in his journey to becoming a citrus grower himself.



Thabo Moripane from Manini Holdings

Thabo started doing research and studying citrus short courses offered by the CGA's Citrus Academy. In 2020, he was able to purchase a 407ha farm in Marble Hall, which had some game and arable land. Shortly after buying the farm, he bought citrus trees from the Du Roi Nursery in Letsitele through his relationship with the ANB Investment Group and received the trees the following year. Mr. MC Pretorius – an extension manager at Citrus Research International – connected Thabo with my team at the CGA-GDC, and shortly after, a farm visit was scheduled to ensure that we would be able to provide him with valuable technical support.

Thabo has since applied for funding from the CGA-GDC Enterprise Development Grant Fund, the payment of which will be used towards purchasing inputs for boosting his orchard of planted citrus trees. The grant will help him support the planted trees while he is in the process of establishing an additional 70 ha of citrus, including 10 ha of Leandri soft citrus, 10 ha 2PH seedless lemons and 20 ha pr ARC Nadorcott, which were planted in September 2021. Ridging is underway for a further 30 ha to be planted in September 2022, which will consist of 20 ha ARC Nadorcott and 10 ha Maayana soft citrus.

The successful establishment and growth of Manini Holdings is a true testament to the invaluable input Thabo has received from various stakeholders across the citrus sector. The orchard layout and irrigation supplies were done by Loskop Irrigation Design, while all pumps were provided by Musketeers. Soil samples and classification are being managed by Agri Technovations, while Laeveld Agrochem is supplying him with the chemicals and fertilizer he needs.

Thabo was assisted by Marble Hall Company with part of the land preparations and Joubert and Sons are helping him with the farm expansion that is currently underway. He is looking forward to completing his farm expansion by February 2023 – and the CGA-GDC looks forward to remaining an active participant and support system to him in his citrus farming journey.

THREEPENCE

FARMING: A LAND DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT BENEFICIARY



By Nomonde Ntloko

An important focus area of the CGA-GDC is partnering with government to provide support and assistance to black growers. One of the key programmes roll-out by the national department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) is the Land Development Support Programme.

The aim of the programme is to provide comprehensive farm development support to land reform farms, while also addressing the gaps identified during the farm assessment process. The programme provides a full grant support to farmers and is implemented in partnership with commodity organizations, including the CGA-GDC, to help realize the objectives of the Black Producer Commercialization Programme - a partnership between DALRRD and the Land Bank to provide loans and grants to commercialise black farmers.

One of the beneficiaries of the Land Development Support Programme is ThreePence Farm, which was officially launched on the 19th July 2022 by Minister Thoko Didiza. The Honourable Minister was joined at the event by her Deputy Rosemary Nokuzola Capa

as well as Eastern Cape MEC Nonkqubela Pieters, who assisted in the harvesting of the fruit before the official programme began.

The ThreePence Farm, managed by Khaya Katoo, is a restitution farm that was transferred back to the 40 households that were beneficiaries of the farm back in 2005. The beneficiaries, however, received alternative land to that which they had officially claimed back from the government as the original piece of land they had applied for was in fact not suitable for farming.

The beneficiaries received extensive support from DALRRD, namely through the financing of a center pivot to assist with the vegetable farming that they had started planting. They then received a R5 million rand grant from the Department in 2012, which was unfortunately only realized in 2014. In the interim, the farm required working capital to ensure business continuity which saw them bringing in a strategic partner to create the WagonDrift joint venture. This ongoing strategic partnership has been extremely fruitful for both parties.

The ThreePence farm was funded through a business plan that was developed by the CGA-GDC and has, to date, received a total grant fund of R13.9 million which will be utilized to develop an additional 20ha of citrus on the farm and will also be earmarked to improve the mechanization and working capital of the farm.

The current expansion rate at ThreePence will result in 8 more people being permanently employed on the farm. Mr Katoo's vision for the farm is to fully establish it as a citrus farm and return the packhouse on the farm to being fully operational. The grants provided by DALRRD have brought Mr. Katoo and his stakeholders one step closer towards realizing this dream.



Minister Didiza pictured with the ThreePence Farming beneficiaries



Minister Didiza is taken on a farm tour to view implementation of farm inputs purchased using R13.9 million grant funding from LDS



Minister of Agriculture Thoko Didiza hands over title deeds to beneficiary



By Yolanda Ntlakaza

One of the greatest challenges affecting the development and long-term sustainability, as well as profitability of black citrus growers, has been a lack of access to agricultural support services. The CGA-GDC and the Western Cape Government have worked to address this issue over the years and are proud to announce a partnership between our local citrus industry and the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, towards implementing a commodity approach in terms of providing universal access to agricultural support services to developmental growers.

