

# agripreneur

Issue 41 | June 2025



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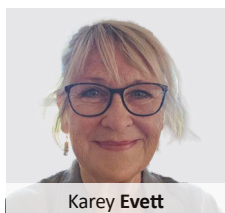
# PREFACE

Welcome to the 41<sup>st</sup> edition of the Agripreneur, a publication produced by the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) to create a platform where agripreneurs and farmers, primarily smallholders, can share their knowledge, skills, challenges, experiences and insights. This publication is intended to assist smallholders to learn from other agripreneurs, develop strategies, adopt models and become part of the value chain by marketing commodities and products that meet market standards and are safe for consumption. The Agripreneur also promotes and profiles aspects of South African agriculture as a brand. Each edition features compelling stories that aim to persuade readers to #LoveRSAAgric.

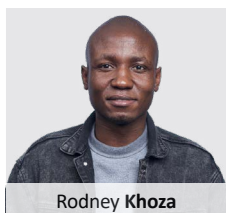
## IN THIS 41<sup>ST</sup> EDITION OF AGRIPRENEUR, WE HAVE FEATURED THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

1. Editor's note
2. Agri-highlights
3. Agri-tourism – A global trend
4. Essential agribusiness tips for smallholder farmers
5. Upholding the highest standards pays off
6. Consumer demand for high-quality produce: The Serage farm story
7. Hleko Farming and Multi Projects give hope to agripreneurs
8. Statutory measures promoting competition and transformation in South Africa's wool industry

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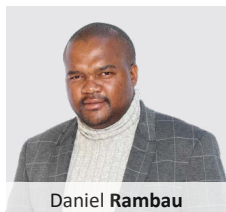
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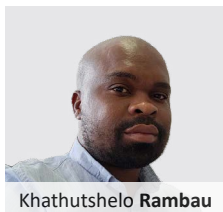
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# EDITOR'S NOTE



Matume Maila

Greetings, readers. It gives me great pleasure to introduce Agripreneur Issue 41, the most recent edition. The Agripreneur continues to assist smallholder farmers to promote their businesses while also sharing skills, expertise, challenges, experiences, and new insights. I'm certain that this will be an excellent read for all of you.

In this issue, we present a review of notable agricultural trends from April to June 2025, as well as dazzling stories of young, creative agripreneurs making significant contributions to the agricultural industry. One of the highlights is the increase in South African agricultural exports in the first quarter of 2025. This is a noteworthy milestone, as the sector's agricultural exports totalled \$3.36 billion.

This issue includes a clarification statement on the banana import ban and a call to action for young people in agriculture as well as insights on the global agritourism trend. Furthermore, the Issue contains useful agribusiness advice for smallholder farmers. This offers insight into the profitability of agribusiness and how smallholder farmers can ensure their activities are sustainable.

The SA Olive's insights on how maintaining the highest standards pays off; competition and transformation in South Africa's wool industry; and the incredible agribusiness stories of Ms Wendy Moshakga and Hleko Farm Business are also featured.

Enjoy the read!

