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Post-Harvest Innovation

Wine tourism

Turning Waste into Wealth

Craft Mango Achar

Insurance models to fit a new agricultural world

Harnessing the Sun

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Agri NW Jongboer van die Jaar Kompetisie

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Editorial

Harvest marks a milestone, but what happens after is just as critical. This month, *AgriAbout* explores **PostHarvest Innovation: storage, packaging, and valueadding technologies and models that reduce waste and increase profitability.** Across our sector, farmers and innovators are finding smarter ways to protect yields, extend shelf life, and transform surplus into opportunity. From bioslurry in smallholder cabbage production to craft mango achar, these solutions show how ingenuity can turn challenges into growth.

Equally important is the human dimension of agriculture. We are proud to present the **Agri North West Young Farmer of the Year 2026 competition**, introducing finalists **JP Nel, Marshan Moll, and Joy van Deventer.** Their stories reflect resilience, vision, and the determination to carry agriculture into the future. This competition has long been a cornerstone of our editorial calendar, and we are excited to share the journeys of these young leaders with our readers.

These two threads, innovation after harvest and the leadership of young farmers, capture the essence of agriculture today: rooted in heritage, yet alive with creativity and renewal. Alongside features on wine tourism, citrus exports, insurance models, conservation, and even recipes that celebrate culinary traditions, this edition offers a rich tapestry of insight and inspiration.

Agriculture is a story of continuity and change. By highlighting technologies that reduce waste and farmers who embody resilience, we reaffirm our mission: to celebrate the people and practices that ensure every harvest truly counts.

Until next time

Chris



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Post-Harvest Innovation: Storage, Packaging, and Value-Adding

Harvest is only the beginning of a crop's journey. What happens after the field work is done often determines whether farmers reap true rewards or watch hard-earned value slip away. Across South Africa and beyond, innovators are reshaping the post-harvest landscape with technologies and models that cut waste, extend shelf life, and unlock new streams of profitability.

Smarter Storage for Longer Life

In Limpopo, smallholder cooperatives are using **solar-powered cold rooms** developed through trials at *Stellenbosch University* to keep tomatoes fresh for up to three weeks longer. Grain farmers in the Free State have adopted **hermetic storage bags**, promoted by the *Agricultural Research Council (ARC)*, that prevent insect infestation without chemicals, reducing losses by as much as 30%. These solutions are lifelines for rural communities striving to keep produce fresh until the right buyer comes along.

Packaging with Purpose

Packaging is no longer just about containment; it's about conservation and communication. A Cape Town startup supported by *GreenCape* is producing **biodegradable maize starch trays** for fresh fruit exports, cutting plastic use while meeting EU sustainability standards. Meanwhile, *KwaZulu-Natal's aloe research projects* have shown promising results in extending avocado shelf life with edible coatings. Smart QR labels are also connecting consumers directly to the farm story, building trust and brand identity in ways unimaginable a decade ago.

Adding Value Beyond the Field

Innovation does not stop at storage and packaging. In Mpumalanga, farmer groups have invested in **community-owned solar dryers** to process surplus mangoes into dried fruit for local schools. Small-scale processing hubs in the Eastern Cape are turning maize into fortified flour, improving nutrition and creating new revenue streams. Blockchain-





enabled traceability platforms piloted in Gauteng with support from *AgriSA* are helping beef producers prove origin and quality, opening doors to premium export markets.

Family Enterprises and Extra Income

Post-harvest innovation is not only for large cooperatives — it can start at home.

- A farmer's spouse in the Karoo bottles surplus apricots into jams and chutneys, selling them at local markets under a family brand.
- In KwaZulu-Natal, families are turning excess beans and tomatoes into canned goods, supplying nearby shops and schools.
- Citrus growers in Limpopo have begun bottling fresh juices for farm stalls and tourism outlets.
- Women-led microbusinesses in the Western Cape package rooibos blends and dried herbs, creating niche products with strong local identity.
- Surplus maize or wheat is being used by spouses to run small bakeries producing bread, rusks, or biscuits, diversifying household income.

These ventures show how post-harvest innovation can empower families to build **micro-enterprises**, turning fresh produce into shelf-stable, branded goods that extend the farm's reach into local and regional markets.

Profitability Through Reduced Waste

Every kilogram saved from spoilage is a kilogram that can be sold, traded, or transformed. A case study from the Western Cape wine industry shows that improved packaging and cold-chain logistics reduced post-harvest losses by 25%, while simultaneously boosting export volumes. For vegetable growers, branding through eco-friendly packaging has opened niche markets in Europe, where consumers are willing to pay more for sustainability.

Human Impact and Rural Empowerment

Behind every innovation lies a human story. Post-harvest technologies are empowering farmers and their families to take control of livelihoods, reduce dependency on middlemen, and build resilience against climate and market shocks. They are tools of dignity as much as profitability, ensuring that the sweat of the harvest translates into lasting value for households and communities.

References & Further Reading

- *Stellenbosch University*: Solar cold storage trials for smallholder farmers
- *Agricultural Research Council (ARC)*: Hermetic storage and packaging innovations
- *GreenCape*: Sustainable packaging initiatives in South Africa
- *KwaZulu-Natal Aloe Research*: Edible coatings for avocado shelf life
- *AgriSA*: Blockchain traceability pilots in Gauteng

Resilience, experience and smart capital are the future of wine tourism

Desry Lesele, Senior Manager for Agribusiness Client Value Propositions
Nedbank Commercial Banking

Wine makes every meal an occasion, every table more elegant, every day more civilized."
Andre Simon

Wine tourism is no longer a side attraction to wine production. Globally and increasingly in South Africa, it is emerging as a strategic economic engine, capable of driving regional growth, attracting high-value visitors, and building globally competitive destinations. The most successful wine estates today are not merely places where wine is sold. They are carefully curated ecosystems, blending culture, landscape, hospitality, commerce and community into experiences that linger long after the last glass is poured. As competition for global leisure spend intensifies, the question facing wine destinations in South Africa is no longer whether to invest in tourism, but how to structure the funding of the wine tourism and how to design wine tourism experiences that compete today, scale tomorrow, and endure for generations.

Wine tourism has entered the experience economy

Modern travellers are not simply buying wine; they are buying meaningful experiences. They want to connect with place, story and people. They are drawn to destinations that offer authenticity, seamless service, cultural richness and a sense of purpose. For wine estates, this shift has profound implications. Revenue is no longer driven only by bottle sales, but by layered experiences, tastings paired with food, art, wellness, nature, events and storytelling.



The economics of wine tourism increasingly depend on how well estates convert visits into lasting relationships and diversified income streams. This evolution presents opportunity, but it also raises the bar. Experiences must be

thoughtfully designed, professionally executed and underpinned by systems that support growth without diluting authenticity. According to South Africa Wine, micro and small wine cellars in South Africa derive between 35% and 36% of their total turnover from wine tourism, while even larger wineries are generating around 20% of their income from tourism activities.

Endurance is by design

While creativity fuels demand, long-term success is shaped by business resilience. Investors and financiers look beyond aesthetics to assess whether a wine tourism project can withstand real-world pressures: climate risk, energy and water constraints, labour challenges, fluctuating visitor numbers and changing consumer behaviour.

Those destinations that endure share common traits:

- Clear positioning and purpose
- Disciplined, phased investment
- Strong governance and operational capability
- Credible sustainability embedded into strategy, beyond slogans
- Deep integration with surrounding communities

In this environment, sustainability has moved beyond compliance to become a strategic advantage. Resilient energy systems, responsible water use, inclusive local employment and transparent impact measurement are now core to long-term bankability.

The role of smart capital and strategic partnerships

Transforming a wine estate into a destination requires more than vision. It requires smart capital structured and aligned to the project's stage of maturity. As destinations scale, private capital and bank funding can unlock infrastructure, accommodation, layers of experience and digital capability. At maturity, optimisation and reinvestment ensure relevance and longevity.

However, capital alone is not enough. What increasingly differentiates successful wine tourism projects is the quality of partnerships between owners, operators, financiers,

technology providers and communities. This is where financial institutions play a pivotal role beyond funding to enable seamless, premium visitor experiences. Global visitors expect convenience, security and recognition. In this context, efficient payment systems and financial infrastructure become invisible yet powerful contributors to quality experiences. Through its long-standing partnership with American Express, Nedbank enables wine destinations to tap into a global network of high-spending, experience-driven travellers. For international visitors, familiar payment solutions, competitive currency handling and premium card benefits enhance ease, trust and comfort. For estates, this translates into higher average transaction values, improved cash flow and access to a loyal customer base that values quality and experience.

At the same time, local entrepreneurs and estate operators from boutique producers to onsite retailers and hospitality providers need accessible, scalable tools to manage and grow their businesses. Through its wholly owned subsidiary, iKhokha, a payment solutions provider, Nedbank supports SMEs with modern payment acceptance solutions, ecommerce capabilities and business tools that allow them to operate professionally from day one and to scale sustainably over time. Together, these platforms do more than process payments, they enable participation in the experience economy, ensuring that value flows efficiently across the wine tourism ecosystem.

At Nedbank, our involvement in wine tourism is grounded in the belief that well-designed destinations create shared value for businesses, communities and the broader economy. We understand agriculture, tourism and infrastructure, not as separate sectors, but as interconnected systems that require enduring capital, informed decisionmaking and trusted partnerships.

Our role is to work alongside wine estate owners, investors and operators to structure projects that are commercially viable, socially inclusive and environmentally resilient. That means asking the hard questions early, supporting responsible growth, and backing ideas that are built to last, not just to impress.

Turning Waste into Wealth: Smallholder Farmers Using Bioslurry to Transform Cabbage Production

Dr. Dikonketso Matjuda, Ms. Precious Dolamo, &
Dr. Lerato Bame Tsalaemang Matsaunyane
Agricultural Research Council

South Africa's agricultural sector is under growing pressure to produce more food sustainably, as climate change, soil degradation, and rising input costs threaten traditional farming practices. In response, smallholder farmers, who form the backbone of rural food production are working with a research team from Farmers Support Commercialisation and Enterprise Development at the Agricultural Research

Council- Vegetable, Industrial and Medicinal Plant (ARC-VIMP), to explore innovative solutions that improve productivity while protecting the environment. One such solution is bioslurry which is quietly revolutionising cabbage farming in Limpopo and North-West provinces. This nutrient-rich byproduct of biogas production (Figure 1) is proving to be a powerful ally in the quest for reducing the overuse of synthetic fertilizer, healthier soils and higher yields.

