

Transformation

Times'

"EMPOWERMENT NEWS FROM THE PEOPLE FOR THE PEOPLE"

SRCC REFINES ITS TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY AND BLUEPRINT - 5 KEY IMPERATIVES

(Pages 2 /3)

- MORE AWARDS
- MEDIA EXPOSURE
- AGBIZ CONFERENCE

More news inside on...



- *Exciting new and unique greenfields participation project taking shape....*



- *Progress being made on the noteworthy educational citrus academy project....*



- *Successful existing BEE citrus enterprises moving forward strongly....*



- *Health care....farm clinics proving to be a winner....*



- *SRCC Foundation extends its reach with integrated bursary scheme plans....*

SRCC REFINES ITS TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY...

As SRCC proceeds on its transformation journey with the solid strategy and blueprint which has been developed, it obviously learns and gathers more information and knowledge along the way that is of relevance in the achievement of its empowerment objectives.

The core of the blueprint revolves around the 5 key imperatives and, as we progress, the landscape is ever changing so revisions, adjustments and improvements are made along the way. Below therefore is a recap of the overall direction that SRCC is following on its empowerment trail, with inclusivity as a primary objective and our purpose being to cover the widest possible spectrum of needs, from direct ownership, through education and development to serving the community.....

1. Continuous improvement and support for the established, successful BEE farming enterprises:

The 3 established BEE citrus farming enterprises have recently all held their 2015 AGM's and reported excellent results with unqualified audit reports. The beneficiaries in each case have received substantial dividends while simultaneously ensuring the future financial health of their farming businesses. The single most important matter to resolve is the failure to date of Government to grant outright ownership of the land on which the Sundays River Farming Trust runs its farming business to the beneficiaries. After more than 10 years in this business they are still leasing the land from the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. In the interests of true transformation it is time that ownership of this land is passed on to the beneficiaries of SRFT.

Read more on pages 5 - 8



2. Support for the individual farmer BEE projects within the SRCC farmer membership:

Although more difficult to implement because of the nature of citrus farming there are a few citrus producers who are working on their own individual BEE initiatives and SRCC is assisting them wherever they may require advice or support.

3. Establishment of a large new "greenfields" citrus empowerment project which will provide opportunity for SRCC's producers to invest on behalf of and for the benefit of their farm workers:

We believe that this is a unique initiative which, because of the need for economies of scale in the citrus farming environment, will provide the perfect opportunity for SRCC's producers to take up a share in a large and viable citrus operation on behalf of their permanent farm workers who will then benefit from the dividends to be paid from the future profits generated from this citrus enterprise. The SRCC packhouse permanent staff along with the permanent workers who are employed on the farm will also be included as shareholders in the scheme. It is envisaged that around 350 beneficiaries will benefit from their shareholding while it is estimated that between 800-1000 jobs will be created by this initiative. SRCC will manage the farming activities and steady progress is being made in the various processes to obtain environmental approval and consequent water licence allocation which are required before any soil can be turned.

Read more on page 4

4. Establishment of an educational citrus farming academy which will become the training ground for the emerging citrus farmers of the future:

This is an equally exciting development which also has the potential to become one of the most outstanding empowerment projects in the country. A far-reaching proposal has been compiled to develop a tract of land of around 300 hectares which belongs to the Sundays River Valley Municipality which will commence with vegetable production followed by the addition of a citrus nursery to serve the various citrus empowerment projects, a pruning service which will be made available to SRCC's citrus producers and then the citrus academy. The latter will effectively be a citrus training farm on which young emerging agricultural graduates who are interested in citrus farming will be trained and developed into the citrus farm managers and owners of the future! A further objective within the project plan is to include a strong community component to it so that significant benefit can flow from the project to community needs in the area. This project will fall under the ambit of the Agri-Park initiative in the Sarah Baartman District and a recent development in this regard is that the Agri-park hub will now be located on a different property in the area so that the land in question can be utilised for production purposes as described in the above-mentioned project.

