

TRANSFORMATION NEWSLETTER – August 2013:

August in South Africa is recognized as Women's Month. African women celebrated the milestone that South African women achieved in the struggle to free the country. A noticeable appointment was that of former Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo –Ngcuka to the UN which was cause for jubilation.

It is still harvesting time within the citrus industry, and several meetings took place between government and growers.

Recap meetings –EC and National Rural Development

The small growers in Fort Beaufort who packed their fruit with Riverside/Lona, submitted their applications for Recap funding in 2011 but with no luck. The CGA transformation desk was requested to assist in this matter. We therefore engaged with provincial and national departments to try to speed up the process. There were some challenges with regard to the business plan submitted and there were also some documents which had not been included with the application. It is important that the applicant and the mentor or strategic partner **double check** their applications before submission. Incomplete applications make it difficult for the department to process.

From the five business plans approved by the department four of them have been paid their first trench for recap funding. This is good news as it's clear that working together, the department and industry can make a huge impact implement change. It is important that when this process starts all parties involved be practical in terms of their involvement.

Growers, strategic partners and mentors are encouraged to keep track of what they said they will implement with the first trench of funding. The reason for this is that it becomes difficult for the department to release the second and third trench without being able to refer to reports as required and proof of payments of implements and other operations that were targeted. The remaining application from the five applicants will be paid before the end of September.

AgriSA – Transformation Policy meeting

AgriSA as the structure that represents most of the commodity organizations has a transformation committee that is formed by all transformation managers from different industries. This committee meets three times a year as well as when there are urgent matters that need consultation.

This year the committee has already met three times due to some policy reviews that needed comments from the different industries. Before they can pass or promulgate the policy the departments of agriculture and rural development first consult with this committee for comments. This time the matter on the table was around the proposal by rural development of 10% ownership after 10 years of loyal service.

Cochran Fellowship Training in USA – CGA Transformation Manager

Every year DAFF and USDA invite applicants to apply for training in US. This kind of training is funded jointly by DAFF and USDA. The transformation manager from CGA applied for training on the Zero Hunger Policy-different models on zero hunger. Out of twenty-one candidates who applied for this training only eight candidates made it and from those eight the CGA transformation manager and one citrus farmer from the EC were accepted. We left for US on the 16th August coming back on the 31st August 2013. The training was hosted by University of Columbia Washington DC.

The training was very hectic so a lot had to be learned in a short period of time. The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources – University of Missouri was responsible for the training and lots of models were examined. The following are some models that we learnt whilst we were there and that we can use as they can make a huge impact in our agricultural sector:

- Grow your own farm – very interesting model for the beginners in farming
- Introduction to US Agriculture
- Basic Farming Principles
- Teaching Practical farm Managements Skills- Business management and record keeping
- Land Tenure
- Role of a Farmers' Cooperative
- Technology and information transfer
- Understanding value chains

All above models can be tailored into something suitable for the SA situation. This could make a huge difference. We undertook many site visits in the markets and farms and research stations.

