

**PRESS STATEMENT BY JUSTIN CHADWICK**

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***Citrus growers leading the way in the country's vaccination drive***

The Citrus Growers' Association of South Africa (CGA) is proud to hear of a number of citrus growers who have organised mass Covid-19 vaccination drives for workers on their farms. This is particularly encouraging in light of the reported slowdown in recent weeks in the uptake of vaccines by over 35 year olds.

In order to protect the health of their workers, a number of citrus growers in Limpopo and Mpumalanga have partnered with the provincial health departments and NGO's to create vaccination sites on their farms in order to make it convenient for workers to get vaccinated.

This was after many of these growers identified a number of factors that were hampering their workers getting vaccinated, including lack of data and poor internet connection to register on the Covid-19 registration portal; vaccinations sites being situated far from farms and little knowledge of government's vaccination programme.

Citrus farms that have organised vaccine drives for their workers include:

- Groep 91 Uitvoer in Letsitele, Limpopo who partnered with the Mopani district department of health to organise a mass vaccination day on 5<sup>th</sup> of August. A vaccination centre was set up at Groep 91's Kaross Embroidery Studio facilities with 497 workers being vaccinated on the day.
- Rosle Farm in Groblersdal, Limpopo who partnered with the NGO, Ndlovu Care Group which has been given permission to assist the provincial department of health with its vaccination roll-out programme. Vaccinations were made available at the farm during work hours over two days with 1700 workers being vaccinated.
- Mahela Group in Letsitele, Limpopo reached out to the provincial health department requesting assistance to get their workers vaccinated. A vaccination centre was set up in a hall on the farm and 397 workers were vaccinated. Employees from surrounding businesses were also invited to get vaccinated on the day.

- Tomahawk in Malelane, Mpumalanga also teamed up with the provincial department of health to set up a vaccination site in one of the packhouses on the farm. An office was also set-up prior to the vaccination days in order to register workers on the Covid-19 portal. 550 workers were vaccinated over two days.

There are a number of other farms in citrus growing regions that have also arranged mass vaccination days for their workers over the past few weeks.

We know that the only way to enable the country's economy to fully open and for citizens to resume their normal lives, is for the majority of South Africans over 18 years of age to get vaccinated.

The CGA therefore welcomes the announcement by government that all residents over 18 years are now eligible to register and get vaccinated from today.

We also thank all our citrus farmers who have proactively partnered with government to get their employees vaccinated over the past few weeks. We are proud that our industry has been leading the vaccine uptake drive, which is so critical for our country's economic recovery.

ENDS.

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