



TRANSFORMATION NEWSLETTER – April, May and June 2014

'My grandfather used to say that once in your life you need a doctor, a lawyer, a policeman and a preacher, but everyday three times a day you need a famer' – Brenda Schoep..

During the past three months the transformation desk has continued with its activities; the pace was however impacted by the important election process. It is expected that once the respective new administrations are in place project implementation will speeded up.

As a result of expected changes in the various administrations preparations have been made to brief newly appointed office-bearers. The objective is to acquaint them with what has happened in the industry's transformation initiatives and to present them with plans that have been made so garnering their support going forward.

CGA Transformation Committee - Development

The CGA transformation desk, with the support of the CGA Board, established a Transformation Committee within the CGA. Additional experts have been invited to join the committee. The Committee's mandate is to consider development initiatives that can be undertaken within the citrus industry guided by the various legislative and policy measures being applied in South Africa.

It is recognised that the new administration is placing great emphasis on transformation in all sectors which implies that CGA, as a commodity organisation, will need to prepare itself and the industry to embrace the various changes. The CGA must place itself in a position to provide advice to politicians and other stakeholders in terms of what should be done in providing support to developing citrus growers.

The CGA has conducted a situational survey of 118 citrus farms. The information gathered will be made available to the committee. This should ease the work of the committee in identifying the challenges being faced by emerging citrus growers. From this the committee will be expected to make recommendations regarding what support measures will be required and how and by whom such support should be provided.

Transformation portfolio site visit - farms per region

The Transformation Manager and two CRI Extension Officers have visited a large number of growers to assess how they are progressing in the new season. It was found that most growers are still faced with many challenges but are trying their level best to do the right thing irrespective of the low level of support.

During the visits the Transformation Manager suggested that growers take charge of their own challenges and be proactive. He also requested that they support the CGA transformation desk in its endeavours. Growers were also advised of the regional road shows where the Transformation Committee would discuss industry development strategy that will be presented to new Ministers and office-bearers.

Government State of the Nation Address and new Ministries

During the opening of Parliament and after the announcement of the new Minister of Agriculture, the President of the Republic of South Africa stated that during his new term of office transformation will be a major focus.

The government has indicated that it will be providing increased support for new entrants to business by establishing a new ministry for small business development. We suggest that this should make a difference to the establishment of viable businesses. We recommend that the citrus industry's development plans should be presented to the new ministry. We also recommend that support for business development be committed for at least five years to enable a credible impact to be made.

It is recorded that CGA transformation initiatives are aligned with recommendations made in the National Development Plan regarding agriculture and rural development support. The industry has promoted the establishment of provincial and district working committees that will facilitate development and promote required communication.

