

| JULY 2023 ISSUE



AGRICULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

AGDA NEWS IN THIS ISSUE

From the CEO's desk	PAGE 2
An advocate for agriculture	PAGE 3
Blouberg potato farms	PAGE 4
Mzansi young farmers	PAGE 5
Reflections	PAGE 6
AGDA's marketing video	PAGE 7
Graceful's hair solution	PAGE 8
VT Harvest making a mark	PAGE 9
GrainSA's 55th Nampo exhibition	PAGE 10
Human resource solutions	PAGE 11
Green Crete smart block	PAGE 12
Stay connected	PAGE 13



From the CEO's desk

2023 is moving at a rapid pace and the AGDA team is also working full steam to convert our current opportunities including progressing forward on the Agri-Impact Fund establishment.

Exciting news about our progress will be shared at the AGM in August.

We have also been working on consolidating several partnerships in the retail space, NGO sector and financial services sector. All of these will enhance our ability to support our membership better.

This issue zooms into young people in agriculture to showcase their achievements; Nono Sekhoto-AGDA Director, Graceful Nene Founder of Boss'Fro organics, Rheainfras Youth film crew (iHappify), our Grow to Market Programme top performing farmers, Tebogo Hlongwane, Kgomoitso Malebana and Clive Mohapi at Mzansi's Young Farmers Indaba that was held at the FNB stadium in Soweto.

We are also bringing you information by HumanRx on how farmers can be assisted in managing human resources and other employment challenges on the farms. We hope that this information will support our farmers and partners.

The Agency is currently working on various commercial transactions including the Quicksell Berry Project. This is one of the flagship projects where AGDA facilitated engagements with Department of Water and Sanitation for access to additional water rights, more than 200 hectares of additional rights confirmed which enabled us to conclude an export contract with one of the leading Blueberry exporters and all

of this combined has more than doubled the value of the transaction for both the commercial farmers and the new Black Shareholders. Thank you DWS team for your commitment to providing us with such good options and the continued advice and guidance.

Our partnership with De Beers in the implementation of the Blouberg Hub project where we have been appointed to play the role of Project Manager which includes overseeing full implementation of the approved business plan has attracted a number of partners, some that have been working with the farmers before and new partners who see the hub and aggregator concept as a key to growth for the area. PSA, LIMA and VKB participate with the secondary cooperative, De Beers, AGDA and government as we collaborate in the project implementation. Exciting news from the farmers' side is that they have successfully negotiated with Kgodiso fund and Pepsico earlier this year and are currently in their first harvest season of producing potatoes for Lays Chips, a great achievement!

The farmers also produce Mondial potatoes for the open market and wholesalers. Read more on the Blouberg Potato Hub in this issue. Watch this space for the announcement of more partnerships that are currently in the pipeline.

AGDA has participated in several activities and engagements within the agricultural sector. SAKATA and AGDA shared an exhibition at the Mzansi Young Farmers Indaba held at the FNB stadium, Soweto in June. Well done to Food for Mzansi for putting together such an amazing event and the stories of the young farmers was a great inspiration and clearly points to the



LEONA ARCHARY
AGDA CEO

fact that more young people are understanding the economic and social benefits of the agricultural sector. We have partnered with SAKATA for two consecutive years, and we are looking to strengthening this partnership in other areas.

I have participated in agricultural panel discussions at the Youth Indaba and Nampo, and we continue to explore many other opportunities to engage with our partners and contribute to the conversations that will grow our sector. We are grateful to iHappify, an organisation that empowers youth through their Rheainfras film internship programme for sponsoring the first AGDA marketing video featuring our Grow to Market Programme progress in Jabulani, Soweto. The video highlights the work of the small growers in Soweto and the impact of the "Grow to Market Programmes". The video link is attached in this newsletter.

We are gradually building our membership and are excited to welcome new members into AGDA especially our smallholder farmers.

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP IS KEY AND AGDA CONTINUES TO STRIVE TO BUILD OUR PARTNER NETWORK.