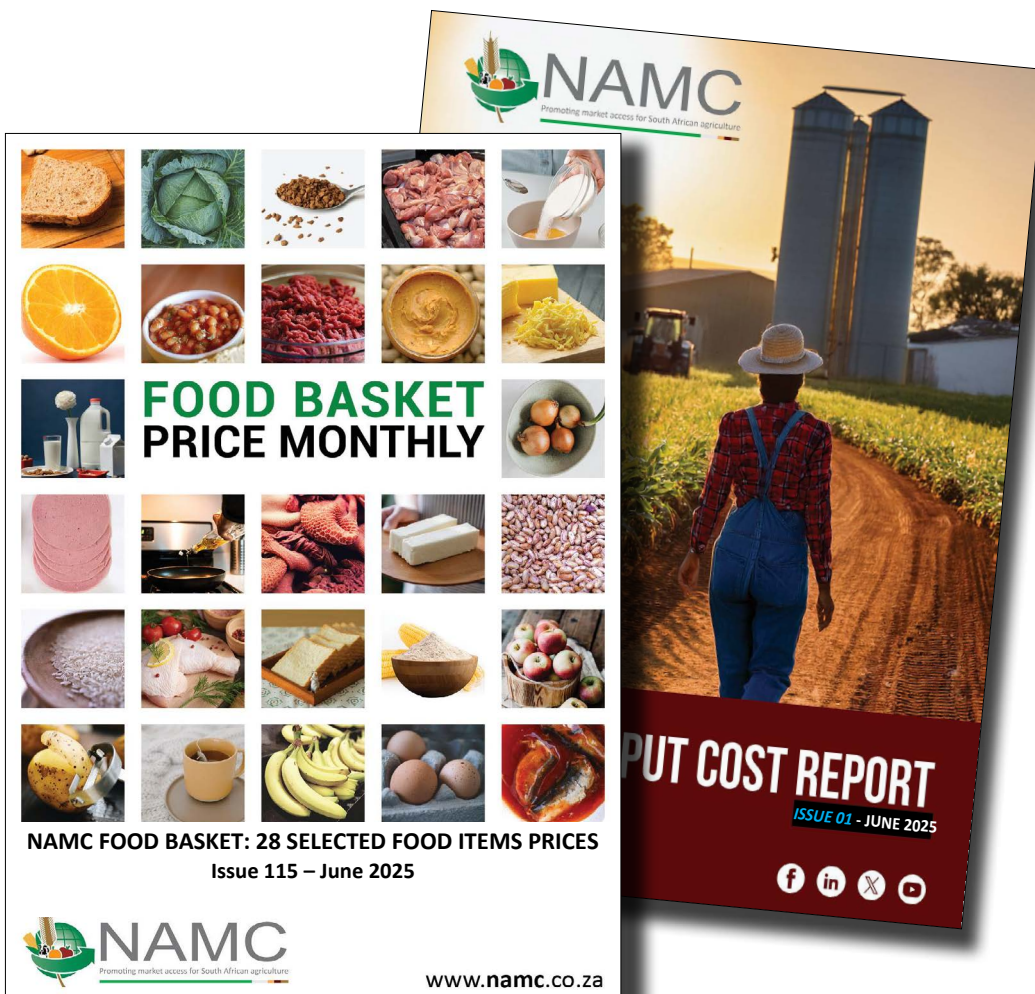
*Matume Maila*



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“Tracks and report food price trends in South Africa to advise the Minister on any possible action that could be taken when national and household food security is threatened”



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# AGRI-HIGHLIGHTS:

## APRIL – JUNE 2025

### MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE WELCOMES EXPORT GROWTH DURING QUARTER 1 OF 2025.



The Minister of Agriculture, Mr. John Steenhuisen, welcomes the good performance of South Africa's agricultural exports in the first quarter of 2025.

The sector achieved US\$3.36 billion in agricultural exports, representing a significant 10% increase year-on-year. This growth was mainly fueled by higher export volumes, which included grapes, maize, apples, and wine, alongside improved international commodity prices.

Minister Steenhuisen highlighted that this good performance is a testament to

the unwavering dedication and courageousness of the country's farmers and the entire value chain. "We can all agree that agriculture plays a vital role in our nation's economic ambitions and contributes significantly to our trade balance," he stated.

In May 2025, the agricultural industry received positive news. According to Statistics South Africa's (StatsSA) Quarterly Labour Force Survey, primary agriculture employment increased by 1% from the previous quarter, reaching 930,000 jobs in Q1 2025.

This increase was primarily observed in field crops, game, and hunting subsectors. While

acknowledging that annual employment remained down by 1% year-on-year, indicating ongoing recovery from past financial difficulties, Minister Steenhuisen expressed confidence in the sector's trajectory.

***"This mild recovery in employment is a welcomed sign, and the Department of Agriculture is committed to implementing interventions to support the subsectors and regions still feeling the effects of previous challenges," he continued.***

Click [here](#) to access the minister's announcement.

# THE PROHIBITION ON BANANA IMPORTS, THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE CLARIFIES.

**O**n May 15, 2025, the Department of Agriculture (DoA) issued a media statement to clarify speculation about the prohibition on banana imports from Tanzania to South Africa.

This came after media reports suggested that Tanzanian authorities may impose a restriction on the purchase of agricultural products from South Africa, citing speculation that South Africa does not allow banana imports from Tanzania.

The South African Ministry of Agriculture thought it appropriate to emphasize that the two countries have a good agricultural trading relationship and that there has never been

a prohibition on banana imports from Tanzania to South Africa.

The National Plant Protection Organization of South Africa (NPPOZA) under the DoA, in collaboration with its Tanzanian plant health counterparts, previously negotiated and agreed on market access for numerous plants and plant product commodities between the two countries.

Tanzanian avocados have been exported to South Africa for the past four years and have a seasonal advantage over local supply, bridging the gap for domestic consumption.