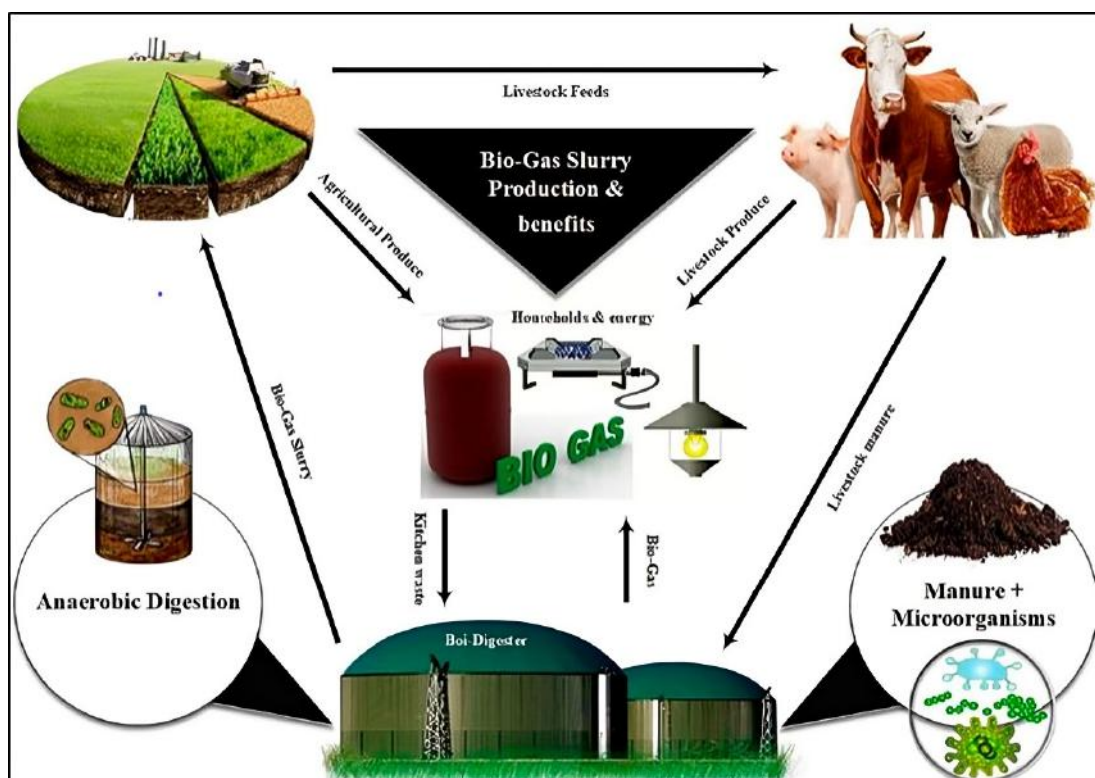


Figure 1: Illustration of bioslurry production during biogas production (adopted from Mgxaji *et al.*, 2025)

What is Bioslurry and Why it Matters

Bioslurry, also known as digestate, is the organic residue left after biogas is produced from livestock manure and biodegradable waste. Though often overlooked, bioslurry is packed with essential nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, iron, zinc and organic carbon which are critical elements for plant growth, root development, and soil fertility. Unlike raw manure, bioslurry is more stable, less odorous, and safer for crops. It improves soil structure, enhances microbial activity, and increases water

retention, making it particularly beneficial in regions prone to drought and nutrient depletion (Figure 2). Its application helps restore degraded soils, reduce reliance on chemical fertilisers, and promote long-term soil health. The bioslurry used in these trials was sourced from the multi-feed biogas plant in Bronkhorstspuit, which processes organic waste from livestock, food industries, and municipal sources. This facility represents a scalable model for circular agriculture—where waste is transformed into clean energy and nutrient-rich fertiliser.



Figure 2: Diagram depicting the beneficial effects and possible advantages of utilizing bioslurry in agricultural practices.

Field Trials on Smallholder Farms: A Cabbage Success Story

To evaluate bioslurry's effectiveness, the FSCED team conducted field trials directly on smallholder farms in Limpopo, Giyani and North West, Masutlhe and Lokaleng village. The test crop of the trials was cabbage, a widely consumed crop with high nutritional value and strong market demand. Four treatments were applied across the test plots: bioslurry, NPK chemical fertiliser, kraal manure, and a control group with no treatment. The trial were done for two planting seasons i.e. winter and summer for two years and the results were compelling. Cabbage plots treated with bioslurry consistently

outperformed the others in terms of head size, chlorophyll content, pest resistance, and overall yield. Farmers reported vigorous plant growth, fewer pest infestations, and improved soil texture in bioslurry treatments.

In both provinces, bioslurry-treated cabbages matured faster and produced larger, market-ready heads compared to those grown with kraal manure and chemical fertilizer. These findings underscore bioslurry's potential to enhance food security and farm profitability, especially in resource-constrained rural communities. Farmers involved in the trials have begun referring to bioslurry as "bio gold", a fitting name for a product that turns waste into agricultural wealth.



Cabbage bioslurry living lab in Masutlhe and Lokaleng, NW province.

Environmental Benefits of Bioslurry

Bioslurry offers a range of environmental advantages that make it a sustainable choice for modern farming. By stabilising nutrients and breaking down pathogens, bioslurry minimises the risk of water contamination from manure runoff. It also reduces the emission of methane and nitrous oxide; a potent greenhouse gas associated with livestock waste and synthetic fertilisers. The use of bioslurry contributes to healthier ecosystems by improving soil organic matter, boosting microbial diversity, and enhancing the soil's ability to retain moisture. These improvements are especially valuable in South Africa, where erratic rainfall and poor soil quality pose serious challenges to crop

production. Moreover, bioslurry supports waste management by transforming livestock and food waste into a valuable resource. This reduces pressure on landfills and helps farmers comply with environmental regulations related to waste disposal.

Economic Benefits for Smallholder Farmers

From a financial perspective, bioslurry offers substantial savings and productivity gains, especially for smallholder farmers who often operate with limited resources. It reduces the need for chemical fertilisers, which are not only costly but also subject to price fluctuations. By producing bioslurry on-site through biogas digesters, farmers can cut input costs and gain greater control over their



Trial demarcation and cabbage crop planting in Giyani, Limpopo province; Mr Stanley Ndlovu applying bioslurry for cabbage production

fertiliser supply. The dual benefit of energy and fertiliser makes bioslurry particularly attractive. Farmers who install biogas digesters can use the gas for cooking, heating, or powering equipment, while the bioslurry serves as a reliable source of nutrients for crops. This integrated system enhances farm efficiency and reduces dependence on external suppliers. In Limpopo and North West, smallholder farmers participating in the trials saw firsthand how bioslurry could improve cabbage yields, soil health, and household income. Their success stories demonstrate that bioslurry is not just a scientific innovation, it's a practical tool for rural empowerment.

Scaling Up: The Road Ahead

While the results from Limpopo and North West are promising, broader adoption of bioslurry across South Africa will require targeted support and farmer education. Training programmes on bioslurry handling, application techniques, and composting methods are essential to ensure safe and effective use. Policymakers and agricultural stakeholders must also invest in infrastructure to support biogas production at farm level. This includes access to affordable digesters, technical assistance, and incentives for farmers who adopt sustainable practices. More study trial are currently in progress to further explore bioslurry's impact on other crops, application techniques and soil types, as well as its long-term effects on farm ecosystems. With coordinated efforts from government, research institutions, and farmer organisations, bioslurry could become a cornerstone of regenerative agriculture in South Africa, helping smallholder farmers turn waste into wealth while building a more resilient and sustainable future.

Acknowledgement

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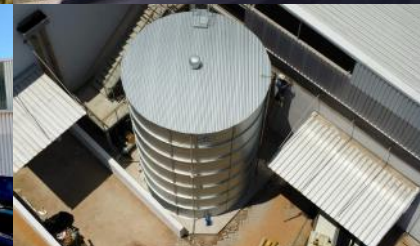
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Craft Mango Achar



Theresa Siebert

ARC-Natural Resources and Engineering

Mangoes are native to South and Southeast Asia and is one of the most important tropical and subtropical fruits in the world in terms of production, acreage and popularity. There are hundreds of mango cultivars grown all over the world. Mangoes can tolerate a wide spectrum of soil and climate conditions if there are no frosting problems.

Green mangoes with premature, soft seeds are suitable for achar. Achar is eaten with maize porridge or bread as a meat substitute and serves as an aromatic flavouring with other foods. Owing to its high oil content, achar has a high nutritional value. The oil used is either mustard or ginger oil. Cured green mango slices are drained, mixed with spices and oil and filled into suitable containers and sealed. Extra oil is added at the top to prevent air entry. Mangoes with a high acid content (5-6%) produce the best quality achar. The flow diagram below explains the steps involved in making a craft-style mango achar:

Harvesting of mangoes for achar:

The fruit is harvested in a mature, but unripe stage, and allowed to ripen for a few days before processing.

Cleaning and washing:

Cleaning removes undesirable elements, removes impurities, damaged and shrunken or broken fruit and involves removal of material adhering to the surface of the fruit. The mangoes are washed in a water-bath, filled with potable water, and brushes. A detergent may be added if required. The water must be changed regularly to minimise the chance of any contamination spreading.

Trimming, sorting & inspection:

Unwanted or unfit parts of the fruit is removed so that only the best suitable raw materials are selected for the craft-style achar. Inspection and trimming of the mangoes is the most labour intensive of the processing steps – the quality of the mangoes and adherence to pre-set quality standards such as colour,

Craft Mango Achar Process





shape and size, can only be controlled through careful inspection.

The mangoes should be full size, immature, with incomplete seed formation, free from diseases, scars, mechanical bruises, insect damage, and latex staining.

Washing:

The fruit is given a final wash with chlorinated water in a mixture of 20-66ppm active chlorine.

Peeling of mangoes (optional):

Mangoes are traditionally not peeled for achar but can be peeled by hand with special knives or peelers if required.

Cutting & stoning:

The flesh is quartered and cut into broad slices on a cutting board. Uniformity of size and shape is attractive in preserves and ensures even salt and spice penetration.

Blending with other ingredients:

Blending is a means of dispensing additional components or ingredients into an existing food system, uniformly distributing the ingredients. The selected spice mixture,

typically salt (15-19%) and a general spice mix (5-10%), preservatives such as ascorbic acid (Vitamin C) or vinegar, and citric acid is mixed with the chopped mangoes.

Packaging:

Packaging is defined as the containment of a food product in a protective barrier that prepares foods for transport, distribution, storage, retailing and end-use. The mango-spice mixture is packed into suitable containers that can be sealed hermetically.

Storage & fermentation:

Fermentation is the breakdown of organic molecules under anaerobic conditions (the absence of oxygen) by micro-organisms such as yeast and bacteria. The bottled mangoes are stored for up to 3 months in a cool, dry place to allow for fermentation to take place.

Re-packaging:

The achar must be re-packaged after fermentation into smaller containers, suitable for individual use. Coloured oil, either mustard oil or ginger oil, is added to the achar to cover the product completely and prevent air entry, before the containers are closed.

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Agri Noord-Wes Jongboer van die Jaar 2026 Kompetisie

Sedert sy ontstaan in **2003** het die **Agri NW Jongboer van die Jaar-kompetisie** 'n gevestigde en gerespekteerde platform in die Noordwes Provinsie geword. Dit is 'n kompetisie wat nie net jong boere erken nie, maar ook die gehalte en diversiteit van die provinsie se landbousektor weerspieël.

Die kompetisie trek jaar na jaar **dinamiese jong boere**, individue wat reeds betekenisvol bydra tot volhoubare landbou en 'n belowende toekoms vir voedselproduksie in Suid-Afrika voorspel. Die Jongboer-komitee, as integrale deel van Agri NW se strukture, bied aan jong boere die geleentheid om saam te werk aan oplossings vir die uitdagings wat die sektor in die gesig staar.

Met trots stel ons die **2026-finaliste** bekend:

- **JP Nel** van Vryburg, 'n Dorperboer wat sy skaapboerdery met passie en 'n filosofie van tweede kanse bestuur.

- **Marshan Moll** van Brits, 'n doelgerigte graan- en groenteprodusent wat sy boerdery met tegnologie, diversifikasie en gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid uitgebrei het.
- **Joy van Deventer** van Bokfontein, 'n snyblomprodusent wat met flair en volhoubaarheid 'n moderne blomkwekery bestuur en 'n voorbeeld stel as vroulike leier in landbou.

Hierdie drie finaliste verteenwoordig die **toekomsgerigte generasie** van boere wat met trots en deursettingsvermoë hul plek in die sektor inneem. Hulle word ondersteun deur die hoofborg van die kompetisie, **Santam Landbou**, wat saam met Agri NW die waarde van jong boere in die provinsie erken en bevorder.

Die **wenner van die 2026-kompetisie** sal later vanjaar, in **September tydens Agri NW se jaarkongres**, amptelik aangekondig word.



Baie geluk!