Happy reading and feel free to contact us through our website.

Leona Archary, AGDA CEO

Nono Sekhoto

An advocate for international youth in agriculture



Dimakatso Sekhoto-Iga (Nono) is a commercial farmer, an entrepreneur, an international youth-in agriculture advocate and an award winning South African civil society leader, working to empower women and youth farmers across the country and region. She is currently appointed at the African Leadership Academy to develop and run the AL for Agribusiness Network programme for the alumni.

Nono began her journey in the agricultural sector in 2011 running a 2,000-hectare mixed farming enterprise in livestock, grain, and fruit, managing up to 50 workers. As a trailblazer in this remarkable position, this opened doors to opportunities for Nono to extend her agri-studies and business acumen and was selected for: Gibbs Goldman Sachs Entrepreneurship 10,000 Women programme; Oklahoma State University Agripreneurs Fellows, Frankfurt School of Financial Management

Frankfurt School of Financial Management and Korea Institute of Development Strategies, to name a few. Nono's passion for agriculture deepened when she was appointed as a member of the National Executive Council for African Farmers Association of South Africa (AFASA). As AFASA Youth Chairperson, tasked with establishing the youth chapter, her tenacity, professionalism and experience in agriculture provided a compelling story for the network of SA's top agribusiness corporates (such as AFGRI, Standard Bank and Corteva Agriscience etc.) to support and engage young farmers in the country via the platforms she created.

This also provided Nono first-hand understanding of challenges faced by youth in agriculture. Nono's work has attracted much attention over the years, as she has been invited to speak about her advocacy to improve support for youth in agriculture, nationally and

internationally, at platforms such as: TEDxWomen, Nelson Mandela Rhodes Foundation, UN Climate Change Conference (COP25), Brussels Policy Briefing, Donor and Finance Platform (EU), Policy Center for the New South's Atlantic Dialogues and several others.

She has also been featured on BBC Africa and numerous print and digital media, including television with the intention to painting a new face of future agriculturists.

Nono founded GrowthShoot in 2014 with the aim of building a career to find ways of empowering youth in agriculture. Her mission is to collaborate with relevant partners to bring about significant transformation in the agricultural sector for youth inclusion, across the African Continent. Prior to agriculture, Nono established a seven-year career in the financial services sector where she worked at PSG Konsult and Investec specialising in investments and wealth management. She holds a BCom Financial Accounting from University of Pretoria, Post Graduate Diploma in Certified Financial Planning from University of Free State, Certificate in Introduction for Agricultural Enterprise Management from University of Pretoria, as well as JSE registered courses.

"My mission is significant transformation and youth inclusion in the agricultural sector."



From left - Phophi Raletjena briefing the delegates, Greg Peterson (De Beers), Matthew Chadwick (SED-Anglo Group) Kgabo Rammutla (AGDA), Sydney Chauke (Blouberg Hub Manager) extreme right - Leona Archary,(AGDA CEO) and officials from Land Bank, Farmers and LIMA.

Anglo American, De Beers and AGDA tour Blouberg potato farms

TERVEEN FARM

A delegation including key funding partners of the Blouberg Potato Farmers' Hub visited farmers and toured two farms to get an update on the project. The delegation visited two farms in VIVO, Limpopo.

Terveen Farm owned by Mr. Phophi Raletjena harvests 80 hectates of two varieties of potatoes per season. FL cultivar potatoes are used for potato chips by Simba. The farm is contracted to Simba to produce this variety of potatoes. The second variety of potatoes is Mondial, an open market potato which is sold to any market or wholesaler. 40 hectares of land will produce potatoes for Simba and 30 hectares for Mondials. When the delegation arrived at the farm, we found workers packaging chillies , which is another crop that he cultivates.

The farm has established its own packhouse which has a washing and packing facility.

TSWETSI FARMING

Mr. Enos Mahwai is a farmer and Secretary of the Secondary Co-op. He is also contracted to Simba for the FL cultivar and produces Mondial potatoes for the open market.