The two technical counterparts from South Africa and Tanzania are currently negotiating market

access to allow for the safe trade of bananas from Tanzania to South Africa.

The South African DoA received a market access request application from Tanzania to export bananas to South Africa in February 2025, and NPPOZA is still undertaking a pest risk analysis (PRA) to draft import regulations.

The processes will follow appropriate phytosanitary regulatory frameworks and International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) standards.

The detailed announcement by the government is available [here](#).



# A CALL TO ACTION: YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE



**W**ith June being Youth Month, it is critical to stress the importance of increased youth participation in the agricultural sector to ensure its long-term sustainability and growth.

“The future of our country and our agricultural industry hinges on the active participation of our youth”.

Minister Steenhuisen underlined the importance of instilling in young people a passion for farming, agribusiness, and the entire agricultural value chain.

The minister emphasised that young talent can be acquired and retained with sufficient investment and coordinated efforts across the whole value chain. This includes making financial support available and tailored to young agribusiness owners.

“The energy, innovation, and adaptability of our young citizens are precisely what our agricultural sector needs to reach its full potential and ensure lasting food security,” the minister said.

Minister Steenhuisen calls upon all stakeholders, including all spheres of government, private sector, educational institutions and communities to lend their

support in creating an enabling environment for the country’s youth to flourish in agriculture. “We are looking forward to having progressive engagements and interventions as a way to commemorate Youth Month so that our young farmers can contribute to growing our economy,” Minister Steenhuisen concluded.

It should be noted that the DoA provides bursaries to deserving students studying agriculture-related subjects. The applications for the 2026 academic year are now open.

Click [here](#) to access the bursaries application form.

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# AGRI-TOURISM – A GLOBAL TREND

By: Christelle Van Zyl



**A**lthough many people are unfamiliar with the word, agri-tourism has been around for a long time. Globally, many countries have recognised the benefits of agri-tourism and have invested in its development and promotion.

**Italy**, for example, enacted a national framework law in 2006 to regulate and support farmers in developing agri-tourism. Read [more](#) about the law and how it helped agri-tourism become a vital component of Italy's rural economy:

*"This law clarified the conditions under which agritourism activities could be conducted, reinforcing the principle of agricultural connection and ensuring that hospitality services remained subordinate to farming operations."*

Another example of a progressive country in agri-tourism is the **USA**. Each state has its agri-tourism policies and laws. Read [more](#) about the various state laws:

*"States' Agritourism Statutes provides the statutory text of each of the states' agritourism statutes."*

**India**, as a final illustration. The Maharashtra State's policy provides farmers with information on eligibility and registration, financial incentives, and non-financial benefits for developing an agri-tourism business. Read [more](#) about their New Tourism Policy, which focuses on agri-tourism:

*"5. Services provided to tourists by Agri Tourism centre: - An Agri Tourism Centre operator should make available the below-mentioned one or more or all services to tourists along with farming."*

The **Global Agritourism Network** (GAN) was established in 2023 in response to growing global focus on the development and promotion of agritourism. Join this international community to explore the different elements of agri-tourism. Benefits include free webinars where farmers and academics from all around the world share their practices and experiences, international conferences, and access to up-to-date information. Read more about this community:

*"Our mission is to connect and support agritourism practitioners, researchers, and enthusiasts across the globe that benefit local agricultural producers, communities, and visitors."*

There is a wealth of material accessible on agri-tourism practices from around the world, but it can be difficult to find if you don't know where to look. While not all international information is directly applicable to us in South Africa, it does provide valuable context and a solid framework for developing ideas.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact:

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# ESSENTIAL AGRIBUSINESS TIPS FOR SMALLHOLDER FARMERS

By: Bernard Manganyi



Across the diverse landscapes of South Africa, smallholder farmers are increasingly looking beyond subsistence to embrace the [principles of agripreneurship](#), transforming their farming activities into strategic, profitable businesses. This transition is critical to improving rural livelihoods, increasing food security, and promoting inclusive economic growth.

This transformation is centered on mastering essential agribusiness practices, from production to marketing. A profitable agribusiness requires a comprehensive approach, beginning with rigorous administration of the farming operation itself.

## 1. Production efficiency

Production efficiency is paramount; this includes carefully selecting crops or livestock breeds most suited to your agro-

ecological conditions, available land, and resources. Focusing on quality inputs, such as appropriate fertilisers, pest control measures, and certified seeds or healthy animal stock, is crucial for maximising yields and meeting market expectations.