NWVK

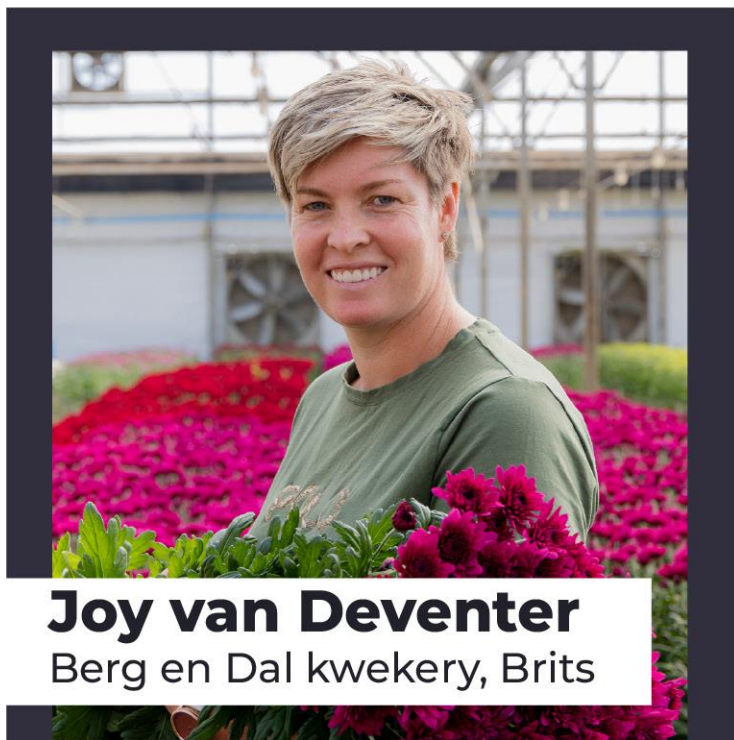


JP Nel
Enkelbos, Vryburg

NWK WENS DIÉ BOERE
HARTLIK GELUK MET HUL 2026
NOMINASIES VIR DIE
SANTAM LANDBOU / AGRI
NOORDWES JONGBOER VAN DIE
JAAR KOMPETISIE.

JULLE HARDE WERK,
DEURSETTINGSVERMOË
EN PASSIE VIR LANDBOU
MAAK 'N VERSKIL IN ONS
GEMEENSAPPE
EN INSPIREER DIE VOLGENDE
GESLAG BOERE.

ONS WENS ELKE DEELNEMER
BAIE STERKTE TOE VIR DIE
KOMPETISIE WAT VOORLÊ!



Joy van Deventer
Berg en Dal kwekery, Brits



Marshan Moll
Mollshoop, Brits.



Agri Noord-Wes Jongboer van die Jaar Finalis:

JP Nel

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In die Vryburg-omgewing, op die plaas Enkelbos, boer **JP Nel** met 'n passie wat diep gewortel is in sy liefde vir diere, die natuur en sy gemeenskap. Gebore op 18 Mei 1994 en vandag 32 jaar oud, het hy saam met sy vrou Melinda die afgelope vier jaar 'n boerdery opgebou wat nie net vleis van uitstaande gehalte lewer nie, maar ook 'n storie van volharding en tweede kanse vertel.

'n Veelsydige boerdery

JP se boerdery bestaan uit verskeie vertakkings:

- **Skape** (35%)
- **Voerkraal-lammers** (55%)
- **Braaikuikens** (5%)
- **Kalwers** (5%)

Hierdie diversifikasie wys sy aanpasbaarheid en vooruitbeplanning — 'n jongboer wat sy risiko's versprei en sy inkomste verskaf uit meer as een bron. Tog bly sy hart by die Dorper-stoet wat hy stelselmatig vestig, met die droom om eendag sy eie veilings te hou.

Akademiese voorbereiding

JP bring 'n sterk akademiese basis na sy boerdery. Hy het drie diplomas aan die **Universiteit van die Noordwes** voltooi: Projekbestuur, Gevorderde Projekbestuur en Middelvlakbestuur. Hierdie opleiding stel hom in staat om produksiebesluite strategies en gestruktureerd te neem. Hy weeg faktore soos weidingstoestand, kuddegesondheid, klimaat, markaanvraag en kostestruktuur — 'n



holistiese benadering wat hom help om risiko's te bestuur en geleenthede te benut.

Bemarking en kliëntefokus

JP se bemarkingsbeleid rus op vier kernbeginsels:

- **Topgehalte lammers**
- **Langtermynverhoudings**
- **Mededingende pryse volgens markvraag**
- **Uitstekende kliëntediens voor én na verkope**

Hy bemark hoofsaaklik aan privaat kliënte en restaurante, met direkte verkope wat 'n persoonlike band met sy mark skep. Sosiale media-platforms soos **Facebook** en **Instagram**, asook 'n webtuiste, dien as sy primêre kanale. Deelname aan kompetisies soos Lamb Champs is nie net prestasie nie, maar ook bemarking.

Hands-on boerdery

Hoewel tegnologie 'n rol speel, beskou JP homself as 'n **hands-on boer**. Hy glo dat sekere aspekte van boerdery nie deur tegnologie vervang kan word nie. Fisiese

betrokkenheid help hom om probleme vinniger raak te sien en doeltreffend aan te spreek.

Gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid

JP se invloed strek verder as sy plaasgrense. Hy dien as **ondervoorsitter van sy plaaslike boerevereniging** en is die **jongboerverteenwoordiger**. Hy is ook aktief betrokke by Vryburg se **buurtwag**, waar hy as leier optree, en by **AfriForum-strukture** wat munisipale en padkweessies aanspreek. Verder dien hy op die **vullisterrein-komitee**.

Saam met Melinda ondersteun hy sportklubs en is hulle aktief betrokke by hul kerk. Hierdie betrokkenheid wys dat sy passie vir boerdery hand aan hand gaan met 'n passie vir gemeenskap.

Eienskappe van sukses

Vir JP rus 'n suksesvolle boerdery op drie kern-eienskappe:

- **Harde werk**
- **Dissipline en konsekwentheid**
- **Empatie en liefde**





Baie geluk, JP NEL!

Santam Landbou/Agri Noordwes

FINALISTE

van die 2026 Jongboer van die Jaar-kompetisie.



ONS IS BAIE TROTS OP JOU!

Baie geluk met hierdie merkwaardige bereiking. Mag hierdie reis jou nog verder neem en mag jy elke uitdaging met selfvertroue en sukses aanpak.

Ons wens jou alle sterkte toe vir die kompetisie!

Jou harde werk, passie en toewyding bou 'n toekoms!



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Uitdagings en oplossings

JP is realisties oor die groot uitdagings in landbou:

- Plaasmoorde
- Stygende koste
- Beleidsonsekerheid

Sy oplossings sluit in plaasveiligheid, streng begroting, diversifisering van inkomste en betrokkenheid by landbou-organisasies.

Waarom die kompetisie?

Vir JP is die Jongboer van die Jaar-kompetisie 'n kans om homself te meet teen die beste,



idees uit te ruil en sy boerdery teen ander se praktyke te toets. Hy hou van kompetisie en floreer onder druk.

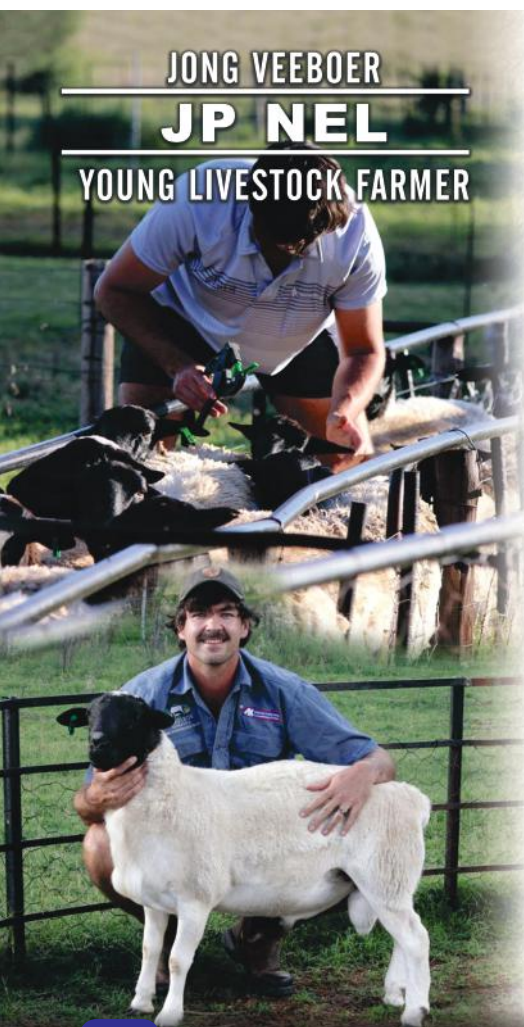
Wysheid vir jongboere

"Daar is nie so iets soos dom vrae nie," sê JP. Hy moedig jongboere aan om raad te vra, elke dag te leer en hul sukses met die gemeenskap te deel.

Enkelbos: 'n plaas van tweede kanse

JP en Melinda se plaasfilosofie is gevorm deur hul persoonlike verhaal. Beide sy vrou en skoonpa het hartoorplantings ondergaan en vier vandag 'n tweede lewe. Hierdie geskenk van tweede kanse weerspieël in hul boerdery: elke lam wat sy kans kry, is 'n simbool van die geskenk van lewe wat hulle ontvang het.

Vir JP is dit 'n daaglikse herinnering dat dankbaarheid en voluit leef die kern van sy werk en sy lewe is. "Gaan drink daardie koffie, doen daardie kampnaweek en lewe voluit. More is nie gewaarborg nie, maar jy het die geleentheid om vandag jou beste self te wees."



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JP NEL
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Ons is trots om ons diepgaande kennis en bewese sukses in kommersiële en stoetveilings, dierkunde, voeding, en veral die effektiewe beheer van algemene veesiektes te deel.

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Agri Noord-Wes Jongboer van die Jaar Finalis:

Marshan Moll

[CLICK HERE
to read article
in English](#)

Jongboer van die Jaar 2026 Finalis: Op Mollshoop, sowat 30 km buite Brits, boer **Jacobus Petrus Johannes Moll**, beter bekend as **Marshan**, met 'n visie wat nege jaar van harde werk en doelgerigte uitbreiding gevorm is. Saam met sy vrou Carla-Danè en hul twee kinders, Mihan (2) en Èlke (1), bou hy aan 'n boerdery wat diversiteit, tegnologie en volhoubaarheid kombineer. Vir Marshan is dit nie net 'n boerdery nie, maar 'n nalatenskap wat hy met trots aan sy gesin wil oordra.

'n Boerdery wat groei en diversifiseer

Marshan se boerdery is veelsydig en intensief, met 'n gewasprogram wat elke seisoen aangepas word volgens marktoestande. Die huidige vertakkings sluit in:

- **Sojabone** (19,5%)
- **Koring** (20%)
- **Gars** (15,25%)
- **Uie** (24,75%)
- **Beet** (9,5%)
- **Skorsie** (6,25%)
- **Butternut** (4%)
- **Suurlemoene** (0,25%)
- **Lusern** (0,5%)

Hy verskaf produkte aan varsproduktemarkte in Johannesburg en Pretoria, en deur Farmwise beland sy uie en groente direk op Woolworths se rakke, asook by ander kettingwinkels. Gedurende die uieseisoen is die plaas 'n miernes van aktiwiteit: vragmotors wat laai, spanlede wat saamwerk, en Marshan wat self toesien dat elke boksie perfek verpak is.



Uitbreiding en besproeiing

Sedert 2017 het Marshan sy boerdery van die grond af opgebou. Die afgelope vyf jaar het hy dit aansienlik uitgebrei:

- In 2022 het hy 'n plaas aangekoop en nuwe besproeiingsgrond ontwikkel.
- In 2024 het hy twee addisionele plase begin huur, waarvan een 'n nuwe spilpunt gekry het.

- In 2026 is nóg 'n besproeiingsplaas bygevoeg om risiko verder te versprei.

Hierdie uitbreiding het die besproeide area laat groei van 87 ha spilpunte en 28 ha pypbesproeiing na sowat 343 ha spilpunte en ±72 ha mikro- en pypbesproeiing, met slegs 'n klein gedeelte droëland.

Tegnologie en presisie

Marshan glo dat tegnologie 'n sleutelrol speel in moderne boerdery. GPS-stelsels op trekkers en stropers, presisieboerderypraktyke, akkurate spuittoerusting en kunsmistoediening — alles dra by tot beter opbrengste en 'n hoër ROI. Hy beskryf dit eenvoudig: "Meet, en jy sal weet."

Eienskappe van sukses

Vir Marshan rus 'n suksesvolle boerdery op drie kern-eienskappe:

- **Dissipline**
- **Passie**
- **Geloof**

Hierdie drie beginsels hou hom gefokus, selfs wanneer uitdagings soos arbeid, hoë insetkoste en diefstal sy pad kruis.



