

# Recognising female entrepreneurs and their role in agriculture

The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) in partnership with Total South Africa hosted the 16th Annual DAFF Female Entrepreneur of the Year Awards, awarding women at a national level under the theme "Reaffirming the commitment towards women empowerment in the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries sector."



Venecia Janse with MEC Thembu Mtherbu, DG Mke Mengana, HOD Dr. Sipiwe Mkhize and Myr Olr Maureen Magubane

The main aim of the awards is to honour the efforts and contribution of women, young females and women with disabilities for the role they continue to play in food security, poverty alleviation, job creation and economic growth within the sector.

"We are extremely proud to be a part of this programme. A programme that awards celebrates and empowers women excelling in what is deemed a male dominated industry. It is important for us as a brand to acknowledge these phenomenal women who have challenged the status quo and we specifically chose to celebrate their achievements in the month of August as a tribute to all women who have interrupted the norm," said Nyameka Makonya, head of strategy, Total South Africa.

The winners receive prize money which they are encouraged to use exclusively for the activities and production of their respective enterprises.

## The programme honoured an Overall Winner and also awarded winners in the following categories:

- Best Female Worker in the Sector is Lindelwa Elizabeth Mabuya from Western Cape
- Best Subsistence Producer in the Sector is Nthabiseng Kgobokoe from North West
- Top Entrepreneur in the Sector: Smallholder is Makhosazana Sambo from Mpumalanga
- Top Entrepreneur in the Sector: Processing is Mabel, Cynthia Mothlale from Northern Cape
- Top Entrepreneur in the Sector: Commercial is Caroline De Villiers from Western Cape
- Top Entrepreneur in the Sector: Export Markets is Vanecia Janse from Eastern Cape
- The Provincial award winner is Eunice Khoza from Mpumalanga

The Ministerial Award for Young and Disabled Female Entrepreneurs went to Phisa Fadana from Eastern Cape. This award affords the Minister an opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of young women and women living with disabilities who

are entrepreneurs. The Minister's Special Award for Youth went to Candice Bostander from Northern Cape. This award recognises emerging young farmer entrepreneurs.

## **The Overall Winner**

The Overall Winner was Venecia Janse from Eastern Cape. Janse is a member of the Oudrift Trust No. 2 with the extent of 304 ha situated 26 km West of Louterwater under the Koukamma local municipality in the Eastern Cape province.

This farm was acquired in 2005 through the LRAD programme whereby the funding was utilised to purchase the land for farm workers (100% owned) but at the time they were in a joint venture with the commercial farmer on the Oudrift No. 1. In 2012, the beneficiaries decided to focus on their farming unit, Oudrift No. 2 and split from the joint venture as they accumulated a lot of financial, technical and management skills for production of cultivars of apples and pears on their own farm. Orchards are planted on 53ha and 47ha is for planting new varieties of apples and pear orchards from 2017 to 2020.

The farm meets the Global GAP and health requirements and thus produces 521 tons of Granny Smith apples and Forelle pears, 60% of which is exported to European Union and Asian countries, as well as the United States, with some second and third grades sold to local retail shops such as Checkers, Pick 'n Pay, Golden Harvest, National and Granopassie juice factories and other markets in Joubertina, Port Elizabeth and Humansdorp areas.

The apples and pears are tested and sorted by the Klopak packhouse with which the Trust has a contract. The farm employs 44 permanent (including trust beneficiaries) and 68 seasonal workers. Casual workers who stay in Louterwater are transported daily by a bus provided by the farm. Over and above the jobs that it created in the local and adjacent communities, the enterprise also donates their harvest to locals schools like Louterwater Primary School during school events like sports days.

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