

TRANSFORMATION NEWSLETTER – September 2013:

September is the month to celebrate our heritage. It is also when people are encouraged to plant trees to enable the environment. DAFF offered an award to local municipalities for planting trees in their communities.

As much as the industry appreciates and supports such generous donations of citrus trees to projects and small holder farmers, it is very important to observe good agricultural practices. The trees have to be of a suitable type and cultivar which will thrive in the area. Anyone interested in donating trees for a particular region should please first ask for advice from the Citrus Foundation Block in Uitenhage, or the CGA/CRI Extension officers. They will be able to advise you if the area is suitable for citrus and which cultivar and which certified nursery you can buy trees from.

Situational Analysis in Progress

As I reported in my previous newsletter, the CGA is conducting situational analyses in all the regions. I want to thank all the farmers in KZN and EC who participated in the process. I know that during the month of September the Citrus Academy and Lima have been busy with Limpopo and I was told that they are making good progress in that region. It is important that you participate in this exercise so that we can understand what your business enterprise challenges are and how can we advise our partners in business development to assist you.

Recap progress and Recap profiling

In my past newsletter I have mentioned the progress that CGA and provincial departments of rural development have made working together in implementing the Recap Programme. You will notice, if you have been following my newsletters, I mentioned that much progress has been observed in the EC province. This is not to say the other provinces are not making progress, but they are faced with financial challenges in implementing the programme which is making progress slower than in EC.

I recently requested all eight provinces where we operate to assist me by undertaking an audit of how many citrus farms have benefitted from the programme to date. I hope to release that report before the end of November. From that report we will be able to address teething problems that need our collective attention.

The New Age/DAFF Breakfast Meetings

The Minister of DAFF recently addressed a breakfast meeting of stakeholders on the new programme, Fetsa Thlala (Poverty alleviation). In that meeting the Minister also acknowledge the role of women in agriculture.

The Minister requested that we work together as stakeholders in the sector to ensure a meaningful support to our small holder famers and through transformation in a sector. Emphasis was on the role of women in the sector. CGA supported the call by the Minister to encourage all women in the citrus industry to be visible and to be represented to ensure that they are not excluded from the development the industry is driving.