Hartlik geluk met die benoeming as finalis

Marshan Moll

Agri Noordwes 2026



Jongboer van die Jaar

Uitdagings en oplossings

Marshan glo dat tegnologie en proewe die sleutel is om insetkoste en produksie-uitdagings te bestuur. Wat veiligheid betref, probeer hy altyd een stap voor oortreders wees en maak dit so moeilik as moontlik vir hulle.

Waarom die kompetisie?

Vir Marshan is deelname aan die Jongboer van die Jaar-kompetisie 'n droom wat terugstrek na 2017 toe hy sy boerdery begin het. Sy doelwit is om te wen en na die nasionale vlak deur te dring — 'n mikpunt waarvoor hy doelgerig werk.

Wysheid vir jongboere

Sy raad is inspirerend: "Moet nooit toelaat dat iemand jou drome kelder nie. 'n Mens is dikwels bang vir verandering, maar soms is dit die beste ding wat kan gebeur. As jy iets aanpak, doen dit met oorgawe en vra altyd baie vrae — dit kos niks."

Hy beklemtoon dat jy nooit moet dink jy weet alles nie, en dat jy eerder uit ander se foute moet leer as om dit self te maak.



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Baie geluk
Marshan Moll

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Intertoy wens Marshan alle sterkte toe vir die res van die kompetisie en glo hy verteenwoordig die toekoms van Suid-Afrikaanse landbou uitstekend.

Gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid

Marshan is 'n lid van **Agri NW** en die **Brits Jongboervereniging**, waar hy aktief deelneem aan netwerkaktiwiteite wat jong boere ondersteun. Hy is ook betrokke by plaaslike veiligheidsinisiatiewe deur die **GPF**, waar hy help met patrollies.

Verder is hy diep betrokke in sy gemeenskap en skenk gereeld vars groente aan ouetehuse, kinderhuse en mense in nood. Vir hom is dit 'n eenvoudige daad van dankbaarheid: die oes wat sy plaas oplewer, moet ook die gemeenskap voed.

'n Boer met visie

Marshan Moll word beskryf as hardwerkend, passievol, vasberade en aanpasbaar. Sy doel is om 'n moderne, volhoubare en mededingende boerdery te bestuur wat nie net ekonomies floreer nie, maar ook 'n sterk gemeenskapsanker is. Hy sien sy boerdery as 'n nalatenskap wat sy kinders eendag kan oorneem — 'n plaas waar dissipline, passie en geloof die fondament vorm.





Exploring nature never stops

Baie geluk Marshan!

Bejo | Nuvance wens jou hartlik geluk met jou nominasie as finalis vir die Santam Landbou / Agri Noord-Wes Jongboer van die jaar kompetisie, en wens jou voorspoed toe vir die kompetisie vorentoe.

Hierdie prestasie getuig van jou toewyding, harde werk en die hoë standaard wat jy in die bedryf handhaaf. Ons wil ook ons waardering uitspreek vir jou volgehoue ondersteuning en vertroue in ons maatskappy. Ons is trots om saam met jou te groei en floreer. Van die Nuvance span.



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varsmark
Hoë toleransie
teen blaarvlek



Maragogi

Vroeë kortdag-ui
Ferm met klein
wortelaanhegting
Baie dun nek
Gesik vir die
varsmark





BAIE GELUK MET JULLE DEELNAME AAN DIE AGRI NW JONGBOER VAN DIE JAAR KOMPETISIE

Mag hierdie besondere prestasie net die begin wees van nog groter sukses, groei en voorspoed in die landboubedryf. Julle harde werk, passie en toewyding is 'n inspirasie vir jong boere en die gemeenskap.

By **Ernst Brothers** wil ons ook opreg dankie se vir julle ondersteuning en vertroue in ons besigheid.

Ons waardeer dit opreg dat julle van ons dienste gebruik maak, en ons is trots om deel van julle landboureis te wees.

Voorspoed en sukses vir die pad voorentoe.



JOY VAN DEVENTER



MARSHAN MOLL



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VS KUNSMIS





Agri Noord-Wes Jongboer van die Jaar Finalis

Joy van Deventer

[CLICK HERE
to read article
in English](#)

Op die plaas **Berg & Dal** in die Bokfontein-omgewing, buite Brits, boer Joy van Deventer met 'n passie wat blomme in besigheid omskep. Sy bestuur 'n intensiewe snyblom kwekery wat kwaliteit, volhoubaarheid en groei as kernwaardes het. Joy haar man, André, is die trotse ouers van drie seuns: Luuk (7), Arjan (5) en Bram (2).

'n Onderneming met visie en flair

Joy se boerdery bestaan uit Krisante-produksie in tonnells, aangevul deur 'n buiteblommeprojek wat seisoenaal bedryf word. Sy is verantwoordelik vir die algehele bestuur: produksiebeplanning, finansies, arbeidsbestuur en bemaking. Elke blom wat die plaas verlaat, dra haar handtekening van sorg en presisie.



Oor die afgelope vier jaar het sy sterk gefokus op die verbetering van doeltreffendheid en volhoubaarheid:

- Optimalisering van die kunsmisaanleg.
- Vereenvoudiging van kragvoorsiening van drie transformators na een.
- Opgradering van die klimaatbeheerstelsel.
- Aanpassing van die grondmedium vir beter produksie.
- Vestiging van 'n nuwe een-hektaar buiteproduksieprojek.
- Installering van 'n boiler vir grondsterilisasië om siektedruk te verminder.

Markte en uitbreiding

Joy se grootste mark is die direkte handelaars wat blomme aan **Woolworths, Pick n Pay** en ander groothandelaars regoor Suid-Afrika verskaf. Sy brei ook internasionaal uit met uitvoere na die **Midde-Ooste** en **Afrika-eilande**.

Haar visie is duidelik: volhoubare groei, strategiese uitbreiding en die optimale benutting van hulpbronne om markgeleenthede ten volle te ontsluit, sonder om kwaliteit of volhoubaarheid prys te gee.



Tegnologie en bestuur

Tegnologie speel 'n kern rol in Joy se boerdery. Die klimaat in die tonnells word volledig beheer, insluitend verhitting in die wintermaande. Waterbestuur is 'n kombinasie van haar persoonlike besluitneming en gevorderde tegnologie.

Wanneer sy produksiebesluite neem, weeg sy faktore soos markvraag, beskikbare hulpbronne, infrastruktuur, koste en winsgewendheid, innovasie en tegnologie, asook weer- en klimaatsinvloede.

Eienskappe van sukses

Vir Joy rus 'n suksesvolle boerdery op drie kern-eienskappe:

- **Goeie bestuur**
- **Aanpasbaarheid**
- **Finansiële dissipline**

Uitdagings en oplossings

Joy is realisties oor die uitdagings wat boere daaglik trotseer:

- **Stygende insetkoste**
- **Markvraag**
- **Insekte en siekte-uitbrekings**

Haar oplossings sluit in presisieboerdery en slim aankope om koste te bestuur, diversifisering van markte en langtermynverhoudings om verkope te verseker, en geïntegreerde plaagbestuur met verantwoordelike gebruik van gewasbeskerming.



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JOY VAN DEVENTER
VAN BERG EN DAL

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VAN DIE JAAR
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Waarom die kompetisie?

Aanvanklik was Joy skepties oor deelname, maar nadat sy deur haar boerevereniging genomineer is, het sy dit as 'n geleentheid gesien om haarself uit te daag. Vir haar is dit 'n kans om te wys dat volhoubare produksie, selfs in moeilike omstandighede, moontlik is. Dit is ook 'n platform om te leer, te groei en by te dra tot die toekoms van landbou in Suid-Afrika.

Wysheid vir jongboere

Joy se raad is eenvoudig maar kragtig: "Bly aanpasbaar en leer voortdurend. Landbou verander vinnig en sukses kom uit goeie bestuur, nie net harde werk nie. Begin klein, bestuur jou koste streng, sorg vir goeie kwaliteit."

Gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid

Joy is aktief betrokke by **Agri NW** en is die stigter sowel as voorsitter van **Agri Bokfontein**. Sy glo dat samewerking tussen boere die bedryf en gemeenskappe versterk. Vir haar is deelname aan georganiseerde landbou nie net 'n manier om haar eie boerdery te versterk nie, maar ook 'n geleentheid om 'n positiewe bydrae tot die



Berg en Dal

Van steenkool tot pragblomme!

Baie geluk Joy met jou benoeming as finalis vir die Agri Noord-Wes Jongboer van die jaar. Jou sukses laat die hele streek blom, en ons is trots om die energie agter jou kwekery te wees.

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plaaslike gemeenskap en die breër blom- en landbousektor te maak.

Sy is ook betrokke by ander gemeenskapsaktiwiteite vir die verbetering van Brits en die bevordering van plaaslike ontwikkeling.

'n Vroulike stem in landbou

Joy bestuur haar boerdery doelgerig as 'n volhoubare en moderne besigheid, eerder as bloot 'n produksie-eenheid. Sy glo daarin om voortdurend te leer en aan te pas by nuwe ontwikkelings in die landboubedryf. Sy verstaan dat elke kliënt unieke behoeftes en standaarde het, en sy streef daarna om produkte te lewer wat nie net aan verwagtinge voldoen nie, maar dit oortref.

Wat haar profiel uniek maak, is die balans tussen **moederlike sorg en professionele bestuur**. Elke Krisant wat oopvou in haar tonnells is 'n simbool van geduld, liefde en volharding — waardes wat sy ook aan haar kinders oordra. "Die manier waarop jy jou plaas bestuur, moet hoop en trots skep vir die volgende generasie," sê sy.



Baie geluk

Joy van Deventer

Ons is baie trots dat jy genomineer is as finalis in die Agri Noordwes Jongboer van die jaar kompetisie

Gr  **nway** *young plants*



South Africa Secures Global Citrus Crown

South Africa has officially claimed the title of the world's largest exporter of citrus, surpassing Spain and cementing its position as a powerhouse in global fruit trade. According to the **Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA)**, the country exported approximately **2.9 million tonnes of citrus in 2025**, with projections for 2026 set to exceed **210 million cartons**.

This achievement reflects not only the resilience of South Africa's growers but also the strategic orientation of the industry toward international markets. Citrus has become a cornerstone of agricultural exports, supporting livelihoods, strengthening rural economies, and showcasing South Africa's ability to compete on the global stage.

Driving Forces Behind Growth

- **Export Orientation:** Unlike many competitors, South Africa's citrus industry is heavily geared toward exports, ensuring consistent supply to international markets.
- **Compliance and Quality:** Strict adherence to plant health standards and a reputation for high-quality fruit have opened doors to demanding markets such as the EU, US, China, and India.
- **Employment Impact:** The sector sustains around **140,000 jobs**, particularly in rural communities, making it a vital contributor to socio-economic development.

Citrus by the Numbers (2026 Outlook)

- **Valencia Oranges:** 63 million cartons (+1.6% year-on-year)
- **Lemons:** 45.9 million cartons (+10%)
- **Grapefruit:** 15.7 million cartons (+16%)
- **Mandarins:** Stabilising after years of rapid growth, with late varieties balancing volumes

Challenges on the Horizon

Despite its success, the industry faces mounting pressures:

- **Rising fuel costs** and shipping disruptions linked to Middle East instability.
- **Tariffs and phytosanitary restrictions** in key markets.
- **Volatile prices** and escalating input costs, which threaten profitability.

These challenges underscore the need for continued innovation, market diversification, and strong advocacy from industry bodies like the CGA.