[Climate-smart agricultural practices](#), such as water management techniques and the cultivation of drought-resistant cultivars, serve to increase resilience and safeguard

production against environmental instability.

[Maintaining accurate and detailed records of all inputs](#), labour, and output for each crop or enterprise provides valuable data for cost analysis, identifying inefficiencies, and making informed decisions to improve productivity in future seasons.

## 2. Effective marketing

Most importantly, profitability is realised in the marketplace, not just the field. [Effective marketing](#) begins with thoroughly understanding your potential buyers, whether they are local consumers, informal traders, restaurants, supermarkets, or processors. Each market segment has specific requirements regarding the quality, quantity, size, and consistency of produce. Smallholder agripreneurs must strive to meet these standards consistently.

This often necessitates investing time in proper post-harvest handling, including cleaning, grading, sorting, and appropriate packaging, to enhance the appeal and value of your products. Exploring multiple marketing channels rather than relying on a single buyer can increase your reach and bargaining power.

Building direct relationships with local businesses or participating actively in local markets can sometimes offer better prices and more immediate feedback on product quality.

## 3. Financial Management

Behind successful production and marketing is sound [financial](#)

[management](#). This is often an area requiring deliberate attention for emerging agripreneurs.

Maintaining meticulous records of all sales proceeds and all expenses, from purchasing seeds and fertilisers to paying for labour, transport, and packaging, is essential. Effective cost estimation, income forecasting, and cash flow management are simplified by the implementation of a basic budgeting procedure for every production cycle.

Setting competitive yet profitable prices and identifying where expenses can be reduced without compromising quality or yield requires an understanding of the actual cost of producing each product.

Maintaining separate financial records for the agribusiness and personal finances provides a clear picture of the farm's economic health. Regularly evaluating these financial records is key to monitoring performance and making data-driven decisions.

## 4. Profitability

[Achieving profitability](#) is an important step, but long-term growth requires strategic reinvestment. Successful agripreneurs invest a percentage of their profit back into the agribusiness rather than spending it all immediately.

This could include upgrading or maintaining essential infrastructure such as irrigation systems or storage facilities, purchasing more efficient equipment, investing in higher-quality inputs, or providing

financing for technical and business training. Prioritising reinvestment boosts the farm's capacity, increases productivity, improves product quality, and enhances overall operational efficiency and resilience against unforeseen shocks.

This forward-thinking approach is fundamental to scaling the business and ensuring its long-term viability.

Increasing profitability and stability can often be achieved through various forms of integration. [Vertical integration](#) involves taking on additional activities along the value chain. For a smallholder, this could imply going beyond selling raw produce to cleaning, packaging, or even undertaking basic processing such as drying vegetables or fruits, making jams, or producing sauces.

These steps add value to the product and can capture a larger share of the consumer market. [Horizontal integration](#), typically achieved through collaboration with other farmers in cooperatives or associations, offers numerous advantages.

When resources are pooled, farmers can purchase inputs in bulk at lower prices, collectively market larger volumes to reach bigger and possibly more lucrative buyers, share information and best practices, and strengthen their collective bargaining power in the market. Both vertical and horizontal integration can lead to cost savings, higher revenues, and a more secure position within the agricultural value chain.

# UPHOLDING THE HIGHEST STANDARDS PAYS OFF

By: Karey Evett



When SA Olive launched its mark of quality in 2008, the association knew it would be a game-changer but didn't fully appreciate how far-reaching its effects would be in terms of how South African extra virgin olive oils (EVOOs) are perceived and ranked in the world. The Commitment to Compliance (CTC) Scheme is a voluntary, integrity-based scheme managed by SA Olive for locally produced EVOO. The green SA Olive label on a bottle of EVOO guarantees that the EVOO is 100% locally (South African) produced, authentic Extra Virgin Olive Oil, and produced during the harvest year specified on the seal.

It also assures consumers that they may enjoy all the benefits of a fresh juice extracted from newly harvested olives. From a health viewpoint, the CTC seal also confirms that the SA Olive Organoleptic Tasting Panel considers the content to be free of any organoleptic defects and that it complies with the International Olive Council (IOC) chemical analysis standards for free fatty acids (FFA) and peroxide value (PV).

The SA Olive CTC seal demonstrates not just authenticity but also commitment to the quality of the Extra Virgin Olive Oil and guarantees that the labelling of the product is correct and

transparent. The year of harvest and 'best before' date are clearly displayed on the label to verify the freshness of the oil. The SA Olive seal guarantees all of this while encouraging consumers to support the local olive oil industry and the producers that have earned the seal.

