



# Marking 10 years of AgriBiz Training

From the 15-19 May 2017, female agricultural entrepreneurs from all provinces participated in the AgriBiz Female Entrepreneurship Programme. The training was facilitated by Market Matters and Buhle Farmers Academy. Over 30 participants from across all ages benefitted from an accredited AgriSETA course.

This was the first time the course gained accreditation from AgriSETA after 10 years. Its humble beginnings can be traced to former Chairperson Ntombi Msimang quest for women involved in agriculture to gain semblance of knowledge of what they do and how to access markets. This was after the NAMC's research diagnostic report on barriers to market access which indicated that the most affected were

women. Since then, the programme gained support from SAWEN, Land Bank, AgriSETA, Western Cape Department of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

Paying special homage was Agribusiness Development Senior Manager Khumbuzile Mosoma who said feedback received from previous participants was more than encouraging. "The programme has welcomed female farmers of the year, young and old female farmers, those involved in agro-processing and retail. But the real factor we always take away year in and out is the excitement these ladies show to return back to their communities and add impact. Tabisa Nkohl from the Land Bank candidly supported Mosoma's assertion.

The Bank has witnessed an increase in smallholder farmer enquiring about grants and loans which has necessitated for the bank to design a funding model catered uniquely for smallholder farmers. HOD of Western Cape Agriculture Joyene Isaacs said she was proud to be associated with this programme even though it never received the spotlight it deserved.

At a special gala dinner marking the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the programme, a song was sung in bouts of exuberance. The now common song titled 'Ha O swenkela (if you look down on) agriculture, you will never come alright' participants reminded the NAMC that the AgriBiz programme should not die or fade but for the benefit of the next generation.

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