Global Context

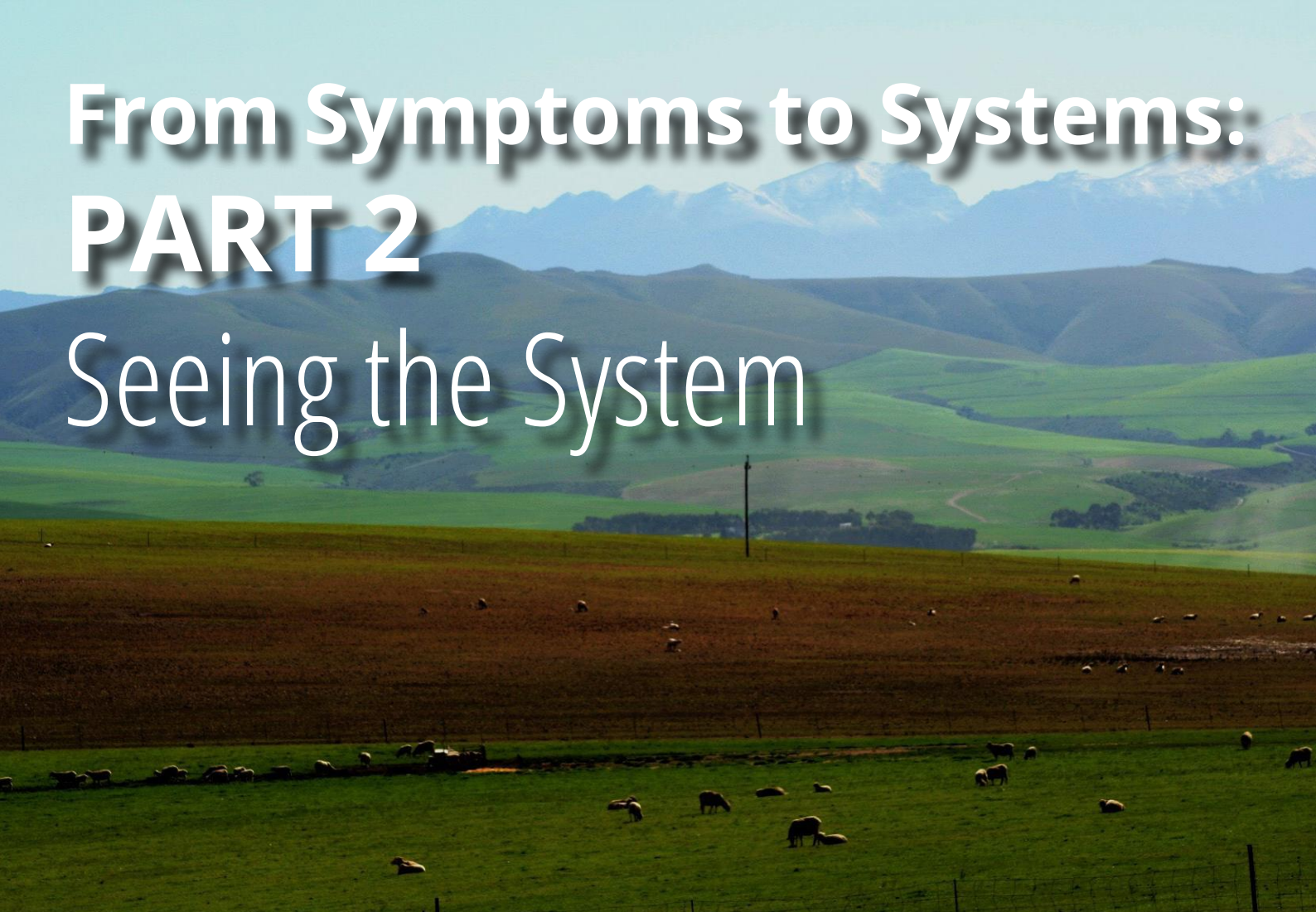
Spain, once the undisputed leader in citrus exports, has seen volumes constrained by climatic variability and a stronger domestic market focus. South Africa's ability to expand production while maintaining quality has tipped the scales, positioning the country as the world's citrus champion.

Conclusion

South Africa's citrus triumph is more than a statistical milestone—it is a story of resilience, innovation, and global competitiveness. As growers prepare for another record-breaking season, the industry's success offers a powerful reminder of agriculture's role in shaping both local livelihoods and international trade.

Sources

- Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA) Tel: +27 (0) 31 765 2514 Email: info@cga.co.za Website: www.cga.co.za
- Fresh Plaza, *South Africa Largest Citrus Exporter*, Publication date: 13 May 2026



From Symptoms to Systems: PART 2 Seeing the System

Dr Ida Wilson

Independent Crop Production Consultant

Modern crop production is built on a strong foundation of scientific understanding. Over decades, plant pathology, physiology, agronomy, soil science, and other disciplines have developed into highly specialised fields, each contributing valuable knowledge. *This* knowledge has enabled remarkable gains in productivity and shaped how crop problems are addressed today.

The Logic of Identifying and Controlling Problems

At the centre of this understanding is a simple idea: crop problems can be identified, classified, and controlled. In plant pathology, a disease is defined as a disruption of normal plant function caused by biotic or abiotic factors. Biotic factors include fungi, bacteria, and viruses, while abiotic factors

include nutrient deficiencies, water stress, or temperature extremes. This distinction provides a clear framework for diagnosis followed by intervention.

From this perspective, crop management becomes a process of identifying the limiting factor and correcting it. If a pathogen is present, it is controlled. If a nutrient is deficient, it is supplied. If water stress becomes apparent, irrigation is adjusted. The logic is sound. It allows for quick remedial action in complex environments and has proven to be effective.

The Strengths of Specialised Knowledge

The widespread use of fertilisers, crop protection inputs, genetically improved cultivars, and precision irrigation has enabled significant productivity gains in

crop production in recent decades. Based on the model of problem identification and intervention, entire specialist industries have developed around solving specific problems. These include, for instance, specialists in plant nutrition, who help farmers manage soil fertility, and crop protection advisors, who support the management of pests and diseases. More recently, irrigation practices have become more targeted, with irrigation specialists supporting the optimal supply of water to crops. Each separate discipline contributes to depth and precision to optimise crop production.

The Limits of Separating the System into Parts

This model has clear advantages, but it assumes the system can be understood by dividing it into parts. In practice, crops do not operate within boundaries. Soil, water, plant physiology, climate, and management practices interact continuously. A change in one part influences the others. Yet our knowledge structure encourages us to look at problems in isolation.

Partial Views and Overlooked Context

A soil analysis guides fertilisation. A scouting report guides pest control. Weather forecasts inform irrigation. Each tool is valuable, but each offers only a partial view. When decisions rely only on these fragments, the broader context is easily missed.

When Symptoms Mislead

Disease diagnosis often begins with visible symptoms—lesions, discolouration, wilting. These are matched to known profiles, and control measures follow. But similar symptoms can arise from water stress, nutrient imbalance, or root damage.

Pathogens often exploit plants already under stress. The visible disease may be a secondary effect, not the original driver of the problem. A vineyard showing trunk disease may be treated to solve the pathogen problem. Yet closer examination may reveal water stress, poor soil structure and quality, and canopy mismanagement. These factors would reduce the plant's inherent resilience, allowing the pathogen to persist. Treating the pathogen alone may reduce disease symptoms, but the underlying cause remains.

Inputs and Interventions

In many instances, fungicides, herbicides, and insecticides are applied preventively. While this approach has value, it assumes blanket control of general problems. These inputs are typically time-limited interventions, which do not rely on an understanding of the underlying causes.

The effectiveness of product application depends on timing, environment, application quality, and plant condition. If these are not aligned, control may fail even with the correct product. A fungicide under low disease pressure may seem unnecessary; under high pressure, it may seem ineffective if stress and conditions favour disease. Outcomes are often judged by product performance, not system conditions.

Climate Change and Shifting Benchmarks

Another limitation is reliance on thresholds and recommendations developed under stable historical conditions. Much guidance is context specific - linked to cultivar and environment. As climate variability increases, the reliability of historic data declines. Shifts in temperature, rainfall, and seasonal dynamics, for instance, would influence plant growth, disease, and input performance. What worked before may no longer apply.

Moving Toward Systems Thinking

Current practices are grounded in research and provide workable day-to-day management. But they encourage focus on individual factors and limit adjustment to whole system interactions. This is not a flaw in science, but in how it is applied. To move forward, we must place specialised knowledge in a broader context, integrate expertise, and recognise complexity. It requires a shift from thinking in parts to thinking in systems.

In the next edition of *AgriAbout*, we will explore the importance of systems thinking and how understanding complexity could reduce vulnerability.

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Read PART 3 (**Where it Unravels**) in the next edition of *AgriAbout*

Positive mood at Nampo but 2026 shows a picture of mixed growth for agriculture

Wandile Sihlobo

There are a few places that illustrated the vibrancy of South Africa's agriculture as clearly as at NAMPO, the largest agricultural technology show in the Southern Hemisphere. I spent time this week at NAMPO in the Free State, observing new equipment from various suppliers, technological innovations in seeds, fertilisers, livestock products, automotive suppliers, and financial solutions, among others.

At this one place, one gets a feel for the state of the South African farming sector and interest in our sector from various stakeholders globally. There is also an opportunity to have deeper conversations with stakeholders in a more relaxed, frank manner. The conversations this year ranged from narratives about agriculture (its positioning in the public) to issues of trade wars, geopolitics, biosecurity (plant and animal health), and South African agriculture's place in the changing world.

The mood was generally positive at NAMPO, though people didn't hide the fact that the South African farming sector faces some challenges. Foot-and-mouth disease in the beef and dairy industries, along with African swine fever in the pig industry, are among the pressing challenges these sectors face. In the various panel discussions, this was also one of the points emphasised as hindering South Africa's agricultural growth prospects. Some viewed this as a wake-up call; we needed to ensure we improved plant health and focused on it more, as diseases would be as

damaging to crops as those we are witnessing in livestock. Fortunately, our field crops and fruits are in good condition, and investment in animal health would also improve from the current state.

Inefficiencies in logistics, poorly run municipalities, and unmaintained roads are among the issues that place pressure on the farming sector. This is something even visitors to NAMPO experience as they drive through North West and the Free State, noticing the decay of roads and towns in these provinces, which illustrate the inept governance and the pressure businesses are under because of these failures. The logistics issues don't end with roads and poorly run towns; they also extend to the ports. South Africa has made enormous progress in improving efficiency at Durban and Eastern Cape ports. The gains were clear in the robust agricultural exports in 2025, which reached a record US\$15.1 billion (up 10% year on year). But the Port of Cape Town faced significant challenges from the end of 2025 through 2026, and table grape producers felt the negative impact of these inefficiencies and had to use faraway ports from their production zones in the Eastern Cape. We are now, fortunately, at a point where Transnet, organised agriculture, and the private sector are collaborating to improve efficiency.

Aside from the cattle and pork industries, which face various challenges, activity in field crops, horticulture, and wine has generally been upbeat, and expected harvests are



plentiful. For example, South Africa's 2025-26 summer grain and oilseed harvest is estimated at 20.8 million tonnes, up 1% year-on-year.

We also see strong performance in the various fruit products. For example, export volumes from the stone fruit and pome industries have increased by 12% year on year, driven by a large harvest. Also, the figures recently released by the South African Table Grape Industry show that the final figures for the 2025-26 table grapes inspected for export were 81.25 million cartons (4.5 kg cartons), a 3% year-on-year increase. The production conditions for vegetables remain broadly favourable, supporting increased field activity. The poultry industry also had a better start to the year, supported by lower feed prices (maize and soybeans).

Overall, 2026 is likely to show a mixed growth picture in South Africa's agriculture, with the cattle and pork industries under pressure, while the other subsectors may perform better. The mood, as observed and discussed at NAMPO, suggests a year of mixed fortunes.

But going into 2027, there are risks ahead. The higher input costs, fuel and fertiliser, because of the Middle East war, along with expected El Niño drought, are some of the risks that could weigh on the sector and on employment conditions from now on. The grain industry begins summer crop plantings in October 2026, and this is likely to coincide with higher input costs. The decisions farmers make in October will affect the fortunes of the sector in 2027 and through to the start of 2028.

Acknowledgement:

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Built for Small Fire Management and Heavy-Duty Clearing: The Husqvarna 578BTF Blower

As winter sets in, much of South Africa turns drier and dustier, increasing the demands placed on both farmers and their equipment. Around workshops, machinery bays, and sheds, and along fence lines and firebreaks, debris and dry material can build up quickly. Keeping these areas clear is not only part of routine farm maintenance, but also a crucial step in maintaining safer working environments during the dry winter months.

For farmers and landowners, winter maintenance and firebreak work calls for equipment that is powerful, reliable, and built to handle long hours in challenging conditions. Downtime, poor performance, or equipment that struggles under pressure can quickly slow productivity when there is already a lengthy list of seasonal tasks to manage, and when the risk of fire becomes an added operational concern. The Husqvarna 578BTF petrol backpack

blower is built for this reality.