Read more on page 4

5. Further growth and enhancement of the SRCC Foundation's community upliftment work in the Sundays River Valley:

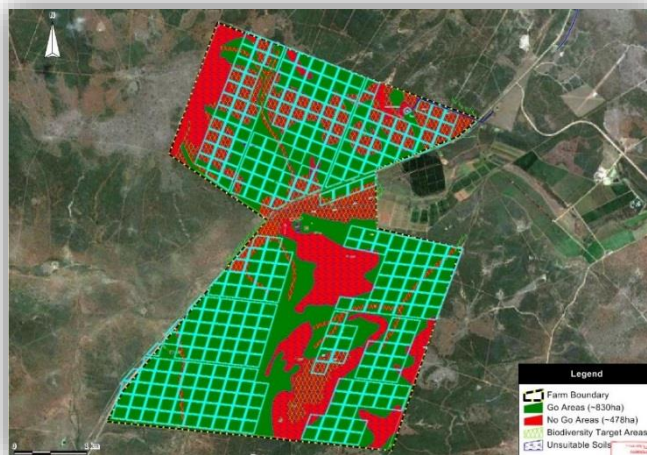
The SRCC Foundation is a vital component of the overall strategy as it relates to attending to the substantial needs of the surrounding communities. Focus is placed on education, health and environmental needs and obviously substantial funds are required to make even the slightest impression in this regard. The most recent development within the Foundation is the establishment of a bursary scheme to benefit promising young scholars in the community through primary, secondary and tertiary education. Another noteworthy achievement is the growth of the mobile clinic initiative which serves our farm workers across the Valley.

Read more on page 10



NEW GREENFIELDS GROWER / FARM WORKER PARTICIPATION PROJECT

Work on the unique Ikamva Lethu (“Our Future”) Project moves steadily forward as the requirements for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) are addressed. Some design changes have been made to the water supply and storage provisions in the project, which, because of the size of the project, also require EIA approval. The EIA is a lengthy and thorough process which is required to ensure that all the important environmental aspects are respected within the development of agricultural land. So, although all concerned would prefer the project to be moving forward more speedily, the significance of meeting the environmental requirements is understood and appreciated. A detailed timetable of the process and the compliance requirements is being compiled which suggests that, on the assumption that all requirements are met, the final environmental approval could be obtained during the latter part of 2017.



Presentations of the project were recently made to the SRCC Packhouse staff who will be included in the project and a very positive response was received. SRCC looks forward to the inclusion of its Packhouse staff in the project as many of them have been loyal to the organisation for many years. As mentioned in previous newsletters the support from the SRCC growers is overwhelming and they too are looking forward to the opportunity of empowering their loyal farm workers through their inclusion in the project and providing them and their families with the long term benefits which will flow from the project in the future. The inclusion of around 350 beneficiaries and the creation of an estimated 800 – 1000 job opportunities which this exciting project will generate, is reason enough for all concerned to follow the progress with much anticipation!

EDUCATIONAL & DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECT

The detail of this noteworthy initiative was provided in the previous edition of our newsletter and since then, further progress has certainly been made. The Agri-Park development which has been launched by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform in order to promote the development and empowerment of agriculture and its supporting value chain in the rural areas of the country is steadily gaining a foothold in the Sarah Baartman District within which the Sundays River Valley falls. Recent decisions identified an alternative property in the Addo area on which the hub of the Agri-Park development will be located, which then allows for the tract of land earmarked for this educational and community driven project to be dedicated to the production aspects of the project. Furthermore, positive work has been done in obtaining the support of the surrounding communities who will benefit from the project, so we look forward to the finalisation of the necessary approvals and agreements from the various stakeholders over the next number of weeks, which will then enable the project to proceed. The surrounding communities in the Addo area will feature strongly in terms of future benefits from this project as it is intended that a certain portion of profits generated will be ploughed back into selected community related projects.

The most exciting aspect of this project is the potential that it carries to identify, train, develop and mentor the future young emerging citrus farmers in the Sundays River Valley. We are all very conscious of the enormous needs of our youth in our Valley and in our country as a whole and it is projects such as this that will make meaningful contributions towards addressing the educational and employment aspirations of our young previously disadvantaged people in the Valley.

SRFT	
Hectares	420 ha
2015 Production	9,505 tons
2015 Export Cartons	406,247
Beneficiaries	27

The structure of the SRFT Farming Enterprise is as follows:

Sundays River Farming Trust (SRFT)
(Workers' Trust with 27 beneficiaries)



Sikhula Sonke Enterprises (Pty) Ltd
(operating company)



5 consolidated farming properties:

- Willowtree
- Glengrove
- Siyaphambile
- Sophumelela
- Siyathemba



Siyaphambile

The picking of the first harvest at Siyaphambile was done by the beneficiaries, in orchard no. 1 of Phase 1, as an informal ceremony to mark this important event. The General Manager, Ms. Buyiswa Ndyenga, took the lead in sorting the fruit as it was picked (as shown above and right).



