

Note from the Managing Director

One of the key habits of successful people and companies is to always look for opportunities to enhance and develop skills. The RBX Group actively encourages staff members to identify training, through our performance management system, that will help to improve their current performance or start to prepare them for the next step or phase in their career.

A big High 5 to Emma on not only developing her own capabilities but also adding massive value to the company's continued expansion into the beneficial insect market.

*Cheers,
Rob*

Recognising Excellence in the RBX Group

“ How do you eat an elephant?
One bite at a time. ”

This is the mindset that Emma carried with her throughout her Master's, a project that started out ambitious and, along the way, became even more so.

At River Bioscience, we believe progress happens one step at a time, and sometimes those steps lead to exceptional achievements. We are proud to celebrate Emma Thompson on completing her Master's degree with distinction through Rhodes University, and on receiving the prestigious S²A³ Bronze Medal for the best Master's thesis in the science faculty.

Emma's research focused on *Trichogrammatoidea cryptophlebiae*, a parasitoid we know well and actively use, but one that still holds important opportunities for deeper understanding. Her work set out to move beyond theory, building a practical, field-relevant framework for how this biological control agent can be used more effectively in real farming systems.

What makes this achievement particularly valuable is how the research evolved. As Emma progressed, it became clear that answering applied questions required a stronger understanding of the parasitoid's biology. This led to an expansion of the laboratory work, refining key factors such as female age and rearing ratios, which directly influence parasitoid quality. The result is a more informed approach to producing not just high numbers, but high-performance insects for release.

In the field, the research reinforced a critical principle: timing and strategy matter. Releases that were well aligned with pest egg presence and implemented at the right scale delivered significantly better results. These insights strengthen how we guide growers in achieving consistent, effective biological control.

A key addition to the study was the investigation into agrochemical compatibility. Biological control does not operate in isolation, and Emma's work highlighted that even when parasitoids survive chemical exposure, sublethal effects can reduce their long-term effectiveness. By classifying these impacts using internationally recognised guidelines, the research provides practical direction for integrating biological and chemical control more successfully.

The outcome is a holistic contribution to integrated pest management, highlighting three essentials for success:

- Producing high-quality parasitoids
- Releasing them at the right time and in the right numbers
- Ensuring compatibility with existing farming practices

Emma's recognition through the S²A³ Bronze Medal is awarded to only one Master's student per university each year, underscoring the significance of her work and its contribution to the scientific field.



At River Bioscience, we are incredibly proud to have this level of expertise within our team. Emma's achievement not only reflects her dedication and scientific excellence but also strengthens our mission to deliver practical, sustainable biological solutions to growers.

This is exactly how we continue to move the industry forward, one step at a time.

April Birthdays

Wilbur Beukes, Lazani Goldsmid, Christel Oosthuizen, Ntombentsha Befile, Granville Mentoer, Stephanie Minnaar, Gareth Vorster, Martin Fransman, Enrich Scholtz, Peter Basson, Lee-Anne Carolus, Lindy Martin, Grayzill van Wyk, Nceba Ngquse, Redawaan Valentyn, Babalwa Xhali, Mushe Tshilonga, Brian Fortuin, Zelmar Persens, Nomazotsho Tatsi, Thando Mngqeba, Tracey-Lee Paulse, Marius Tsobo, Patrick Langklaas, Lindelwa Tutu, Lindiwe Nqubelani

Proud Members of the
CGA Group of Companies