Professional-Grade Power for Essential Farm Maintenance

The Husqvarna 578BTF is designed for heavy-duty professional use, with the performance needed to move large volumes of built-up debris quickly and efficiently. Powered by a 75.6cc engine, it delivers strong blowing force with air speeds of up to 100m/s and an airflow output of 1,500m³/h, making it well suited to large agricultural properties and demanding workloads.

The blower is specifically designed for the removal of combustible material and can also assist in controlling smaller grass fires, making it especially relevant during South Africa's winter months when dry conditions increase fire risk across many farming regions. Whether clearing





Watch the video

around fuel storage areas, maintaining cleaner fence lines, or managing controlled burns, the 578BTF gives operators the power needed to work efficiently across larger areas.

Husqvarna's X-TORQ® engine technology provides powerful performance with improved fuel efficiency, helping operators maintain productivity while managing fuel consumption during long working days. The simplified starting procedure with air purge also helps reduce interruptions in the field.

Comfort and Durability for Long Hours in the Field

Extended clearing work can place significant strain on operators. The 578BTF features a backpack design with a double harness system that distributes weight evenly for improved comfort during prolonged use. An adjustable offset handle helps improve manoeuvrability and working position, supporting better control.

Durability is equally important in agricultural environments. The heat-resistant nozzle is designed to withstand high temperatures during close-proximity fire control, while the protected fuel hose system uses a sturdy rubber guard to help prevent damage from branches and dense vegetation. The robust design reflects Husqvarna's focus on creating equipment that stands up to professional use season after season.

Built for Farmers Who Depend on Their Equipment

Farmers invest in equipment that works hard, starts reliably, and performs consistently when it matters most. The Husqvarna 578BTF reflects the brand's long-standing focus on user-driven design, setting a higher standard for quality and durability, and delivering dependable performance in tough environments.

Whether clearing around operational areas or supporting winter fire preparedness, the 578BTF is built to help farmers work more efficiently through the season while reducing unnecessary effort and downtime.

Find out more at
www.husqvarna.com/za
[#WeAreHusqvarna](https://twitter.com/WeAreHusqvarna)



Insurance models must connect the dots to fit a new agricultural world

The 58th NAMPO Harvest Day agricultural exhibition was held at Bothaville, Free State, from May 12 to 15, with the theme *Resilience through Innovation*.

Hosted by Grain SA, NAMPO has become one of the country's biggest agricultural events and provided a platform for industry stakeholders to engage on the future of farming, while highlighting the latest developments in agriculture. The exhibition once again demonstrated how many agribusinesses had expanded beyond production into storage, distribution, wholesale arrangements and even retailing.

Returning to NAMPO as an exhibitor for the ninth time this year, Hollard highlighted the need to rethink the assessment and coverage of agricultural risks within the context of this continued expansion of agribusinesses, alongside the emergence of new risks introduced by artificial intelligence (AI) and other innovation.

Speaking at the exhibition, Andries Wiese, Head: Agriculture at Hollard, said the evolution of agribusiness and the pace of technological advancement in agriculture had fundamentally changed the risk landscape. He believed insurers, brokers and agribusiness clients would increasingly need to keep the



bigger picture in mind and “connect-the-dots” across the entire value chain when assessing and mitigating risk.

Modern commercial farming, he explains, has expanded beyond production, while becoming increasingly precise, data-driven, and technologically advanced. Innovation across the value chain has undoubtedly improved efficiency and productivity, but it has also introduced entirely new, and often multi-layered, categories of risk. Insurers active within the sector need to evolve if they are to provide coverage across this broadening risk spectrum.

“As an agricultural insurer, it is our responsibility to share information, assist and advise our brokers and clients regarding changing risks as the sector evolves. To do that, we need to ensure a deep understanding of the newest developments within the industry, including new business models, innovative machinery, emerging technologies and alternative risk management tools. If clients are going to be buying new technology, or starting a new retail business, we must work with them and our brokers in ensuring that all risks are mitigated and/or covered.”

The theme of this year’s NAMPO exhibition was particularly relevant to the role of insurance in agriculture, said Wiese.

“Resilience is precisely the outcome that insurance strives to deliver - the ability to continue operating across an increasing number of related businesses despite unexpected disasters. Innovation in agriculture insurance is as important as innovation in agriculture itself. As insurers, we must ensure that agribusinesses can withstand technical, financial and any other kind of setback, and remain productive and sustainable. And we cannot just talk about cover – we need to be talking about holistic risk management in the context of the risk appetite and capacity of each agribusiness.”

The impact of innovation

Reflecting on developments over the past nine years, Wiese notes that traditional agricultural insurance products were often structured as bundled, “off-the-shelf” policies designed to cover a broad range of risks.

However, increasingly individualised agribusiness models, along with the integration of advanced technologies such as drones, AI and precision farming systems, has significantly transformed agriculture and with it, the nature of risk. Sometimes, that risk falls outside of the ambit of available insurance cover.

“The introduction of new technology can render existing cover redundant, or create new risks, while the growth of agribusiness beyond farming demands a much more holistic approach to risk management. This combination of new and evolving risks has forced us to relook our insurance offerings.

In effect, while we need to deconstruct our policies and re-assemble them on a tailored basis to meet changing cover requirements, we also have to acknowledge that insurance is just one leg of a comprehensive risk management strategy for a complex business. Working closely with insurers and clients, brokers need to develop an overall perspective of each agribusiness and determine the balance between risk mitigation and insurance cover, based on business-specific levels of risk appetite and capacity. It’s all about seeing the bigger picture.”

“At a very basic level, you can look at the example of expensive flasks used in artificial insemination in the dairy industry. While technology has changed the way these flasks are used, most policies still provide cover based on old processes, rendering cover ineffective at best and completely useless at worst.”

“In pivot irrigation systems, as another example, rubber tyres are critical components. While tyre wear and damage is typically excluded in standard motor policies, in this context a machine that is out of commission due to a tyre problem can be disastrous, so the risk has to be assessed and properly mitigated.”

The risks associated with using the latest technology are also multiple and new, adds Wiese.

“Drones provide a good example. Now in widespread use, as airborne devices they



introduce aviation-related risks, which were not previously considered in agricultural policies.”

Looking beyond production, risks linked to automation and artificial intelligence may impact further down the value chain. If AI systems used to plan and control a logistics operation or an automated bottling plant go wrong, for example, it could be disastrous. A failure of navigation systems resulting in the loss of products intended for export could effectively wipe out the profits from an entire harvest.

Building solutions beyond conventional insurance

The bottom line is that new business models and technology-related shifts, alongside changes in existing risks such as climate change and safety and security, are reshaping the insurance environment. Addressing this constantly changing risk landscape requires a holistic approach to ensure comprehensive risk mitigation and cover.

“What is needed goes beyond conventional insurance cover offered in the traditional way.

We need to build solutions that address the full financial implications of these new and evolving risks and tailor these to individual risk appetites.”

This approach extends beyond standard policies to include less well-known instruments where necessary.

“The use of alternative insurance instruments to cover risks that conventional policies do not cover has emerged from a more comprehensive understanding of the agribusiness value chain. This may include products that are financial or even medical in nature, and their incorporation into broader risk solutions.”

The evolving agribusiness landscape demands that insurance evolves alongside it. Innovation, in this context, is not limited to covering new technologies, but extends to increasingly complex business models. This requires an end-to-end, holistic understanding and management of risk portfolios to ensure that agribusinesses are equipped to remain resilient in the face of the myriad challenges that confront them.

Harnessing the Sun:

Mobile Solar Trailers for Resilient Farming Communities

Zikhona Buyeye, Erence Manyako, Primrose Magama and Dr Idan Chiyanzu

The Agricultural Research Council – Natural Resources and Engineering is continuously exploring and promoting sustainable technologies to enhance climate resilience and support smallholder farmers. For many small-scale and emerging farmers, especially in remote or grid-unreliable areas, powering water pumps remains a significant challenge. Limited access to reliable electricity, rising fuel costs, and dependence on diesel-powered systems often constrain irrigation, livestock watering, and daily farming operations. As a result, productivity may decline, operational costs

may increase, and farming communities can become more vulnerable to drought and climate-related disruptions.

Mobile solar power trailers present an innovative, off-grid solution to this enduring problem. Support from the Department of Agriculture LandCare Programme, which focuses on the sustainable management and rehabilitation of natural resources, drives implementation of technologies like the mobile solar trailer. These trailers align with the LandCare programme's core objectives by enabling off-grid, solar-powered



Figure 1 A mobile solar-powered system that supports on-farm water abstraction.

water abstraction for irrigation and livestock without degrading the environment. Using the trailers to replace diesel-powered pumps eliminates greenhouse gas emissions, noise pollution, and soil contamination from fuel spills, contributing to cleaner air and healthier ecosystems.

Understanding Mobile Solar Trailers

A mobile solar trailer is a compact, towable unit that integrates solar panels, energy storage, pumping equipment, and water delivery into a single system. The units are designed to be rugged and easily movable around a farm. A typical system, as illustrated in Figure 1, features a single-axle trailer equipped with multiple solar panels, a submersible pump, a controller, batteries for energy storage, and connected water pipes. One of the main advantages of the system is the quick on-site setup, which requires no complex installation or connection to the national grid.

How Mobile Solar Trailers Support Farm Operations

The primary application of these trailers is to provide a self-sufficient water supply for:

- **Groundwater-fed irrigation:** They provide power to submersible pumps that draw water from boreholes for irrigating crops or backyard gardens. This is particularly helpful for maintaining food production during dry spells.
- **Livestock watering:** For livestock farmers, the trailers provide consistent access to clean water, which is vital for animal health and productivity. Because the system is mounted on a trailer, it can be used at different watering points across the farm.
- **Supplemental water supply:** The system can also function as a backup during power outages or as a power source in areas that are not connected to the grid at all.

Mobile solar-powered trailers have a diverse range of applications around the farm. They are especially useful for farmers with multiple boreholes or those who intend to increase their borehole count in future, since their mobility eliminates the need for multiple power sources.

Why Mobile Solar Trailers Matter for Small-Scale Farmers

Challenges such as water shortages highlight the vulnerability of small-scale operations. Mobile solar trailers address several constraints that are specific to small-holder farmers:

- **Energy independence:** The systems reduce and can even eliminate reliance on the unstable national grid or expensive diesel generators for water pumping, which leads to improved energy security. Because South Africa experiences elevated levels of solar radiation, it is a well-suited solution for farms in the country.
- **Affordability in the long term:** After the initial investment, the operating costs are near-zero because sunlight is the fuel source. This not only protects farmers from volatile fuel and electricity prices, but it also eliminates the need for refueling, leading to daily energy savings.
- **Low maintenance and operational simplicity:** Designed for durability and equipped with minimal moving parts, these systems require less technical expertise to operate than maintaining a diesel generator. However, users should still receive sufficient training to ensure appropriate hitching and correct travelling speeds under different on- and off-road conditions.
- **Flexibility and mobility:** The trailer can be hitched to a vehicle and moved to where water is needed most, making it a versatile asset for different plots or community shared-use models. It does not need large vehicles like tractors; an adequately powered bakkie should suffice for moving the trailer around the farm. This has the added advantage of not disrupting other farming activities that require use of tractors.

Key Benefits and Practical Considerations

Using solar-powered mobile trailers for farm water abstraction offers several advantages, as they:

- are clean and renewable – use of solar energy reduces the carbon footprint and air pollution associated with other fossil fuel-powered water abstraction methods.

- promote water security – farmers have reliable access to groundwater, an important adaptation to climate variability
- are scalable – the systems can be designed for different needs, from a 500W system for smaller tasks to 1.2kW for more demanding continuous operation.
- provide power storage flexibility – in areas where farms receive sufficient sunlight all year round or on farms that have water storage tanks, the batteries may be omitted from the design. This can reduce the capital cost of the system. Furthermore, the system is flexible enough for the batteries to be added at a later stage, as long as their weight and integration is taken into consideration in the design phases of the trailer.
- are quiet and safe – the systems operate silently with no fire risk from fuel storage. However, caution should be taken to ensure the batteries and wires are properly placed and adequately protected to prevent explosions and fires.