Wendy Petersen, the CEO of SA Olive, states, "We need a benchmark - a mark of quality – that affirms the quality of our EVOOs. The CTC seal achieves this and more.

It not only assures quality, authenticity and origin but it also demonstrates the commitment by our members – the EVOO producers in South Africa – that they adhere to a strict code of process and production, and this helps to not only maintain high quality produce but also ensures that the standard is fully understood in the industry and beyond. The CTC seal – the SA Olive label – attests to the products' excellence in taste and production, and this seal of confidence has really made a significant difference in perceptions and understanding around our local olive oil production."

Other interventions also serve to promote South African EVOOs, such as the annual SA Olive Awards, which showcase the very best quality and tasting oils. The EVOOs are scrutinised and assessed by an expert,



internationally qualified panel of local and international olive oil judges. Rather like wine awards, the SA Olive Awards also highlight the best of each year's season, giving retailers and consumers alike the information they need to select the very best.

Many international eyes also focus on the SA Olive awards, particularly now that more and more South African EVOOs are gaining global recognition and winning international competitions in which they compete against producers from some of the most established and mature markets in the world. These accolades, both domestic and international, show that the quality and pride put into manufacturing South African EVOOs is worthwhile.

To illustrate, some of the SA Olive winners are international competition winners too, such as Mardouw, which has scored platinum and gold awards in Italy, France, USA, UK, Israel, Argentina, and Japan. De Rustica's Estate Collection Coratina was awarded the "Absolute Best" at the EVOOLEUM Awards in Spain in 2023, and, in 2025, the same oil secured second place with a score of 96 points, once again being the only non-Spanish or Italian oil in the top 10. Willow Creek won gold at both the London International Quality Olive Oil Competition and the Monte Carlo Masters of Olive Oil International Contest for their Director's Reserve Extra

Virgin Olive Oil, and the estate's Estate Blend received a gold medal at the EVOO International Olive Oil Contest in Italy. Ubuntu Extra Virgin Olive Oil was awarded a silver medal at the 2024 NYIOOC (New York International Olive Oil Competition).

Wendy Petersen says the number of international awards that South African EVOOs are winning is increasing every year. "We are highly delighted that so many of our locally produced EVOOs are winning major accolades in olive oil competitions around the world. I believe the confidence that the SA Olive CTC seal, our local awards, and the overall interest in South Africa's quality of its EVOOs all contribute to this ever-changing perception.

The producers are more confident to enter international competitions, and the international committees are now fully aware of the quality and excellence of the SA product. Each step forward brings even more opportunity for everyone. It also helps to attract new entrants to the market here in South Africa, and this is where SA Olive can help to guide and mentor them in the best production standards so that they may also bask in the glory of producing a delightful and internationally competitive product. The first step on this journey is to achieve the SA Olive

CTC seal - as this secures not only their commitment to compliance but also their dedication to producing a high-quality product of which we can all be proud."

The CTC scheme also aligns closely with SA Olive's overall mandate to support a healthy future for its members, healthy growth and development for the industry, and a healthy lifestyle for all South Africans.

The SA Olive Industry Association is championing its stakeholders, promoting local product excellence, and upholding quality messages in its work. Not only promoting the health and wellness benefits, but the power of buying local is another key tenet of its daily work. With more entrants to the market, with more committed consumers and retailers, SA Olive will be able to realise its transformation goals and make it more inclusive.

As Wendy adds, "We are determined to help transform the industry from a small and growing one to a significant agricultural sector. This is the vision for the South African olive industry that it continues to grow in stature here in Africa and around the world because it deserves all the positive recognition it can receive."

# CONSUMER DEMAND FOR HIGH-QUALITY PRODUCE: THE SERAGE FARM STORY

By: Khathutshelo Rambau



Ms Wendy Moshakga, a 27-year-old enthusiastic farmer from Serage Farm in Moletjie Lonsdale. With a great interest in agriculture, she became particularly interested in crop production, specifically cabbage farming.



**\*Ms Wendy Moshakga.**

She recently wrote a book that has all of the necessary information about cabbage cultivation.

She offers monthly classes to emerging farmers who are interested in farming. The



**\*Produce for market.**

Department of Agriculture, the Polokwane Municipality, and Core Energy have all provided her with technical assistance, training, and production inputs such as fertilisers and pesticides.

