



# NAMMC

Promoting market access for South African agriculture

# Agripreneur

Issue 19 | DECEMBER 2019



**Female entrepreneurs:  
A story of the Frugi Fruit  
Juice Company**

**Meet the 21-year  
old winemaker from  
Tshitavha Tsha Sambando,  
Limpopo**

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# PREFACE

Welcome to the nineteenth edition of the Agripreneur publication of the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC). Through this publication, the NAMC seeks to create a platform where agripreneurs and farmers, mainly smallholders, can share their knowledge and skills, challenges, experiences and insights with one another. It is believed that this publication will assist smallholders in learning from one another, developing strategies, adopting models, and becoming part of the value chain through the marketing of commodities and products that meet market standards and are safe for consumption. Agripreneur also serves to promote and profile aspects of South African agriculture as a brand. Each issue features good stories that will hopefully convince the reader to #LoveRSAAgric.

## **Presented in Agripreneur 19 are the following topics:**

- (1) Female entrepreneurs: A story of the Frugi Fruit Juice Company
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- (4) Modulaqhowa plant nursery inspires youth participation into agriculture

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### **A note from the editor**

The agriculture economy has struggled in 2019, mainly due to drought and biosecurity challenges. In quarter 1 of 2019, the agriculture production fell by 13,2%. Employment also declined by 12 000 quarter on quarter, whereas it went down by 9 000 year on year. In quarter 2, agriculture production contracted by 4,2%. Employment increased by 5 000 quarter on quarter, while declining by 1 000 year on year. Quarter 3 also mirrors a similar trend where production fell by 3, 6% quarter on quarter.

With the current drought situation in provinces such as the Northern Cape and the Eastern Cape, where water supply failures threaten some areas and livestock farmers are considering reducing their herd sizes, the struggles of the agriculture economy may well continue into the fourth quarter. Furthermore, if the rainfall does not improve in many parts of the country, we are in for another agricultural economy slump in 2020, which, coupled with Eskom's power provision challenges, will have adverse effects on the GDP in the fourth quarter. In other words, we could expect the economy to contract in the next quarter.

Enjoy the reading, love South African agriculture!

The NAMC wishes you a happy holiday season and a prosperous new year. Take care on the roads.



# Female entrepreneurs: A story of the Frugi Fruit Juice Company

By Zosuliwe **Kala** & Pamela **Matyolo**

Being a successful entrepreneur means more than starting a new venture every other day. It means the right attitude towards your business, determination and the courage to achieve success, which goes a long way of passion, perseverance and starts with what you have.

Here follows the story of Frugi Fruit Juice, a family-owned business which was established in April 2017. The company is situated at East Lynne in Pretoria and was founded by three family members with Lerato Laka being involved in day-to-day operations, including procurement of inputs, processing, packaging and distribution.

The business idea came as an alternative to finding an employment opportunity for Lerato, who is a paralegal graduate. They started out using a bucket to produce the juice and sell it to neighbours. The response she got from her customers drove her to go bigger. She partnered with the other two of her families of relatives (extended family) and together, they dug deeper into their pockets to buy a processing machine, get input suppliers (e.g. for inputs such as concentrate and bottles) and register the business. One of the family members assisted with branding, creation of the website and advertising on social media and this is how the Frugi fruit juice was born.

**Figure 1:** From left to right: Lerato Laka, mama Rosina Laka and Zandile Gwala



**Figure 2:** Maama Rosina Laka bottling the Juice being

The processing machine has a capacity of 650 litres, which enables them to produce six flavours of fruit juices (orange, mango and orange, apple, rooibos and red fruit, and fruit medley) ranging from 250 ml to 5 litre-bottles. In addition to juice, they also produce bottled water (available in 500 ml only). The juice is 100% fruit juice.



**Figure 3:** Packaged products

Due to limited production capacity, they currently supply to schools, weddings, funeral parlours and individuals that buy in bulk. Deliveries are done on request. Although there is a high demand for their juice, Lerato feels that the business is not ready to supply to the retail stores yet, mainly due to the issue of capacity.