This partnership will offer a three-pronged approach that will be rolled out over the next few years in the following ways:

- The Western Cape Department of Agriculture will provide policy leadership to ensure that selected projects comply with the objectives as set out by the National Department;
- The implementing agent will provide secretariat support, procurement, monitoring and evaluation; and,
- The industry partner - represented by the CGA-GDC – will provide technical and capacity development, as well as business expertise to ensure the successful execution and monitoring of projects with regular feedback to the provincial Department of Agriculture.

A key component of this initiative consists of a beneficiary selection process, which will be conducted as a collaborative effort between the citrus

LATEST NEWS

FROM THE COMMODITY PROJECT ALLOCATION COMMITTEE

industry, departmental representatives and black farmer structures at the Commodity Project Allocation Committee (CPAC) level.

The CPAC is a formal structure, established specifically to strategically consider, consult and approve projects as well as the allocation of project funds to enable new farmers to achieve their goals within the broader commodity approach. The CPAC therefore seeks to ensure that recommended projects comply with the applicable selection criteria and that all allocations are prioritised in terms of key deliverables per province against those of the National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD). Almost R10 million has already been spent on various projects to assist with production inputs, infrastructure and moveable assets.

The majority of these partnerships take the form of empowerment projects, in which farm workers and their families are granted co-ownership of citrus production enterprises. The focus areas of these partnerships have been social in nature and include subsidy schemes for farm workers to obtain shareholding in the businesses or farms that employ them. It has also included worker participation in training programmes at all levels of the production and packing value chain, as well as the provision of care facilities for pensioners.

The continued implementation of this partnership will be a critical undertaking if we are to continue building an inclusive citrus industry in South Africa, where black citrus growers are regularly provided with opportunities to increase their shareholding in citrus farms, which is currently calculated to be around 2 664 ha, or just over 14% of the citrus planted in the Western Cape province (18 952 ha) to date.

The CGA-GDC looks forward to continue supporting this partnership and its approach to increasing black ownership in our local citrus industry, towards the holistic transformation of the sector.

BEST

PERFORMING FEMALE IN THE SOUTH: NOMFUNDO MPAHLA

By Zamazima Njili

The CGA and CGA-GDC have continued to prioritize the promotion and development of women in our local citrus industry, with the CGA Citrus Academy being one of the main drivers towards achieving this critical outcome. The Academy was established to address the key challenges of scarce and critical skills; poor quality of skills delivery; slow progress of black economic empowerment and employment equity and low production skills levels.

One of the Citrus Academy's success stories is Nomfundo Mphala who was born and raised in a farming environment back at her home in Peddie. She spent her school holidays working as a seasonal worker on her father's farm. She studied Agricultural Management at the Nelson Mandela University and was provided with funding to further her studies in our sector through the Citrus Academy, as one of their BBEEE beneficiary students.

The Citrus Academy exposed Nomfundo to the industry through its short courses, workshops, symposiums, and conferences. This exposure to the citrus growing community in South Africa provided her with new knowledge that helped improve her understanding of the industry, while also expanding her own understanding of her own capabilities and leadership characteristics.

Ms. Mphala soon joined her father at his Naudeshoek farm as a Farm Manager in 2012. Her roles were mainly focused on administration, audits, payroll, export compliance and phytosanitary measures. Mphala believes that being afforded the chance to be a successor provides someone with the wonderful opportunity to learn from a vast range of knowledge and wisdom - in this case, from her father specifically.

Ms. Mphala has extensive experience in other roles with the sector, including the work she did as a packhouse manager of the Riplimead packhouse since 2012. The role entails a number of crucial responsibilities such as general management, control room management, procurement and finance. Ms. Mphala has publicly stated that her time at the packhouse helped challenge her role and have helped refine her overall management and leadership skills.

Ms. Mphala confirms that both positions of leadership have taught her that the key to effective

management is through planning, co-ordination and resource allocation. "The key to managing people efficiently starts with leadership committing to the mission and vision of the business, while striving to encourage subordinates to adopt the same principles in order to successfully capitalize their utmost skills and advance their careers in the process" shares Ms. Mphala.

In the midst of a market crash and many other challenging conditions faced by growers at present, Mphala encourages growers to persevere. She has also emphasized a need for an improved working relationship with stakeholders including DALRRD, the Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB) and exporters.