Siyaphambile

As mentioned in our previous publications, Siyaphambile is the farm which SRFT and its operating company, Sikhula Sonke Enterprises (Pty) Ltd, has bought to provide employment opportunities and revenue for the benefit of its beneficiaries and farm workers. Siyaphambile, which is 117 ha in extent, is divided into 3 phases. The building of the dam has started on Phase 3 (as above) and ESKOM will start shortly with the installation of power points. Phase 1 has been completed, the planting of 36 hectares in Phase 2 is in process and planting in Phase 3 will commence later in the year.



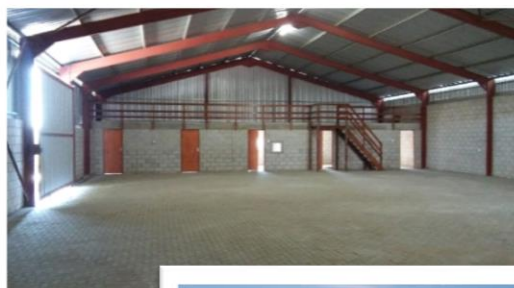
Glengrove

A motorcycle was recently purchased for use on the farm as it is more practical and productive in managing the various farm activities and irrigation requirements. The other farms have all followed suit.

The hostel at Glengrove was also upgraded recently, the electricity cables were rewired and security lights were also installed.

The building of the new shed has also been completed as can be seen on the right.

The new shed at Glengrove



Siyathemba

The farm manager of Siyathemba can be seen proudly driving his new bakkie around the farm as the harvesting progresses. Picking has proceeded well as result of good weather conditions.

Approximately 1,7 hectares will be replanted later in the year with the Nova variety.



Sophumelela

New ablution facilities have been built for the staff.

An Irrigation check probe system has been installed which measures the moisture content of the soil with an application which sends updates to the cellphone handsets of the production- and farm managers.

The development of additional irrigable land of 7,99 hectares is in process in order to establish orchards in which new trees will be planted (see left)

The irrigation system was also upgraded with a new suction pipe. (left)

Willowtree

The 2,14 hectares on which the Morr variety of trees were planted, has now been covered with shade cloth as explained in our previous publication. This will ensure that top quality export fruit will be produced as a result of both protection against wind and weather and also an element of temperature stability. We look forward to measuring the improvement which is expected (see below and right) to verify the viability of the cost.



Willowtree

A Man truck and carrier trailer were bought for the transportation of staff between home and work (as below). This will help significantly with the convenience and cost of this function.



LUTHANDO	
<i>Hectares</i>	130 ha
<i>2015 Production</i>	3,351 tons
<i>2015 Export Cartons</i>	139,110
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	49

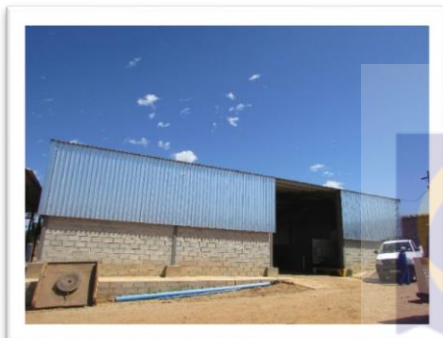


Luthando Farm (Pty) Ltd

The development and replanting of 10 hectares at Luthando Farm is planned for the 2016 / 2017 season. As can be seen above right some replanting was also done late last year.

The new tractor shed (below) has now been completed along with some much-needed tractor maintenance.

New tractor shed at Luthando Farm



Re-sprayed tractor at Luthando Farm



Mbuyiselo Plase (Pty) Ltd

MBUYISELO	
<i>Hectares</i>	62 ha
<i>2015 Production</i>	1, 835 tons
<i>2015 Export Cartons</i>	60,078
<i>Beneficiaries</i>	23

Office Building : Meeting Room



Mbuyiselo Plase (Pty) Ltd

We reported in our previous newsletter that staff houses and office buildings at Mbuyiselo Plase were renovated by using the recapitalisation grant funds received from the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR). This work has now all been completed and the staff concerned are enjoying improved living conditions.

The upgrading of the inside of the office building is still work – in-process, with blinds being installed. The company name signage (left) has been proudly erected in the meeting room at Mbuyiselo Plase.

Mbuyiselo Plase performed very well during its recent ethical audit and the farm is in an excellent condition, with the fruit quality and volumes looking very good for the current season.



Wellness Programmes

The Wellness Programmes of Sikhula Sonke Enterprises and Luthando Farm were presented to the visiting representatives of the German Ministry for Economic Development and Co-operation on the 1st of June 2016 due to the involvement of the AIDCEC in the success of these programmes.

The aim of these programmes is to educate farm workers about HIV/AIDS, TB and other health related topics. It includes the opportunity for workers to have testing done voluntarily and confidentially and to attend awareness sessions on various health related topics (as seen above).