Although there are several advantages associated with mobile solar trailers, there are important factors that need to be taken into consideration as well, such as:

- Initial capital cost – the upfront cost for the trailer, panels, batteries, and pump can be a barrier, which may necessitate supportive financing or grant mechanisms.
- Weather dependence – in some areas, sufficient battery storage will be necessary for continuity since pumping capacity is reduced during cloudy or rainy periods
- Maintenance awareness – while low, components like batteries have a finite lifespan and need eventual replacement. Users require training on system use and care.
- Theft security – as with any valuable farm asset, properly securing the panels and equipment is necessary.

Mobile solar trailers form part of a broader integrated approach to improving agricultural resilience and sustainability. By providing reliable and clean energy for water abstraction, these systems can support agricultural productivity, strengthen livestock management, and improve

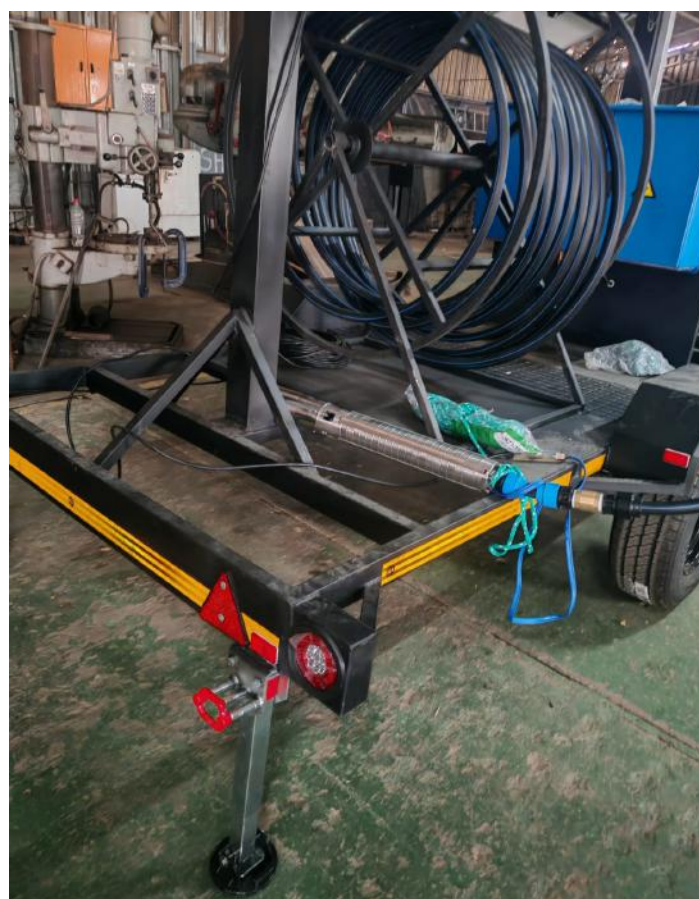


Figure 2 A mobile solar-powered trailer equipped with a submersible pump and piping system for portable water abstraction and irrigation support.

household resilience against climate and economic pressures. Their ability to operate independently of the national grid also makes them particularly valuable in remote or underserved farming areas where access to reliable electricity remains limited. In addition, the mobility and flexibility of these systems allow farmers to use a single unit across various locations and applications on the farm, reducing infrastructure requirements and operational costs.

As climate variability and energy challenges continue to affect agricultural production, mobile solar trailers offer a practical and sustainable solution for small-scale and emerging farmers looking for improved water access and greater long-term farming resilience. They are more than a technical innovation — they represent a pathway to resilience, sustainability, and independence for South Africa's farmers.

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From Field to Future:

Strengthening On-Farm Conservation of Plant Genetic Resources in SA

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South Africa is home to an extraordinary wealth of plant genetic resources, ranging from indigenous crops and wild relatives to locally adapted landraces cultivated by farming communities for generations. These genetic resources form the foundation of resilient agricultural systems,

supporting food security, cultural heritage, and livelihoods in a country marked by diverse climates and ecosystems. Yet this biological richness is increasingly under pressure. Climate change, land-use transformation, market-driven crop uniformity, and the erosion of traditional knowledge are steadily

On-farm conservation contributes to:



narrowing the diversity found in farmers' fields.

On-farm conservation, the continued cultivation, selection, use and management of diverse traditional crop varieties and landraces by farmers within their own production systems, offers a dynamic and community-centered approach to safeguarding this diversity. Unlike conservation in gene banks alone, on-farm conservation allows plant genetic resources to evolve alongside changing environmental conditions and farmer preferences. Farmers, therefore, are not only food producers but also stewards of biodiversity, maintaining and enhancing genetic diversity through their everyday practices. As climate change, market pressures, and uniform commercial varieties increasingly shape what farmers grow, the importance of conserving diverse, locally adapted crops has never been clearer. On-farm conservation offers South Africa a powerful, practical pathway to protect biodiversity while strengthening food security, livelihoods, and cultural heritage.

This article examines how strengthening on-farm conservation can secure South Africa's agricultural future. It explores the vital roles of farmers, indigenous knowledge systems, policy frameworks, and collaborative research in sustaining plant genetic diversity. By

identifying practical pathways and institutional strategies for protecting these resources, the article highlights how on-farm conservation can support resilient food systems, sustainable rural livelihoods, and long-term national food sovereignty. Ultimately, investing in the diversity present in our fields today is an investment in a more adaptable, productive, and food-secure tomorrow.

On-farm conservation Matters more than ever

Plant genetic resources, traditional crop varieties, landraces, and indigenous species, are the foundation of food security. They provide diversity, resilience, and adaptability. Unlike uniform commercial seeds, traditional varieties often tolerate drought, poor soils, pests, and unpredictable weather.

For centuries, African farmers conserved these resources naturally. They saved seeds from the best-performing plants, exchanged seeds with neighbours, and adapted crops to local conditions. This farmer-led conservation ensured stable harvests and safeguarded food systems.

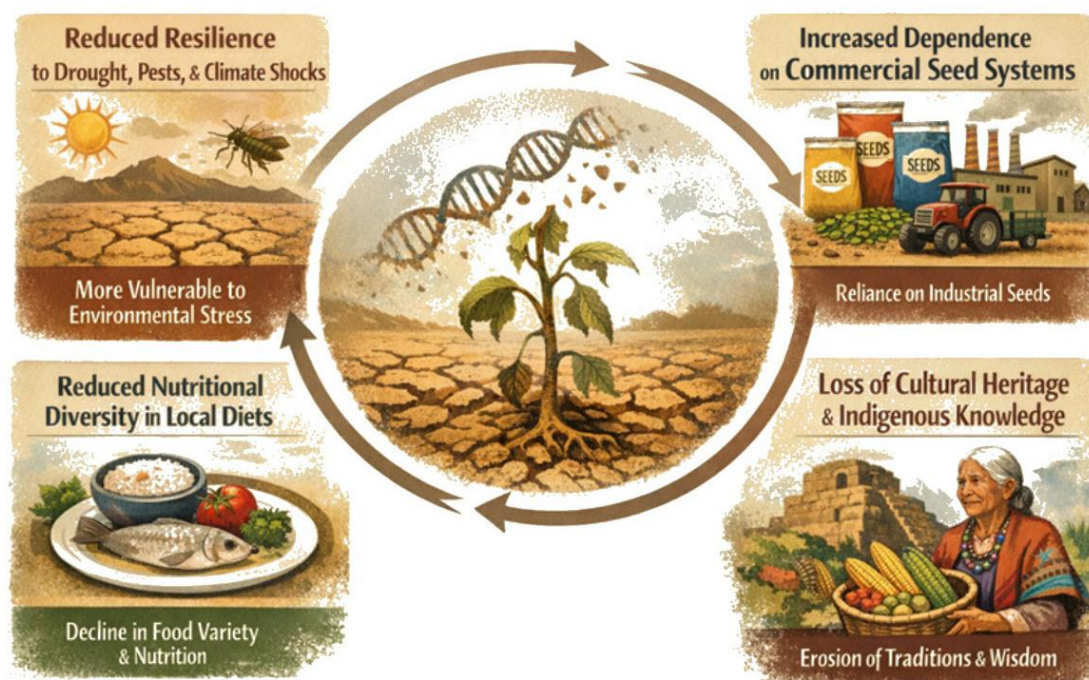
On-farm conservation keeps crops evolving. When farmers grow traditional varieties in real conditions, these plants continue adapting to changing environments. This living conservation is essential in a warming,

Farmers Conserved These Resources Naturally

They saved seeds from the best-performing plants, exchanged seeds with neighbours, and adapted crops to local conditions.



The Consequences of Genetic Erosion



uncertain climate. But when farmers stop growing traditional varieties, those genetic resources disappear forever.

How modern agriculture eroded conservation traditions

The shift toward commercial farming systems, hybrid seeds, and monoculture production has significantly reduced crop diversity. Many traditional varieties have been abandoned because they are not widely available in formal seed markets. This loss is known as “**genetic erosion**”, the disappearance of crop diversity from farmers’ fields. The figure below shows the consequences of genetic erosion:

South Africa’s food system has become heavily dependent on a small number of crops such as maize, while many nutritious indigenous crops have been neglected.

Farmers as Custodians of Biodiversity

Farmers remain the most important custodians of plant genetic resources. Smallholder farmers, especially women, play a central role in on-farm conservation. Through everyday decisions, selecting seed from the best plants, exchanging seed with neighbours, and storing seed across seasons, farmers actively shape crop diversity.

These informal seed systems are often more dynamic and inclusive than formal breeding

programmes. They reflect local preferences for taste, cooking time, storage life, and cultural significance, ensuring that conservation remains relevant to daily life.

On-farm conservation is not just about preserving seeds, it is about preserving livelihoods, culture, and future food systems.

Linking On-Farm Conservation to National Efforts

South Africa’s commitment to conserving plant genetic resources is supported by national policies and institutions, including the Directorate: Genetic Resources within the Department of Agriculture. While national gene banks play a vital role in safeguarding material ex situ, on-farm conservation complements these efforts by keeping genetic resources in use and in evolution. As part of ongoing efforts by the Directorate: Genetic Resources of the National Department of Agriculture, several on-farm conservation and multiplication projects have been rolled out since 2017 across the Northern Cape, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo provinces, helping smallholder and subsistence farmers to safeguard and grow South Africa’s valuable plant genetic resources. Here, farmers maintain diverse varieties of sorghum, maize, cowpea, bambara, groundnut, pumpkins, okra, calabash, and indigenous leafy vegetables, often without labelling it as “conservation.”

These projects:

- Reintroduce lost traditional crop varieties
- Involve farmers, many of them women, in seed conservation and multiplication.
- Farmers are cultivating a diverse mix of traditional crop varieties, including those often overlooked or underutilized such as sorghum, cowpea, mungbeans, pearl millet, finger millet, bambara, groundnut, okra, cassava and taro (amadumbe). These are complemented by other familiar staples like pumpkins, beans, and groundnuts, reflecting the rich agricultural heritage and resilience of local farming practices.
- Promoted seed multiplication and long term conservation On-farm.

Community seed banks, farmer field schools, participatory plant breeding initiatives, and household seed banking are increasingly recognised as practical tools to strengthen on-farm conservation. When supported through training, extension services, and enabling policies, these approaches bridge the gap between formal conservation systems and farmers' realities.