Mphala shares that her medium and long-term goals are centered around seeing the success of the Riplimead packhouse, having control of the value chain and owning her own farm eventually. What makes Mphala one of the best performing females in the industry this month is certainly her ambition to create a name for herself, while focusing on her personal growth and sustaining generational wealth.

Mphala believes that the one woman that has tremendously influenced her in the industry is Jacomien De Klerk – manager of the Citrus Academy. She was and still is, motivated by her drive, as well as her courageous and bold attitude. She shares that she hopes to inspire the continued drive to commercialize the high-quality produce of black citrus growers – and especially female black citrus growers - to help them become more independent over time.



Nomfundo with her high quality citrus fruit



By Melton Mulaudzi

The CGA-GDC is proud to profile the remarkable achievements and work of several leading women in the citrus growing sector this month. This Spring, we celebrate the work and passion of Segomotso Letebele, Lerato Moilwa, Luambo Gloria Mutele and Tshirema Talelani Annah. We hope our newsletter readers are inspired by their determination to run successful businesses in a predominantly male-dominated industry. The CGA-GDC looks forward to continue supporting the sustainable and profitable business development, and growth, that these women envision for their farms and all those under their employ.

Segomotso Letebele

Segomotso Letebele is a citrus farmer at Zoutpansdrift, located in the Brits area in the North West province. She started farming at Zoutpansdrift in October 2015, after acquiring her farm through the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy programme of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development. The farm is 25 ha in size, and is host to five different cultivars of citrus.

"While my dreams of getting into farming were being realised, the reality of it was both exciting and overwhelming when I started" shares Letebele. Together, with the combined help of the previous farm workers, as well as much determination, Letebele was able to grow her farm and business. She shares that the journey towards becoming an independent farmer is not an easy one: "It is only by looking at the improvement of the quality of our fruit, as well as the increase in tons we are producing year-on-year, that we are able to prove how this business has grown through our own



Segomotso Letebele and her citrus fruit packed for export



WOMEN CONTINUE TO LEAD THE WAY

IN CITRUS

learning and development at Zoutpansdrift".

Letebele shares that she has received a large degree of support within the citrus industry, especially from the CGA-GDC through regular training, extension services, research, study groups, funding and other relevant activities.

The recapitalisation grants from the Department of Agriculture were also critical forms of assistance that helped enable her ability to obtain the machinery she needed to farm her land. Letebele shares that her dream is now to expand her farm further by establishing a new orchard to replace old trees with cultivars that are more relevant and popular within today's markets.

Lerato Moilwa

Bathlako Temo Services is a registered 5-member co-operative that is based outside Brits in the North West province. The co-operative is composed of five family members, including two men and three women. Lerato Moilwa is married to fellow co-op owner, Isaac Moilwa, who started the project in 2012. Lerato is currently the Financial Manager of the farm.

The land under their utilization was acquired through the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's land restitution program. The citrus farm comprises 61.5 ha, with approximately 16 000 trees which were being irrigated manually, using a dragline irrigation system prior to the CGA-GDC's support of their farming activities.

The CGA-GDC was delighted to assist Lerato and her team with the installation of a functional irrigation system, which has since resulted in the addition of more citrus trees resulting in a sizeable increase in citrus production figures, which now includes 25 310 trees.



WOMEN CONTINUE TO LEAD THE WAY

IN CITRUS

CONTINUED

Lerato and her team at Batlhako Temo have since grown from strength to strength and have achieved many milestones over the years. This includes the fact that they are the first black citrus exporters in the North West province, who are currently supplying overseas markets with their high quality citrus fruit. Lerato is proud to share that the Batlhako Temo co-operative now produces citrus fruit that is destined to the Middle East, Taiwan, Malaysia and China.



The Batlhako Temo co-operative is an enterprise that continues to pride itself on women's empowerment. "I now find myself in an extremely rewarding position as the only successful black, female, citrus exporter in the North West. I have employed other females in this journey, who are now also playing a vital role in our successes, as scouts, quality control officers, and many other positions. All of these women continue to play such an important role in dismantling the idea that the agricultural sector is meant to be a male-dominated industry" shares Lerato.

The CGA-GDC celebrates Lerato's teams achievements and looks forward to continue supporting the co-operative and its aim to one day own its own packhouse and juicing factory.

Luambo Gloria Mutele

Luambo Gloria Mutele (Marafha) is 46 years old and the owner of the Glorious Light Farming company which is located at Ha-Mutale in a small village called Duluthulu in Limpopo.