Farm Clinics

As mentioned in a previous publication, together with the Automotive Industry Development Centre Eastern Cape (Pty) Ltd (AIDC EC), the initiative was taken to set up farm clinics. The idea is to provide health support to the workers on site so they don't have to leave work for half a day to visit the clinic in town. SRCC, in conjunction with Capespan, established farm clinics on 4 of the Sikhula Sonke Enterprises farms as well as on Luthando Farm (as seen right). Mbuyiselo Plase will also be incorporated from this year. Capespan has concluded a Services Agreement with Incon Health who will be rendering clinic services on the various farms which include a qualified nurse visiting the clinics full time on a set time table.

This initiative has started to roll over to other citrus producers in the area with three other farms already involved: Penhill (Capespan), Habata 1 & 2.

Representatives of the German Ministry for Economic Development and Co-operation also visited Willowtree Farm and its clinic and were very impressed with the success of this initiative.



SRCC FOUNDATION

As a result of recently agreed co-operation between the SRCC Foundation and the Engeli Group, it has been decided that a fully integrated bursary scheme should be established which would provide educational support for worthy scholars across primary, secondary and tertiary levels followed by potential employment opportunities within the SRCC and its producer organisations. Obviously significant and ongoing funding will be required to establish and maintain such a scheme on a sustainable basis and Engeli has offered to provide assistance relative to fund raising efforts. An early example of this assistance is the very successful Zuurberg Trek Mountain Bike Race which was recently held in the Zuurberg mountains at which an appeal was made to participants for contributions to the Foundation.

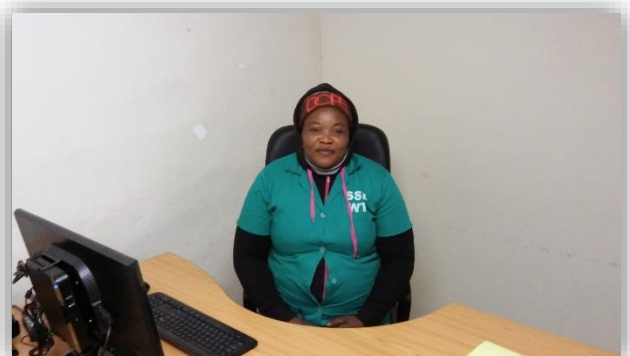
This initiative will also link in eventually with the planned citrus academy where it is envisaged that agricultural graduates will learn their trade and, ideally, some of these graduates will have been supported by the above-mentioned bursary scheme. Although this is also a long term venture, it is certainly a worthwhile one to pursue.

AWARDS

District Female Entrepreneur Awards 2016 Western District

At a function presented by the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR), Ms. Zukiswa Mni (as seen right) from Willowtree farm, Sikhula Sonke Enterprises, won the award for Best Female Worker – 2016 and Ms. Nikelwa Wonci from Luthando Farm was the first runner-up. We congratulate them on their achievements!

This is an annual function held to recognise the role of women in agriculture and rural development.



MEDIA EXPOSURE

-MEDIA EXPOSURE -

The transformation work being undertaken by SRCC has recently received some good exposure in the media. The July publication of the agricultural magazine "Farmbiz" included a comprehensive article on the transformation strategies, plans and progress of the SRCC while the Landbouweekblad of 10 July provided good detail on both the current and future projects with which we are busy. If a copy of these articles may be required please do not hesitate to contact Anne-Marié Le Roux on 042 - 233 0320.



AGBIZ CONFERENCE

Agbiz Conference

The Agricultural Business Chamber or Agbiz, as it is more commonly known, presents an outstanding congress every two years which covers the important topics impacting on agriculture and the economy. Yet another excellent congress was presented at the beginning of this month in Somerset West with the theme "Fit for the Future" at which Land Reform and Transformation featured strongly on the agenda. A pre-congress workshop was held on 31 May at which the revised BEE Codes for the Agricultural Sector were presented and discussed in detail. Excellent speakers also covered the important topics of energy and water supply into the future and the congress finished with an analysis of the various scenarios facing South Africa relative to its current and future political and economic circumstances, ranging from reasonably positive to extremely negative. Since then the country has avoided junk status classification which would have taken it into the negative scenarios! The need for us all to protect our agricultural resources while transforming the landscape within the agricultural sector, in order to ensure that we provide long term food security for our population, came through very strongly indeed.



Editorial Team: Ken Nieuwenhuizen, Frikkie Olivier,
Anne-Marié le Roux, Lorraine Marais
Contact details: (042) 233 0410 / srftadmin@srcc.co.za

