



DALRRD news

November 2020

Official newsletter of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

CONTENTS

- **Presidential Employment stimulus initiative for Subsistence Producers**
- **BRICS Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform meeting**
- **Siyathuthuka beneficiaries appreciate donation of farming equipment**
- **Minister Didiza and MEC Mosupyo commemerated IDRW**
- **G20 Agriculture and Water meetings**
- **Plastic Recyclers in Desperate Need of Triple Rinsed Empty HDPE Pesticide Containers**
- **Redder is better**
- **A normal outlook for South African 2020/2021 stone fruit exports**
- **Youth in food production**

Editor-in-Chief: Reggie Ngcobo, Email: MLO.Minister@dalrrd.gov.za,
Cell number: 082 883 2458

Editor: Piwe Mbiko, Email: PiweM@daff.gov.za, Celnr: 072 937 2337



Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development



Follow on Twitter @DALRRD_ZA

Presidential Employment stimulus initiative for Subsistence Producers

On 15 October 2020, President Cyril Ramaphosa called a joint sitting of the National Assembly and the National House of Provinces, to announce the Presidential Economic Recovery Plan. As part of the department's contribution to the Presidential Economic Recovery Plan, Ms Thoko Didiza, Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, announced the Presidential Economic Stimulus package for the agricultural sector.

The president requested DALLRD to support employment in the country, through a short-term (6-months) support intervention in the agricultural sector. Following that request, the department initiated a producer relief fund for subsistence producers that would help them retain self-employment and support food value chains. On 23 September 2020, National Treasury confirmed R1 billion to fund the initiative and the allocated funds to be used before 31 March 2021.

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) will use Extension Officials in all provinces, as well as a contingent

of approximately 9000 youth from the constituted of agricultural graduates, and the NARYSEC youth.

This initiative seeks to provide subsistence producers with non-financial input vouchers that are to be used to retain their livelihoods and support household food security.

Farming commodities to be supported:

The following farming commodities will be supported under this initiative:

- Vegetable and fruit growing
- Maize, soya, cotton, sugar, other production
- Poultry: Layer Chickens and Broilers
- Small and Large livestock

The size of the non-financial awards will be determined by the scale of current production after an intensive physical verification process

BRICS Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform meeting

On 23 September, the tenth Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development was convened via videoconference. The agriculture ministers discussed the impact of the pandemic on food production and agriculture and also current cooperation in agriculture. The virtual meeting was presided over by Dmitry Nikolaevich Patrushev, Minister of Agriculture of the Russian Federation. According to Mr Patrushev, the BRICS countries have considerable potential for strengthening their position in the global agricultural market and providing uninterrupted supplies with a view to ensuring global food security.

The ministers recognised that their countries' mutual turnover has been steadily growing, in fact, it has almost doubled in value since 2010. Such growth shows the increase in the commercial appeal of the national agricultural markets and the reduction of tariff and technical barriers. The ministers also acknowledged that they need to look for new points of growth for developing intra-BRICS trade. In particular, granting a most favoured

nation status and the removal of trade barriers in veterinary and phytosanitary control areas may present additional opportunities.

Following the meeting, the ministers adopted the Joint Declaration of the tenth Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development, which reflects the issues of facilitating trade and investment, using digital technologies for sustainable development in the agricultural sector, fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

Development, as well as implementing international programmes on food security, nutrition and support for the vulnerable groups



Siyathuthuka beneficiaries appreciate donation of farming equipment

By Samuel Kgatla

The beneficiaries of the Siyathuthuka Vegetable Project thanked the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Ms Thoko Didiza, and Gauteng MEC of Economic Development, Agriculture, Environment and Rural Development, Ms Morakane Mosupyoe, for the donation of equipment to their project. The tools were handed over on 15 October at Zithobeni Village during a visit to the project. The beneficiaries also thanked the leaders for choosing to visit their project. The tools consisted of spades, forks, shovels, hoes, rakes, seeds and manure.

Project leader Julia Tladi and other beneficiaries ululated in appreciation of the minister's visit to their project. "Let us hope that the minister's visit to our project will bring assistance to us. She must tell others to come and help our project to prosper. We need a bigger land because we are growing. We really thank the minister and MEC Mosupyoe for donating us the equipment. The tools will come in handy for our project and the market is already there for us to

grow. We will do well if we can find the shed nets," she said.

The project started in 2008 and comprises of five beneficiaries. They are planting mixed vegetables such as spinach, green pepper and onions; strawberries and other crops on 3 150 m². They sell their produce locally and the demand has increased. The project is aiming at poverty reduction, income generation, contribution to the local community and job creation.

MEC Mosupyoe said that they will continue to work with the project and make sure that it succeeds. The MEC said she trust the beneficiaries will look after the equipment and use them wisely.