He has established a partnership with the local community and employs 70-100 people during harvesting time. His contribution to the community is job creation and food security. After harvesting, the community is allowed to collect left over potatoes which assists them in improving food insecurity over a period of 5 months.



Enos showing off his FL Cultivar potatoes used to make Simba chips



From left - Matthew Chadwick (SED -Anglo Group) chatting to Enos about Tswetsi farm.



Tswetsi Potato Farm field



AGDA and Sakata partner at the 2023 Mzansi young farmers Indaba exhibition



From extreme right - Leona Archary, AGDA CEO, making a point during a panel discussion on "Growing a more inclusive agriculture sector".

AGDA CEO, Leona Archary, joined a panel of agriculture experts discussing and sharing wisdom, expertise, and experiences on the topic "Growing a more inclusive agriculture sector". Leona remarked, "My wish for the agriculture sector is trust between established and new entrants into the sector. Collaboration and partnerships are important. Trust is the key to inclusive growth and new opportunities. Let us build together for a greater sector in our country". Panelists concurred that collaboration and partnerships are indeed crucial in farming, they encouraged farmers to work together. "You cannot operate alone, we need each other" Farmers were advised to know their markets, partners and get information on how to access finance. They were encouraged to build businesses from day one.

Leona urged delegates to see agriculture as a business, "Yes, the grants do help but farmers cannot rely entirely on grant money forever"

The 2023 Food for Mzansi Young Farmers Indaba was hosted at the FNB Stadium in Soweto from 14th to 15th June 2023. This is an annual event that brings together young farmers from across South Africa to share knowledge, learn new trends, network, and highlight their products and services. Various agricultural organisations, funders, mechanisation providers and wine makers showed and sold their wares.

landscape. The incredible show of support from farmers, industry professionals, and enthusiasts alike underscores the unwavering commitment to empowering and nurturing the next generation of farmers in Mzansi. The diverse array of exhibitors and thought-provoking discussions provided a platform for knowledge-sharing, innovation, and collaboration.

The Indaba brought together 60 speakers, 550 attendees, 22 exhibitors and the recognition of 5 outstanding individuals. The event surpassed all expectations, leaving an indelible mark on the agricultural

AGDA also took part in the Indaba by exhibiting its work in partnership with SAKATA for the second consecutive year. The two organisations shared an exhibition stand to showcase their products and services.

Tebogo Hlongwane, Kgomotso Malebana and Clive Mohapi, three of AGDA's top performing grow-to-market farmers based in Soweto joined the Mzansi Young Farmers Indaba event to network and learn more about farming.



Professor Naude Malan and Sulaimaan Patel received the Change Makers Award at the Mzansi's Young Farmers Indaba.





Reflections by AGDA's subsistence farmers

From left -Tebogo Hlongwane, Kgomotso Malebana and Clive Mohapi at the 2023 Mzansi Young Farmers Indaba.

Tebogo Hlongwane

"The training and technical support from AGDA has impacted my life in a positive manner as it has changed how I harvest my produce. I have learned how to keep records of when I start planting seeds or seedlings on my farm, leading up to harvesting. I am also able to sort harvests for personal use and business. AGDA has created an easy way of engagement with their farmers through technical support using social media platforms".

Junior Kgomotso Malebana

"The training from AGDA was a blessing to me. I have learned a lot of things that I did not know about farming. Now I can see where I am going with my Agribusiness. AGDA granted me an opportunity to attend the 2023 Mzansi Young Farmers Indaba where I met many young farmers like me, and we shared our achievements, lessons, and struggles. That made me want to work even harder. All I can say is thank you AGDA for giving me this opportunity and the push you have always given me".



"To be a farmer is to be a student forever, for each day brings something new."

iHappy sponsors AGDA's marketing video



iHappify is an independent company that specialises in creating happiness and supplying quality services. They have kindly sponsored a video that highlights the work of AGDA's Grow to Market Programme. The programme has contributed greatly to changing the lives of unemployed youth, especially subsistence farmers in Jabulani, Soweto.