The business has not received any external support so far. In addition to low capacity, the business battles other challenges such as distribution. They only have one car, which makes it hard for them to make deliveries on time. Besides, the car is small and old and sometimes it gets them into bigger trouble. The worst-case scenario was when they got robbed on the way to deliver. Lerato, therefore, wishes them to be able to grow in terms of bigger spaces and machines that will enable them to produce larger volumes, supply the retail stores and some of their current markets and cut off the ones that put them at risk of getting stuck and robbed.



**Figure 4:** Frugi Fruit Juice branded company car

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# PortiaM

**an agro-processing venture that has opened up a business opportunity for rural people of Limpopo to earn income from the Marula trees**

Portia Matshidiso Mngomezulu is a founder and a manager of the Sibahle Skin Solutions, trading as Portia M. The company was established in 2011 and is based in Lynwood, Pretoria. As the name suggests, the company processes marula into skin and personal care products. The idea of Portia M emanated from the advice that was given to Portia by her mother-in-law to use marula oil to cure stretch marks. After realising the benefits of the oil, she started selling it to friends and relatives receiving a positive response. As a result, Sibahle Skin Solutions was founded.



**Figure 5:** The resources at the beginning of the initiative

Like most start-up companies, the Sibahle Skin Solutions started in the kitchen and later moved to the garage, but now it has developed into a well-recognised brand “Portia M”. Portia then rented office space at the Innovation Hub (Bio park), which is where the company is located in Lynwood. At this new location, she was using a 2-plate stove for processing. The Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) and the South African Breweries Limited (SAB) assisted her with formulations and the testing of her products. Subsequently, SEDA and the Innovation Hub assisted her to buy machinery. Furthermore, she was part of the top 40 National Gazette and she received R1 million, which further assisted her to purchase machinery and a delivery truck.

**Figure 6:** Delivery truck



She now produces more than 2 000 units of products per month and manufactures over 12 skin products from marula, namely the skin face wash, toner, anti-blemish day cream, day cream for oily skin, night cream, tissue oil (in 100 and 200 ml), skin body lotion (250 and 400 ml), body cream, hand cream and a body lotion for men.

**Figure 7:** Some of the Portia M products



Since her childhood days, Portia knew that marula was used to produce marula beer, which is a common custom in areas around the Limpopo province. Therefore, Portia’s business has opened up opportunities for people of such regions to derive income from the marula trees. An example is one cooperative of women who extract the

kernels from ripe marula fruits by hand and cold-press the kernels to harvest the marula nuts, which are a source of oil. Sibahle Skin Solutions then buys the nuts from the cooperative and other people who collect them.

Portia M products are sold nationwide at PicknPay, Shoprite, Checkers, Clicks, Spar and Game stores, Kalapeng pharmacy and other independent pharmacies. The products are going to be available at Jet Stores soon. The distribution also extends to Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana and Namibia.



**Figure 8:** Employees

In addition to creating a business opportunity for the people from the local villages of Limpopo, the Sibahle Skin Solutions employs 27 permanent workers (20 females and 7 males) – 24 of the employees are from a younger group. Employees attend training offered by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Innovation Hub. Furthermore, the company is involved in some social responsibility activities such as donating blankets, food and money.

Portia has a BTech Degree in information technology. She has also completed various other training, including project management and supply development. She further studied planning, chemical mixing and formulation of products through a scholarship awarded by Massmart.

The company plans to develop Portia M to be a leading brand in Africa, and to extend the market linkages in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region and further up the continent. Nigeria has shown interest in the Portia M products. However, the main aim of the short-to-medium term is to increase awareness of South African consumers about these products. It is also Portia's wish that the people who are supplying her with the nuts, could obtain machinery to harvest the nuts because they are currently doing it by hand, which is strenuous and takes time.

Like any other business, Sibahle Skin Solutions has its fair share of challenges - the main one being space (factory space). The business is growing faster and the current area that is being used is quickly starting to lack space. If this is not attended to abruptly, the effort of the business to extend its market share could be in vain. Machinery for extracting the oil from the nuts and processing will be required to accomplish the expansion of the operations. One of the advantages is that the marula tree itself is drought resistant which, to some degree, will minimise the immediate impact of climate change on the products.