Why On-farm conservation is essential for South Africa's Future

South Africa's agricultural future depends not only on modern technologies and improved seed, but also on the protection and continued use of diverse plant genetic resources on

farmers' fields. On-farm conservation plays a critical role in ensuring long-term food system sustainability. The main functions of On-farm conservation are:

a) **Climate adaptability and resilience**

As droughts and heat intensify in provinces like the Northern Cape and Limpopo, maintaining traditional crop varieties improves climate adaptability and enhances resilience to environmental shocks.

b) **Maintaining traditional crop varieties / Maintaining genetic diversity**

Keeping diverse local crops in farmers' fields prevents genetic erosion and ensures that valuable traits remain available for future generations.

c) **Seed saving and sharing**

Farmer-led seed saving and sharing systems strengthen local seed security, reduce dependence on commercial seed, and support community-based conservation.

d) **Ecosystem health**

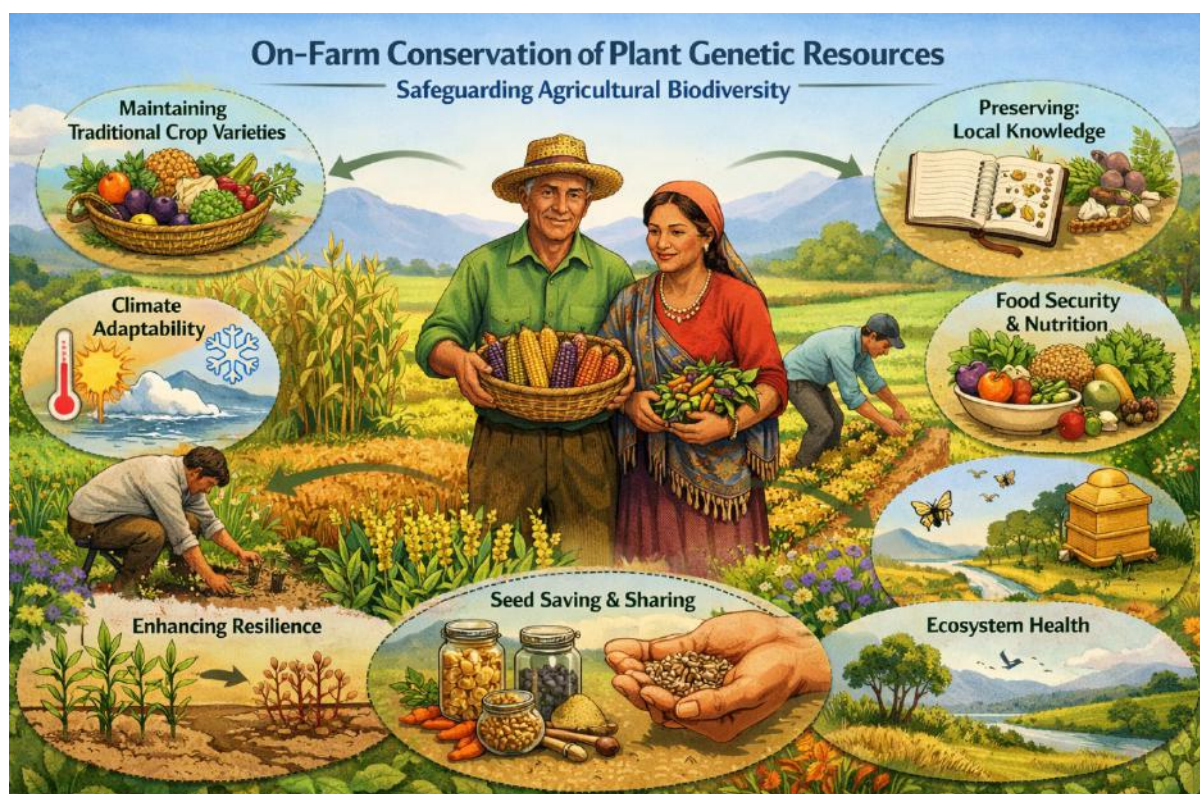
Crop diversity improves soil health, supports beneficial organisms, and contributes to more balanced and sustainable agroecosystems.

e) **Food and nutrition security**

Diverse crops improve household food availability and dietary diversity, enhancing both food and nutrition outcomes.

f) **Preserving local knowledge**

On-farm conservation safeguards



indigenous knowledge, traditional farming practices, and cultural heritage linked to seed and food systems.

Together, these elements make on-farm conservation a cornerstone of a resilient, sustainable, and inclusive agricultural future for South Africa.

Challenges on the Ground

Despite its importance, on-farm conservation faces growing challenges:

- Loss of traditional knowledge as younger generations move away from farming
- Replacement of local varieties with uniform commercial seed
- Limited recognition of farmers' seed systems in policy and markets
- Climate shocks that can wipe out local seed stocks

Addressing these challenges requires investment, not only in infrastructure, but in people, knowledge, and local institutions.

A Living Solution for a Changing Climate

On-farm conservation is not about preserving the past, it is about preparing for the future. In a warming world, the genetic diversity found in farmers' fields may hold the traits needed to develop tomorrow's climate-resilient crops.

By strengthening on-farm conservation, South Africa can build an agricultural system that is diverse, adaptable, and inclusive, one that values farmers not just as producers, but as stewards of the nation's genetic wealth.

Looking Ahead

The future of South Africa's food system may well depend on what is planted, saved, and shared today. Supporting on-farm conservation means supporting farmers, traditions, and ecosystems, ensuring that seeds continue to travel from field to field, generation to generation. ***Biodiversity does not survive in vaults alone. It thrives in fields, hands, and households.***

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Supplier Development Funds: Unlocking Growth for Small-Scale Farmers



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South Africa's agricultural sector is often discussed in terms of climate risks, rising input costs, and global price pressures. Yet a deeper structural issue continues to shape outcomes in the sector. Limited capital restrict investment in infrastructure, inputs and technology often trapping farmers in low productivity cycles. What is less widely understood is that part of the solution already exists within South Africa's competition policy framework.

Supplier Development Funds (SDFs) have emerged as one of the tools aimed at breaking this constraint. By combining finance with skills development and market access, these funds are helping farmers expand production, create jobs and build more sustainable farm business.

Supplier Development Funds Explained

Through merger regulation, large firms are increasingly required to contribute to economic inclusion. Under the Competition Act 89 of 1998, mergers are assessed not only by their impact on competition, but also on public interest considerations. These SDF, are

typically established by large agribusinesses, retailers or processors as part of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE), which seeks to expand economic participation among historically disadvantaged groups.

The SDF are increasingly proving that well-designed funding can unlock production, employment, ownership transformation, and the ability of emerging and expanding farmers to enter and participate in markets. Rather than operating as once-off grants, these funds are designed to support farmers who form part of the existing or potential value chains. The focus is on strengthening supply capacity. In practice, this means helping farmers produce more efficiently, meet market requirements and participate more competitively in formal agricultural markets.

Practical support for farmers

In practice, Supplier Development Funds go beyond simple financial assistance. Financial assistance often takes the form of Interest-free loans, blended finance (Grants, loans, and equity) depending on the needs and scale of farming operation.

The Funding is often directed towards productive assets such as irrigation systems, machinery, fencing, storage facilities and on farm operations. By lowering the cost of capital, farmers can invest in long-term improvements that would otherwise be unaffordable.

Non-financial support plays an equally important role. Many programs include training programs, production support, compliance standards and equipment use. Some facilitate access to inputs such as seeds and fertilizers, easing seasonal cash-flow pressure.

In a sector where market access is often the biggest barrier, this combination of support can be transformative. Several SGF's actively support market access by linking farmers to processors, retailers or export channels. For farmers, this translates into improved productivity, more stable income streams, and opportunities to enter formal value chains. In many cases, it provides a pathway from subsistence farming to commercial participation.

Evidence from the Field

Recent assessment and study evidence suggests that these funds are beginning to have a measurable impact. Over the past decade, more than R1 billion has been mobilized through development funds linked to merger conditions, supporting over 1,000 small enterprises and creating thousands of jobs.

Case studies highlighted in the Competition commission 2024 point to farmers expanding production and having access to market. Example: Mondi's Zimele Development Fund from the SDF assisted Mbonambi Agric Enterprise, a small farm that produces and supplies vegetable to supermarkets, small businesses and school feeding schemes. She accessed the funds through the development fund which assisted her with access to the market. The development funds negotiated with Food Lover's Market (In Richards Bay) to supply the store with her spinach.

Other Case examples:

- Nohari Farms through Coca Cola's Development Fund

- Clifton Farm through the Coca Cola Mintirirho Development Fund
- Grasdal Farm through South African Breweries Public Investment Fund
- Imihlobo Cooperative through Mondi's Zimele Development Fund

Gaps that can undermine progress

While evidence is encouraging, access to these opportunities is not automatic. Awareness remains limited, and many farmers are not connected to the networks through which these programs operate. Participation often requires engagement with cooperatives, industry bodies, or development agencies. Farmers must also meet certain standards, including consistent production quality and reliability of supply.

This means that while the policy framework is in place, its success depends on effective implementation and access. Research shows that these funds are more likely to be imposed in sectors such as agriculture and in periods of high unemployment and inequality. This suggests that they are not random interventions, but targeted tools designed to address structural challenges in the economy. Agriculture, in this sense, is more than a productive sector, it is a vehicle for job creation, poverty reduction, and rural development.

Despite their potential, challenges remain. Implementation is not always consistent, monitoring mechanisms are often weak, and not all farmers benefit equally. Structural constraints such as land access, infrastructure deficits, and high input costs continue to limit the overall impact of these interventions. Without addressing these issues, the full benefits of Supplier Development Funds may not be realized.

The way forward

Overall, the supplier development funds have proven to be an effective tool for unlocking supply-side constraints in agriculture and transforming South Africa's agricultural sector. Going forward, a more coordinated approach is needed. Government must strengthen monitoring and ensure that funds reach farmers on the ground. Large firms should move beyond compliance and view supplier development as a long-term investment in their value chains.

The lesson is clear: *the greatest gains are paired with skills development and market access and when the long-term sustainability of the farm remains the central objective*

Greater awareness is now critical. Small farmers are encouraged to engage with their buyers, processors, commodity organizations or agribusiness partners, as these value-chain relationships are often the entry point into supplier development program. Furthermore, Farmers, in turn, need to stay informed, engage in available programs, and position themselves to participate in formal markets.

Understanding how these funds work and how to access them is a crucial step towards turning opportunity into lasting farm growth.

Acknowledgement:

The article draws from insights from the Impact Study Report Agriculture by the Competition Commission on Development funds for increased enterprise development and market competitiveness in the agricultural sector.

Sources: Competition Commission, 2024. Agriculture Development Funds created in the period 2015-2020. <https://www.compcom.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Impact-Study-Report-Agriculture-Development-Funds-2015-2020.pdf>

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Pizza with Bacon, Feta & Basil Pesto

Ina Paarman

This pizza is not for those sensitive to salt. Just replace the feta with more mozzarella, and the bacon with sandwich ham

Makes 2 Pizzas

You Will Need:

125 g streaky bacon or sliced sandwich ham (or salami), chopped

2 medium size, ready-to-bake pizza bases

½ cup (125 ml) Ina Paarman's Tomato & Basil Pasta Sauce

250 g mozzarella cheese, coarsely grated

1 wheel feta or extra mozzarella cheese

1 x 125 g Ina Paarman's Basil Pesto

fresh basil leaves for garnish (optional)

Ina's Tip

If you have a pizza stone, preheat it to 220 °C for 20 minutes on the base of the oven. Top with pizza and turn the temperature down to 180 °C.

Method:

Adjust the oven rack to the middle position, and preheat the oven to 180 °C.

Pan-fry the bacon until just cooked, then set aside.

Spread them generously with the pasta sauce.

Top the bases with the grated mozzarella, fried bacon, and crumbled feta (if using).

Bake for 10 - 12 minutes or until golden.

Remove the pizzas from the oven.

Squeeze Basil Pesto from a cut corner of the pack.

Garnish with a few basil leaves (optional).

Portion and serve hot.



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Cape Malay Vegetable Curry

Ina Paarman

A mildly spiced vegetable curry done Cape Malay style.

Serves: 8

You Will Need:

- 3 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed 1 cm x 1cm
- 2 T (30 ml) Ina Paarman's Masala Seasoning
- 4 T (60 ml) canola oil
- 200g green beans, stem ends removed and halved
- ½ cup (125 ml) fresh cream or coconut milk
- ½ cup (125 ml) water
- 1 x 250 ml Ina Paarman's Cape Malay Curry Cook-In Sauce
- 1 medium head of cauliflower (prepared as demonstrated in video)

Watch the video



Method:

Season the cubed potatoes with Masala Seasoning.

In a saucepan, heat the oil to smoking point, add the potatoes, and fry until light brown and semi-cooked.

Add the green beans and fry for another few minutes.

Add the cream or coconut milk, water, and Cape Malay Curry Sauce.

Bring to a simmer.

Add the cauliflower and stir through.

Cover with a lid and simmer until the cauliflower is tender.

Serve with roti or Yellow Rice and Tomato Sambal and/or Cucumber Raita.



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