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Farmers and Agriculturists acknowledged for outstanding achievements in agriculture

Boere en landboukundiges ontvang erkenning vir uitstaande prestasies in die landbou

News release by the Agricultural Writers SA North on the regional awards for the Farmer, New entrant into commercial agriculture and Agriculturalist of the Year, 2012

Sponsored by: Monsanto and ABSA.

The Agricultural Writers SA North acknowledged outstanding achievements of four commercial farmers, a new entrant in to commercial agriculture, as well as four agricultural personalities. These awards were handed over on Friday evening in Pretoria at the CSIR Conference Centre.

One of the aims of these awards is to give prominence to the role that farmers and agriculturist play in the agricultural sector in South Africa. But it is also important to note that these award recipients also impact on the broader economy of the country as well as the southern African region.

These candidates will all go through to the national awards ceremony of the Agricultural Writers SA in Johannesburg on 9 November where the national farmer, new entrant in to commercial agriculture and agriculturist will be announced.

The candidates were:

Agriculturist of the Year

1. Gauteng –Dr John Purchase
2. KwaZulu-Natal –Dr Rikus Kloppers
3. Limpopo –Dr Peter Taylor
4. North West –Johan Jordaan

New Entrant in to Commercial Agriculture

Gift Mafuleka

Farmer of the Year

1. Gauteng –Dr AF Saaijman

2. Limpopo –George Barnard
3. Mpumalanga –Johann Pistorius
4. North-West - Oosthuizen Farms

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Background on the initiative by the Agricultural Writers SA

Early in 1977 a gathering of seven agricultural journalists, representing the three components of the media - journals, daily newspapers and electronics - assembled in Johannesburg to take the historic decision of formally establishing the Agricultural Writers Association of South Africa. From those small beginnings the association expanded rapidly until it reached a membership total of 140 in two years and a peak of 187 in 1985. Today membership stands at more than 200. At its inaugural meeting on 30 March 1977, the very first clause adopted for incorporation in its constitution provided for the annual selection of a regional and national Farmer and Agriculturist of the year. The association's motivation for the introduction of these honours, with appropriate awards, was to give recognition to deserving farming and scientific agricultural merit that would inspire others to emulate the accomplishments of those persons singled out, and at the same time to indicate what could be achieved with good planning and untiring application, under all kinds of conditions and environments. Right from the inception of the awards the response has been immensely rewarding and the honours so bestowed on those selected have been and still are much appreciated by the country's entire agricultural industry.