"I'm a person who loves farming – I think my passion for agriculture truly encouraged me to continue working towards my goal of one day farming my own crops. In 2018 I told my husband about my passion about farming, and he gave me his full support to achieve my goals. This was a life changing and exciting moment for me and my family" shares Mutele.

In 2018 and 2019, Mutele planted her first cash crops and in 2020 decided to start planting crops that would secure better returns in the long term - she shares that this is where her dream of planting citrus truly began.



"I had a conversation with Mr Robert Mudau who is an extension officer from the Department of Agriculture - he gave me his full support to reach my goal and assisted me with the transport I required to fetch citrus trees in Tzaneen.

WOMEN CONTINUE TO LEAD THE WAY

IN CITRUS

CONTINUED

In September 2020 I bought 100 Eureka lemon trees at the Rievlei Nursery, followed by 200 Eureka lemon trees in October of the same year. In January 2021 I bought another 250 citrus trees at the Henley Nursery. This was a very exciting time for me - although my access to water soon became a challenge thereafter".

Given this setback, the CGA-GDC quickly stepped in to provide Mutele with the support she required in terms of water infrastructure for her farming activities. On the 26th of January 2021, the CGA-GDC provided Mutele with a grant towards the establishment of a borehole. This was followed with another grant for all the chemicals and fertilizers her farming required in July 2022.

"My goal is to develop a 10 ha farm of planted citrus trees within the next five years. The best part of this dream is that it will also help create more jobs for member sof my local community. I look forward to making this a reality - soon" shares Mutele.

The CGA-GDC hopes to continue offering Mutele with the support she requires to ensure her continued ability to offer employment opportunities to members of her local community.

Tshirema Talelani Annah

Tshirema Talelani Annah is the owner of Itsharivhone General and Trading Company, which is situated at Ha-Mutele in Limpopo. She has been in the farming industry since 2015 and had originally planted many mangoes before meeting with the Department of Agriculture's extension officer, Robert Mudau.

"I met with Robert who really encouraged me to plant Eureka lemon trees. He even used his own personal vehicle to assist me with the transportation of my new lemon trees when the time came to purchase them. I initially bought 200 lemon trees

from the Rievlei Nursery in 2020 – followed by an additional 350 in 2021" shares Annah.

In 2021, Annah was introduced to the CGA-GDC, which began assisting her with the attainment of all her new business goals. The CGA-GDC was able to provide Annah with a grant for the excavation of a borehole, pumps and equipment to be used for a borehole as well.



"I am very grateful to the CGA-GDC for assisting me with the establishment of a borehole, which continues to work well for my farm" shares Annah. This grant was supported by further funding from the CGA-GDC in 2022 to buy all the chemicals and fertilizers she needed to protect and grow her farm.

"I have faith that my company will continue to expand and create more opportunities for my surrounding community, especially with the support I am receiving from the CGA-GDC" concludes Annah.

The CGA-GDC will remain a committed and supportive partner to all black, female-owned citrus farms and businesses, as we aim to ensure the inclusive transformation of our sector, in a manner that also empowers the women who have chosen to make this industry their own.



PROMOTIONS AND NEW

APPOINTMENTS

by Mathapelo Mello

With the continued growth of the CGA-GDC's support towards developing black citrus growers in our country, we have found a need to enhance our team's capacity, specifically within the financial department of the company. Ms Camille Khoza has been with the CGA-GDC since 2016 occupying the position of Office administrator and has consistently, as a secretariat, provided invaluable services to the CGA-GDC board.

We watched her grow in her role over many months and noticed that the new skill-sets she had attained were being under-utilised in her position. She has also recently completed her Bachelors' of Commerce Degree in Financial Accounting and expressed her desire to be exposed to the financial functions of the CGA-GDC. She subsequently started offering support services to the CGA-GDC Financial Manager, while also fulfilling her obligations as office administrator and has performed very well in all these roles. As a result, she has been offered the position of Financial Accountant of the CGA-GDC, effective from the 1st of September 2022.

Following Ms. Camille Khoza's move into our finance division, a gap was left behind in our Office Administrator role, which has subsequently also been filled. It is with great pleasure that we welcome and announce the appointment of the new CGA-GDC's Office Administrator, Mrs. Tebatso Nkulele, who joined our team from the 1st of September 2022.

The CGA-GDC remains committed to making job opportunities available to members of our community and industry, while developing our employees and increasing their skillsets so that they may seize such opportunities that become available.

We welcome Ms. Khoza and Mrs. Tebatso into their new roles and look forward to watching them both grow into the positions they now hold.



Ms. Tebatso Nkulele



Ms Camille Khoza