AGDA collaborated with iHappify in the filming and production of a marketing Agri-video on the Grow to Market Programme. The video is based on the Development Laboratories (DLABS)

programme of the Development Bank of Southern Africa in partnership with Amandla and AGDA.

The video features AGDA's role in the Grow-to-Market Programme which is agri-household training and the development of Business Unit Leaders (BULs) who show potential to establish enterprises. These BULs are trained in mixed farming and entrepreneurship. AGDA has continued to support these farmers technically, providing guidelines on how to handle a variety of plants and prevention of plant diseases.

Click here to watch the video, which was filmed and produced by Rheainfras film crew, a group of young people who are on an internship programme at iHappify.

<https://youtu.be/ZihadHnfNn4>



Graceful's hair solution



Graceful Nene, founder of Boss'Fro Organics.

Twenty-three-year-old Graceful Nene is the founder of Boss'Fro Organics, a hair product business launched in 2021. After struggling with hair loss and breakage that affected her self-esteem, she decided to start researching oils that can help improve her hair.

A believer in herbs and plant-based solutions, Graceful then decided to mix a variety of plant-based oils that are non-acidic into a concoction to make the Boss'Fro oil. She produces and sells hair and beard growth products made from different oils.

Boss'Fro products have been proven to restore beard, hairline, strengthens hair strands, stimulates hair growth, prevents hair breakages, protects hair from direct sunburn, prevents hair loss. Boss'Fro Organics products have helped Grace boost her self-esteem as she witnessed her hair growing stronger and healthier. Her products have also helped many of

her clients to restore their hair and beard problems.

Boss'Fro is not only a hair and beard product brand, but also a business that focuses on the skills development sector through the Boss'Fro Organics Academy where they teach how to do various trendy hairstyles and how to run salons. They provide these teachings to help decrease the unemployment rate.

Graceful's dream is to access funding for her business that will also enable her to provide free services in her academy. She also seeks assistance to access markets such as Pick 'N Pay, Clicks, Dis-Chem Pharmacies and others.

Though Boss'Fro Organics is a small emerging business, she is proud to have been able to create jobs for 3 brand ambassadors as well as



distributors. Her biggest aspiration is to create more jobs through primary farming, manufacturing, packaging, and branding. Boss'Fro Organics also conducts self-awareness and positive mental health sessions called "Youare_soimportant" on Instagram.

AGDA wishes Graceful the best with her business and invites interested parties to help her grow the business. If interested, contact us and we will gladly connect you with her.

VT Harvest making a mark with its harvests



VT Harvest is an agri-business that was established in October 2017. It is situated in Tarlton Agripark, Mogale City, Gauteng. It is 100% black female owned. VT Harvest started operating through the leasing of greenhouse tunnel structures in Krugersdorp. Its production capacity was quickly increased by an addition of 8 tunnels after a realisation that the requirement for scalability in farming and potential profits are to be made.

VT Harvest is focused on growing specialty and high value crops. The mission of VT Harvest is to sustainably and profitably grow agricultural products that are nutritious through innovative production techniques. Their aim is to incorporate strategic value addition processes to reduce waste and maximise yields for the benefit of their customers, shareholders, and employees.



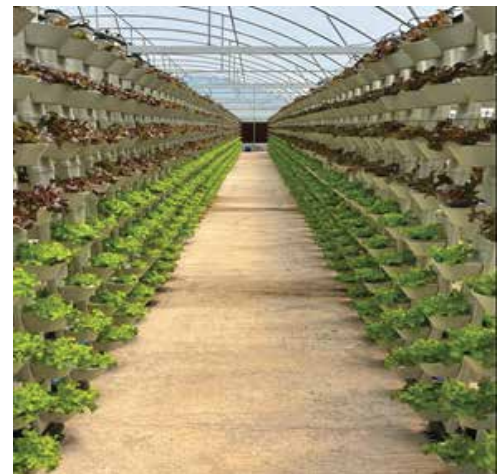
This agri-business chose the use of greenhouse tunnels to grow their plants as it has a pre-eminent benefit of protecting delicate crops from extreme weather conditions. The use of greenhouse tunnels is to corroborate uninterrupted growing cycles, high yields, and continuous supply for their customers. They have production teams that consist of six members who are responsible for soil production, planting, weeding, scouting for pests, precision watering from drip irrigation and harvesting.

