

04 August 2017

## **Monsanto SA launches Empowerment Programme**

### **- Seeding Success**

It was an evening filled with drama and suspense as we waited for the big reveal. What reveal; one may ask.

It was the launch of Monsanto SA's own empowerment programme.

Monsanto successfully launched the "*imbewu*" Empowerment Programme aimed at contributing to inclusive growth in South Africa by empowering local communities with smart solutions to improve their lives and develop a sustainable agricultural platform.

"*imbewu*" – actually means seed in Zulu, and that is what we are doing. We're seeding growth, we're seeding successful business leaders, and we're seeding potential in people; the potential to become and do better. That's our greatest investment" said Parusha Pillay, Monsanto SA's B-BBEE Transformation Manager.

The programme undertakes to improve the lives of local farmers by providing them with innovative products and technology; as well as the development of critical skills in the sector, like enterprise development and also assist with access to funding.

The launch took place on 04 August at the Fairways Hotel, in Randburg. Amongst the attendants were Buhle Farmers Academy, Grain SA and Annette Steyn, Shadow Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries for the Democratic Alliance.

Although Monsanto has been involved in farmer development programmes for many years, it was only decided in 2016 that such a dedicated programme be created.

"During our research for the programme, we discovered three themes that spoke to our objective. The first was to empower communities where we operate with a sense of self-worth, enabling them to make their own decisions regarding their destiny. Second was to contribute to sustainability and discourage perpetual dependence of funding and lastly, to inspire others to do the same. That is what *imbewu* is" said Pillay.

To make it more ironic, Monsanto employees came up with the name of the programme and helped design the logo, to insure that inclusive growth starts internally.

Pillay acknowledged the leadership of Monsanto SA for the foresight to see the kind of success the programme can impart for the company and the country.

She concluded by thanking all the partners who are passionate about such initiatives that are all about touching and changing lives; and encouraged all to seed success together.

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Note: Please contact Magda Du Toit, Corporate Engagement and Communication Manager, Monsanto SA for any interviews or further interview. Email: [magda.du.toit@monsanto.com](mailto:magda.du.toit@monsanto.com)



The newly launched empowerment programme by Monsanto SA to contribute to inclusive growth and sustainability for SA agriculture.



Ms Parusha Pillay, Monsanto SA's B-BBEE Transformation Manager. She is passionate about empowerment and believes that this robust strategy will go a long way in ensuring sustainability in SA agriculture.



Monsanto SA's MD Mr Kobus Steenekamp during the launch of the imbewu empowerment programme. He believes the programme is more than just a business imperative to tick-off the box, but rather a social contribution to help improve lives.



Gyanendra Shukla (Monsanto Africa Lead) - Pritesh Ramjathan (IT Lead Africa and winner of the naming competition for the programme) – and Kobus Steenekamp (Managing Director, Monsanto SA).



Front: Parusha Pillay (B-BBEE Transformation Manager), Gyanendra Shukla (Monsanto Africa Lead), Annette Steyn, DA Shadow Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. Back: Kobus Steenekamp (Managing Director, Monsanto SA) and Pieter Smit (Marketing Manager – Seed and Biotechnology, Monsanto SA) and a colleague at the imbewu launch.