The minister was pleased to see the women and man working on the land to produce food. "I am impressed with their work and I want to encourage them to continue working hard. We just came here to see how you are doing as today is the International Day for Rural Women. At least we brought them farming equipment," concluded the minister.

Siyathuthuka beneficiaries appreciate donation of farming equipment



Minister Thoko Didiza, Deputy Minister S'dumo Dlamini and MEC Morakane Mosupyo are some of the dignitaries who visited the Siyathuthuka project.



DALRRD Minister Thoko Didiza with some guests who attended the 2020 IRDW.



Some of the equipment donated to Siyathuthuka vegetable garden in Zithobeni Village.

Minister Didiza and MEC Mosupyoe commemorated IDRW

By Samuel Kgatla

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Thoko Didiza, together with the Gauteng MEC of Economic Development, Agriculture, Environment and Rural Development, Morakane Mosupyoe and a representative from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Dr Mercy Chikoko, commemorated the International Day for Rural Women (IDRW) at Bronkhorstspuit on Thursday, 15 October. The event was part of the pre-World Food Day activities, which took place on Friday.

The first International Day of Rural Women was observed on 15 October 2008. The theme for the 2020 IDRW was about building resilience for women farmers. The minister has prioritised the commemoration of IDRW as it was the same event last year.

Rural women continue to play a critical role in the rural economies of both developed and developing countries. In most parts of the developing world they participate in crop production and livestock care, provide food, water and fuel for their families and engage in off-

farm activities to diversify their families' livelihoods.

The minister, MEC, the FAO representative and other dignitaries visited an agricultural project and an indigent household in Zithobeni outside Bronkhorstspuit. The intention was to engage with the rural women working in the vegetable garden and to donate food parcels and farming equipment.

The minister mentioned that IDRW is about building resilience for rural women in agriculture. She continued that the Covid-19 has made things worse for agriculture this year. "We are all aware of the setbacks we suffered due to this pandemic, so one way we can build the resilience of rural women in agriculture is through access to land. As much as we encourage people to farm, we advise those who are not interested in farming to at least get a bakkie and sell produce by local farmers, that is how we can create a value chain," she said.

Furthermore, the minister said that farming was not for the lazy people and quick returns but for those who are prepared to work the land and reinvest in their business.

G20 Agriculture and Water meetings

The Group of Twenty Countries (G20) is the premier forum for discussing, planning and monitoring international economic cooperation. South Africa is part of the G20 and it is the only representative from Africa in the G20, therefore its participation is crucial. Due to the Corona Virus pandemic, the second Agriculture and Water Deputies meeting as well as the Agriculture and Water Ministers meeting were conducted virtually.

Preceding the meeting of the Agriculture and Water Ministers meeting were a series of technical meetings in preparation for the meeting of the ministers. The first technical meetings took place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 26 to 27 January 2020. The purpose of this meeting was to take stock of efforts and progress made by

the G20 on food security and water action since its last presidency, and also reviewing and discussing the draft of the ministers declaration. The last of the technical meetings took place from 10—11 September 2020, wherein the senior officials worked to finalise the declaration due to be tabled for adoption by the ministers on 12 September 2020.

By the end of day one, 11 September 2020, it became clear that the United States of America (USA) and the European Union (EU) were on opposite sides of the climate change issue.

Bilateral meetings were convened by the Saudi Presidency between countries to try to resolve the impasse, however, the USA stood firm and adamant in rejection

to p 8



G20 Agriculture and Water meetings

from p 7

of including the Paris Agreement and any other language that speaks to climate change into the ministers declaration. The European Union opposed this strongly, indicating that climate change is affecting fresh water sources as well as food security all around the world. Arduous negotiations lasted well into the night of 11 September. Unfortunately, the meeting ended without having reached consensus on the climate change item.

The Agriculture and Water Ministers met virtually on Saturday 12 September following the two-day long deputies meeting. The main aim of the ministers meeting was to adopt the declaration that was negotiated and agreed upon



by senior officials. However, this year for first time, the senior officials failed to agree on the content of the Ministers declaration. In their meeting, the ministers acknowledged the impasse on climate change and called on the Saudi Arabian G20 Presidency to continue to work with Member States in efforts to come to an agreed upon text that all ministers can endorse.



Plastic Recyclers in Desperate Need of Triple Rinsed Empty HDPE Pesticide Containers

South Africa's plastic recyclers were severely hampered by the lockdown regulations and ceased operations for the better part of three months. The market has fortunately recovered, and plastic recycling is in full swing again. This, however, has created such a demand for recycled plastic that most of the CropLife SA certified plastic recyclers are desperate for triple rinsed, punctured empty HDPE pesticide containers.