Currently, VT Harvest is farming a variety of herbs and fancy lettuce directly in the soil and tomatoes in 10 tunnels through a hydroponic system. They have achieved a critical milestone through the awarding of an SA Gap Certificate. Their farming is done according to strict food safety standards and techniques as required by leading retailers and thereby ensuring that their produce is of good

quality and safe for consumption. Their products have a longer shelf life.

In the near future, VT Harvest intends to expand in the agro-processing industry, specifically the distillation of some of their herbs to extract essential oils and the drying of tomatoes. They believe in Youth Empowerment which is a critical focus in their organisation. VT Harvest is becoming a hub for critical technical skills transfer for graduates and unemployed youth. Currently, they are training four university graduates from Tshwane University of Technology.

They have partnered with GDARD and the IDC in implementing the presidential social employment fund project by hosting 30 unemployed youth from their local community.





From the left- Themba Rikhotso - Landbank CEO; Christo Van Rheede - AgriSA Executive Director and Leona Archary - AGDA CEO.

AGDA attends GrainSA's 55th Nampo exhibition

AGDA CEO, Leona Archary attended the 55th GrainSA NAMPO Harvest Day that was held at Bothaville in Welkom. She participated in a panel discussion organised by Food for Mzansi alongside the new CEO of the Land Bank, Themba Rikhotso and Christo Van der Rheede, AgriSA Executive Director.

The focus of the discussion was on partnerships and commercial farmers, how the government and the private sector are working together but in silos. The country has only 25% of farmers as commercial farmers. The question remains why we have not been able to convert other entrants to commercialise.

Leona Archary emphasised the need to look at pre and post financial support and that market access is crucial. Farmers cannot pay back loans if they do not have a market. We need to target commercial farmers and put in place a system that can assist farmers at lower levels by finding finance that is tailored for entrants.

Rikhotso said "In order for the Land Bank to get agriculture right we need to bring key stakeholders together to form a new kind of partnership. We need to leverage



From left - Ivor Price (Food for Mzansi), Themba Rikhotso, Christo van der Rheede and Leona Archary.

access to funds; affordability for new entrants; and have a passion for capitalisation. We should not shy away from the challenges that new entrants face; we are fully aware that market access needs a facilitator. We cannot do this alone; we need blended finance. The larger part of our book is commercial farmers. He added that Land Bank is in synchrony with AGDA and AgriSA, but the bank is lacking in execution.

The Land Bank CEO added that the bank needs to build capacity to execute big plans which include integration, coordination, facilitation, and creation of modules for producers by pulling them all together. Christo Van Rheede's advice to the Land Bank was "check what

Land Bank can get from the agriculture masterplan and partner with government. Commodity organisations need to implement. "We need proper agriculture education and skills" commented Leona.

Jeremiah Mathebula of GrainSA remarked that collateral is needed for farmers, and GrainSA is searching for funding as they wish to produce 10 commercial farmers in 5 years. Emerging farmers have land, and the sector must understand what kind of collateral is needed. GrainSA has a footprint in all provinces, all that is needed is funding for all farmers "We need to work together to integrate funds that can be put where they belong" he concluded.

