

## **CST-SA hosts first industry “match-making event”**

Cereal Science & Technology - Southern Africa, a non-profit association of individuals who are actively involved in the science and technology of cereals, has firmly established itself in the grains and oilseeds industry as the link between students and their future employers. Under the auspices of the CST-SA Chair, Mariana Purnell (also General Manager of Agbiz Grain), the first industry “match-making event” was held on 10 September 2019 and proved to be a very successful item on the industry calendar. Sponsors for the Meet & Greet evening were the South African Cultivar & Technology Agency (SACTA), The Maize Trust, The Sorghum Trust and the Sasol Agriculture Trust.

The Meet & Greet event serves as a showcase where young scientists of wheat, maize, barley and sorghum can meet industry role players, explore the wide scope of job opportunities offered by the grain industry and be exposed to potential employers. Highlights of the evening were:

The event brought together 34 students - a critical mass of young cereal researchers with scarce skills, from all over the country;

The students are mainly recipients of bursaries supported by the Maize Trust, Sasol Agriculture Trust, SA Cultivar and Technology Agency, the Sorghum Trust, FoodBev SETA, SANSOR and several others such as the NRF;

The students represent more than 10 tertiary education institutions (universities and technikons).

CST-SA was founded 33 years ago and membership is open and free of charge to all involved in cereal science and technology. All relevant role players are invited to join. It is especially important to strengthen the ties between academia and the industry as well as both the Agri SETA and the FoodBev SETA.

The focus of CST-SA is skills development and as such, with the flagship event being the biennial New Voices Symposium where the students present their research work. CST-SA also strengthens the industry linkages in order to encourage research and active collaboration, advance the knowledge of the science and technology of cereals and other grains through various events with local and international experts in the field, and provide awards student travel and study awards to the benefit of student members.

The students were introduced to the role players in the grain and oilseeds value chain by industry leaders and organisations that provide bursaries.



*Front (fltr) Gert Heyns (CEO SACTA), Leon du Plessis (Administrator of The Maize Trust, Sasol Agriculture Trust and The Sorghum Trust), Lukeshni Chetty (General Manager SANSOR) Hector Makhubele (representative FoodBev SETA)*

*Back (fltr) Jannie de Villiers (CEO Grain SA), Deon van Rooyen (Chair SA Cultivar and Technology Agency), Sandile Ndlungwane (Chair The Maize Trust), Mariana Purnell (Chair CST-SA/General Manager Agbiz Grain) and Thato Kganakga (representative Winter Cereal Trust).*