Pesticide containers need to be triple rinsed to remove virtually all the pesticide residues to render the containers nominally empty, according to SA National Standard 10406. Once triple rinsed and punctured, the containers are no longer categorised as dangerous goods or toxic waste and may be transported by normal road transport and processed by plastic recyclers.

CropLife SA appeals to South African farmers to triple rinse all empty pesticide containers, puncture them and arrange to be dropped off at a CropLife SA certified plastic recycler. CropLife SA has noted with grave concern that there are still farmers and members of the corporate sector who

burn these containers on farms. Not only is it unlawful, but also damaging to the environment and a shameful waste of a valuable resource. This is also a contravention of the requirements of the certification agencies and they risk withdrawal of their certification if they fail to comply with the triple rinsing procedure.

There is a need for additional collection points for triple rinsed empty pesticide containers in many parts of South Africa. CropLife SA appeals to farmers who are willing to set up collection points on their farms to contact the association for advice on setting up and managing collection points. Recyclers that are already part of the CropLife SA network are willing to buy the collected materials from collectors.

Details about the triple rinsing of empty containers, requirements for collectors and recyclers, compliance issues and the list of CropLife SA certified recyclers are available on www.croplife.co.za.

For more information, please contact CropLife SA's operations and stewardship manager, Dr Gerhard Verdoorn, on 082 446 8946 or gerhard@croplife.co.za

Redder is better

From fairytales to great works of art, the perfect red apple is a placeholder for a wide range of human emotions. With its recent improvements the Fuji variety is set to continue its rise. Tru-Cape Fruit Marketing, the largest exporter of South African apples and pears, sold more than 570 000 cartons of Fuji Royal apples this year.

“Fuji Royal shows promise as an improved strain that will deliver a better red colour, higher pack-outs and, we hope, fewer inherent quality issues that come with Fuji,” says Frederik Voigt, Business Unit Manager at SAPO Trust which manages the variety.

Henk Griessel, quality assurance manager at Tru-Cape Fruit Marketing, says “There’s almost no market any longer for poorly coloured Fuji. No colour – no market!” Well-coloured class 1 Fuji is readily marketed as ‘Red Fuji’ in Malaysia, Hong Kong, China, Singapore, Taiwan and Vietnam, markets which are entirely colour-dependent.

According to SAPO, currently about 45 ha of Fuji Royal have been planted, with an additional 80 ha (roughly 133 000 young trees) projected to be planted in 2021. The cultivar has a high-chilling

requirement and it is important to plant it in regions which promote good colour development.

In the Ceres and the Elgin areas Fuji Royal is harvested at the same time as other Fuji strains, which is from the first to the second week of April. SAPO says that another of Nel’s discoveries is also a Fuji mutation: Shortie is striking for its precocity. “Because of this Shortie can start to bear as early as in the second leaf while the fruit is characterised by an extremely short stem,” SAPO said.

Tru-Cape managing director Roelf Pienaar says that club varieties—those that attract a licence fee to plant and to market—will continue to be a significant income stream for growers and licensees.



A normal outlook for South African 2020/2021 stone fruit exports

The 2020/2021 season is upon us and the stone fruit forecast and overall estimate volumes are looking much better compared to the same time last year.

Good winter rains in most parts of the Western Cape during 2020, together with good winter chill and moderate spring conditions, contributed to better overall fruit set of all stone fruit commodities. Although it is still early in the season we are optimistic about the anticipated volumes of especially apricots and plums that is said to normalise. The drought conditions plaguing the Little Karoo for the last few of years is not fully broken, however, water availability has improved slightly and things are looking better compared to the previous two seasons for this region.

The initial export crop estimate projects an increase in volumes compared to the previous season. Early varieties are estimated to be 7 – 10 days later than last year. Apricots are estimated to increase by 23% year-on-year; mainly due to Imperial/Palsteyn returning to an average export crop. Fruit set is looking much better and with more available irrigation water in the Little Karoo, compared to previous seasons, apricot

volumes are set to increase.

Nectarine export volumes are expected to increase from last year's 5 mil cartons to 5,6 million cartons. The growth in export volumes are driven by young orchards coming into production, mainly in the mid-season, as well as more favourable weather conditions. Similarly peaches are also expected to increase to a normal crop (5% Year-on-year).

Plum growers are expecting export volumes to increase by 22% compared to last season, returning to a normal plum export volume. The past year seasons' volumes were negatively affected by the drought and warm weather during spring. Favourable weather conditions definitely had a positive impact on fruit set for this coming season and we are optimistic about the harvest.

The industry is confident that the logistical challenges experienced during the past year due to COVID19 is something of the past and is looking forward to a great season.