Human resource solutions for farmers



HumanRx is an HR consulting company that offers scalable HR solutions, tailored to individual client needs. After realising that each company is unique and does not have the same HR requirements, they then opted to offer support in a variety of diverse ways. The support includes HR project support in areas like Organization Design, Job Profiling, Job Grading, Payroll, Training, Performance Management, Recruitment, Disciplinary Matters, Employment Contracts, Policies & Procedures etc; or Outsourced HR services to companies that do not have an in-house HR department, covering the full spectrum of HR and payroll.

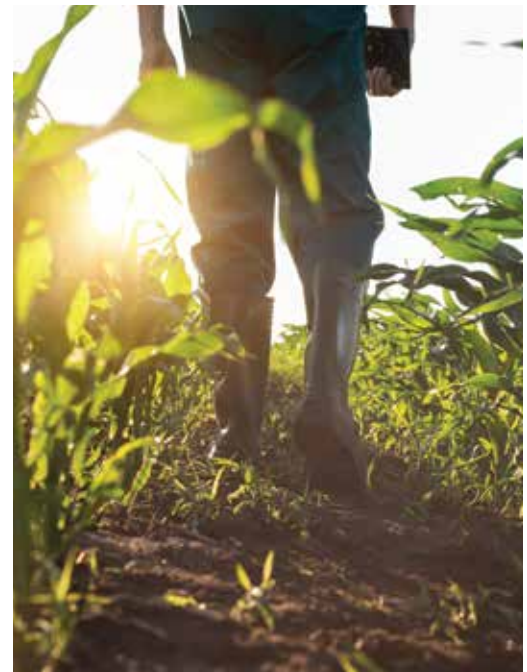
HumanRx considers farming as one of the most important industries in our country, and one of the most labour intensive. After some market research, the company realised that there is a definite need for a human resources solution in the farming industry, that has a simplified approach and is time effective. Therefore, the solution that they have developed is an Online Human Resources Toolkit for Farmers; to empower them by enabling

them to handle their own HR matters, with the necessary support.

The HumanRx Online Human Resources Toolkit for Farmers offers farmers an online platform that they can access via an email address and password.

Membership gives farmers access to; Employment Contracts 'Job Descriptions' 'Policies and Procedures' Forms, Templates' Information Guides (Important topics like UIF and Workmen's Compensation)' Learning Videos (Explaining elements of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act that relates specifically to farm workers in South Africa), Disciplinary Code (Disciplinary related templates for warnings, dismissals etc), Online support from a team of professional HR Specialists, Changes and updated forms and Chat group for Farmers

The aim of this product, is to empower farmers to operate pro-actively, giving them the opportunity, in a quick and simplified way, to get all their labour relations in order, according to Labour Legislation, and knowing which procedures to follow, whenever,



thereby avoiding unnecessary CCMA hearings, legal costs, and payment of settlements after a dispute. This product will enable farmers to concentrate on what is most important to them, the day-to-day management of their farm, while knowing that their HR concerns are taken care of. It is said that "Employees are the heartbeat of a company, and on a farm, the workers are of the utmost importance to the farmer, as working side by side with them, will ultimately determine the success of the farm. The more effective the farmer and his workers can work together in every aspect, the more successful they will be".

Feel free to contact HumanRx on:

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Telephone : +27 72 184 6333
Website : www.humanrx.co.za



Green Crete smart block

From left - Leona Archary (AGDA), Rob Wiggins (Anglo American), Greg Petersen (De Beers), Mauritz de Kock (AGDA), Tumisho Kekana (Anglo Platinum), Samantha Mutoedzenwa (AGDA), Nonnie Kunene (AGDA), Hennie Snyman (Greene Crete) and Heinrich Snyman (Greene Crete)

AGDA together with partners from Anglo American, De Beers, and Anglo Platinum visited the Green Crete project to explore possible synergies amongst these organisations. Green Crete is a commercial brick manufacturer and supplier of Crete blocks.

The Green Crete smart block products are a combination of recycled waste, binding chemicals and emulsions used to create the most effective walling and building solution which not only saves costs but provides a quicker, more effective, and greener product than conventional brick and mortar and dry-walling systems.



Green Crete smart blocks

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