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**VHUKHUDO MATEKA**

**Meet the 21-year old  
winemaker from Tshitavha Tsha  
Sambando, Limpopo**

**By Pamela Matyolo, Zosuliwe Kala & Thabile Nkunjana**

We are all granted chances to pursue our dreams, although it is not easy to reach our goals. Being rejected does not mean we should stop dreaming, planning and doing. Here follows the story of Vhukhudo Mateka, a 21-year old passionate winemaker from Tshitavha Tsha Sambando in Limpopo. Vhukhudo went through many rejections when he sought support to start up his own business of winemaking. Setbacks which, however, did not stop him from fighting for his dreams and ideas. He is a young entrepreneur, a student at Unisa, who went from selling Mofaya on the streets of Pretoria to owning his own wine brand known as “Cudo wines”. This business was inspired by the entrepreneurship skills he acquired from selling Mofaya on the streets of Pretoria. He says: “As a student sometimes you have to hustle for income just to get by.” He then had an idea of starting his own venture in winemaking, a challenging endeavour. He knocked on many doors to seek for assistance, both in government and private sectors, but to no avail. After many rejections, he finally found someone who believed in his idea and helped him to explore this new venture. He recently launched his wine brand.



**Figure 9:** Thabile Nkunjana (back), Zosuliwe Kala, Vhukhudo Mateka & Pamela Matyolo (from left - right)

Currently, he produces natural sweet red and dry wine and has a contract with a farm in the Western Cape. He has hopes of owning a farm in future and building his brand to be known globally. Although he has and still is trying to promote his brand all over South Africa, he highlighted that market access is still one of the main challenges he is facing. At this stage, he says he is struggling to secure a market share in retail and liquor stores.

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# Modulaqhowa plant nursery inspires youth participation into agriculture

By Kayaletu Sotsha

*Women play a critical role in the agriculture sector. As such, the enhancement of opportunities for women entrepreneurs and agripreneurs is one of the key outcomes of the initiatives aimed towards economic development. The initiative seeks to support them to gain higher capacity to participate and enhance economic activities in their localities. Here follows the story of the Modulaqhowa primary cooperative, a business venture owned by women in Botshabelo. Botshabelo, which means “Place of refuge”, is one of the largest townships in the country and is home to many people that moved there from Free State farms to look for a place to live.*



**Figure 10:**  
Seedlings

The Modulaqhowa cooperative was formed in 1992 by two action groups called Gauta Waste Management and Mohaladitwe Greening Project. The cooperative started by planting trees at Ntemoseng Secondary School and later moved to the municipal park at G-section. In 2013, the all-male members decided to hand over the operations of the cooperative to women. As such, it was registered as a 100% women-owned cooperative in 2014. The cooperative currently has access to 7 ha land but is using 3 ha. Figure 1 shows the leaders of the cooperative, with Ms Lindiwe Ludada not in the picture. Ms Mabeba is the director and one of the founding members of the cooperative.



**Figure 11:** From left – right; Sophy Mabeba, Maria Roestof, Alina Mojandani & Mapitso Ramoholi

The cooperative uses animal manure, dry leaves and compost to fertilise the soil and has created 10 permanent and 5 temporary job opportunities. During arbour month, the cooperative donates trees to the local communities and schools. It also donates seedlings to local organisations.

**Figure 12:** Graduates



Young people working in the cooperative and staff members have been trained as part of the skill transfer programme. In addition, cooperative members take part in the Integrated Resource Plan programme. One of the positive aspects of the cooperative in youth development is that it encourages the youth to learn. As such, some young people have obtained bursaries to study entrepreneurship programmes at the University of the Free State funded by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The Modulaqhowa also offers opportunities for graduates to do vocational work.

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**Figure 13:** Apple trees



The trees are marketed as far as Northern Cape, North West and Gauteng provinces, with Wits University currently being a major client. The local markets include, schools, local businesses, commercial nurseries and the communities around Botshabelo. However, the market and transport still remain one of the main challenges the business is facing.

In 2015 and 2018, the cooperative received awards for the best smallholder enterprise and for the recognition by the MEC, respectively.

The aim of the cooperative is to grow to a commercial scale and to stimulate local economic activity by capacitating youth to grow to be entrepreneurs or agripreneurs in the near future.

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