For any enquiries, please contact Jacques du Preez: jacques@hortgro.co.za; 021 870 2900

Youth in food production

By John Mthembi

There is an Afrikaans saying that goes, “die appel val nie vêr van die af boom nie.” Loosely translated to English, it means that children are often alike to their parents in character. The same can be said of Mr Joshua Maanaso at Bonn Village in Limpopo in the Mopani District under the Greater Tzaneen Municipality. This young producer takes much after his father when it comes to food production activities.

Against all odds, his current indomitable spirit in fighting food insecurity and joblessness in this far-flung rural area, among the youth population in particular, stands as a strong demonstration that together we can indeed do more to improve the standard of living. Mr George Maanaso, Joshua’s father, passed in 2012 while he was busy developing a 3 ha piece of land. His intention was to establish an integrated project where brickmaking and farming could be practiced.

Unfortunately, his objectives could not be realised as he died while he was still busy with infrastructure development. His son, Mr Joshua Maanaso, who was at that time a student at a tertiary

institution—did not allow the idea to pass by. He came back in 2015 to continue where his father had left off, though with a bit of deviations. Joshua did not have much interest in brickmaking, or rather, he did not take it as his first priority. To him, livestock and vegetable production were the first things to venture in. It is no wonder livestock and vegetable production activities are being practised today at this project trading as Maitseng Farming CC.

Joshua is a young farmer with a simple philosophy in life. He believes in starting very small and learning all the required dynamics in the process. Joshua produces short crops on his property such as green beans, mustard spinach, chillies and butternuts. He sells his produce locally and to the national market. He prefers to produce butternuts under a contract with BioBee, which is situated at Letsitele outside Tzaneen. BioBee contracts small-scale farmers around this area who produce butternuts under organic production conditions to be used for biological pests control purposes on orchard farms. “Contract production serves me a lot of marketing challenges. I know that if I have a

to p 11

Youth in food production

from p 10

contract of 1 ha, the first grade will all be taken at once,” explains the young producer who has created jobs for three permanent workers and for fifteen others during picking times. Currently, livestock improvement activities on the project are minimal given prevailing environmental situations, particularly with goats, of which quite a few of them have unfortunately been killed by stray dogs. However, the idea of this enterprise is still alive. “I have secured the use of yet another piece of land far away from the village where stray dogs will not frustrate my plans,” the young visionary and enthusiastic producer, that has the benefit of financial management skills from a tertiary learning institution, says.

Of the 3 ha of land, only 1 ha is used for cropping. Water storage is a big constraint. The current 2 000 l JoJo tank does not meet his irrigation requirements. To allow efficient irrigation, 10 000 l of storage is required. In addition, that would also allow for an increase in land cultivation. Irrigation pipes also contribute to the limitation. However, the young farmer is trying his best to produce quality crops despite this

restriction. “One always have to try and avoid standing in one place,” he says. The project is not adequately fenced in. As a result stray dogs managed to kill his goats with ease. Lack of ploughing units are also a constraint in vegetables cultivation. Relying on hired services does not go well with his production plan. By the time such services are available, his planting schedule has passed. “In that instance I have missed opportunities for fetching good prices in the market. My own ploughing units would be much helpful,” he illustrates.

Joshua has not totally abandoned goat farming. However, he has since learned that it requires a different approach. It needs to be practiced in an environment which is far away from the village. Again, this area will have to be well fenced to prevent stray dogs from getting in. He therefore acquired a portion of land to be developed towards that goal.

It is certainly quite encouraging to meet young people of this kind who have the courage to mobilise scarce resources at village level to ward off hunger and poverty, particularly in food production activities at a time when most of the youth population do not see farming appealing to their interests.



DALRRDnews is the newsletter of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development Private Bag X250, PRETORIA 0001.
 It is published by the Directorate Communication Services, Private Bag X144, PRETORIA 0001.

Opinions expressed in DALRRDnews are not necessarily those of the editorial team. No part of this newsletter may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording or any information storage or retrieval system without prior permission from the editor.

Reggie Ngcobo	082 883 2458	MLO.Minister@dalrrd.gov.za
Piwe Mbiko	072 937 2337	PiweM@dalrrd.gov.za
Lerato Mofokeng	012 319 7927	LeratoMOF@dalrrd.gov.za
Samuel Kgatla	066 084 6653	SamuelK@dalrrd.gov.za
Innocent Mhlanga	063 693 0353	InnocentM@dalrrd.gov.za
Rony Moremi	066 084 6192	RincertM@dalrrd.gov.za
Mercia Smith	060 973 3816	MerciaS@dalrrd.gov.za
Khauhelo Lerata	012 319 7819	KhauheloL@dalrrd.gov.za