These contributions have

significantly improved her farm operations and capabilities.

She operates on 20 hectares of land acquired from the traditional authority. The farm largely uses borehole water for irrigation, which has proven to be a stable source, particularly during drought or water scarcity.

The farm produces a diverse range of vegetables, including cabbage, butternut, beetroot, and carrots. These veggies are rotated seasonally to improve soil health and increase yields.



**\*Ms Wendy Moshakga**

She supplies both formal and informal markets, including Goseame Spar City Centre. The formal market prefers medium-sized cabbage heads, whereas the informal market is more flexible. The majority of the produce is sold directly to consumers, guaranteeing they receive high-quality products.

One of their trademark veggies is cabbage, which they produce at a rate of about 20,000 heads per month. Cabbage is in high demand, and she can provide it consistently all year. ***“I’m proud to say that our produce is of the highest quality, as reflected in the high demand we experience.”*** Said Wendy.

She takes extra precautions throughout the entire production process, from planting to harvesting, to guarantee that crops match the highest standards. The farm employs five permanent employees, ten part-time workers,

and ten graduates, all of whom contribute to the local economy. She is generally delighted with the existing market; yet, they have difficulty with pricing, frequently being price takers rather than price givers. During peak demand periods, they do have extra pricing options.

The business has a huge impact on the neighbourhood, providing job opportunities, affordable vegetables, and donations to local schools and creches. Climate change and a lack of resources are two of the most pressing concerns they confront.

### Achievements

- Recognized by the municipality for her contributions.
- Providing effective training programs with positive feedback.

Finally, she emphasizes the importance of assistance for small-scale farmers, citing how access to financing may make a huge difference in agricultural success and sustainability. She encourages prospective farmers not to give up. ***“Don’t give up; start small; failure isn’t inevitable. A good harvest can change everything.”***



# HLEKO FARMING AND MULTI PROJECTS GIVE HOPE TO AGRIPRENEURS

By: Sanelise Tafa

**H**leko Farm Business is an inspirational example of South African businesses' endurance and determination. Simosakhe Piet Hleko and his children started the farm in 2011, but its origins can be traced back to 1984, when Mr. Hleko, then a farm labourer, made the courageous decision to buy two cows. Despite initial hurdles, such as land ownership limits, the farm's cow farming endeavours continued to thrive.

In 2007, a critical decision was made to lease a 745-hectare farm, resulting in a major increase in cattle numbers, with the herd reaching 150 cows. While the farm initially supported both the Bonsmara and the Brown Swiss breeds, market needs drove a strategic focus on the Bonsmara breed, which has since served as a crucial source of financing for diversifying into sheep and lucerne enterprises.

Hleko Farm Business currently generates revenue from three sources: cattle, sheep, and lucerne. Within the cattle enterprise, the farm annually sells roughly 50 weaners weighing an average of 220kg to respected buyers such as Karan Beef, Pick-n-Pay, and other abattoirs in Aliwal North.

The Sheep enterprise, which has around 190 sheep, helps by



\*Handling facility

selling approximately 800kg of wool to reputable buyers such as BKB and other marketing agents. Furthermore, while supplying feed for farm animals, the Lucerne enterprise generates income by selling bales to local farmers throughout the winter months, with annual sales topping 100 bales priced at SAFEX market rates.

Mr. Simosakhe Hleko, who has worked in cattle production since his early twenties, embodies the spirit of agribusiness. His dedication has established him as a reliable supplier to prominent companies such as Karan Beef and other abattoirs in the Joe Gqabi District. In a strategic move towards succession planning, Mr. Hleko invested in his son, Vuyo Hleko, sending him to an agricultural college to study animal production. Vuyo's formal

education benefits the farm's operational activities, ensuring continuity and growth for future generations.



\*Cattle near one of the earth dams

Despite tremendous improvements, Hleko Farm Business has a fundamental challenge: a lack of land ownership. To overcome this issue and safeguard the farm's future, Mr. Hleko is looking for assistance from any lending financial institution to facilitate the buying of the leased property. The owner has shown a desire to sell the land to Hleko Farm Business for about 8 million Rand.

# OUR ECONOMISTS HAVE BEEN AT THE CENTRE OF OFFERING INSIGHTS INTO CURRENT **AGRICULTURAL** DISCOURSE



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# STATUTORY MEASURES PROMOTING COMPETITION AND TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICA'S WOOL INDUSTRY

By: Maremo Mphahlele

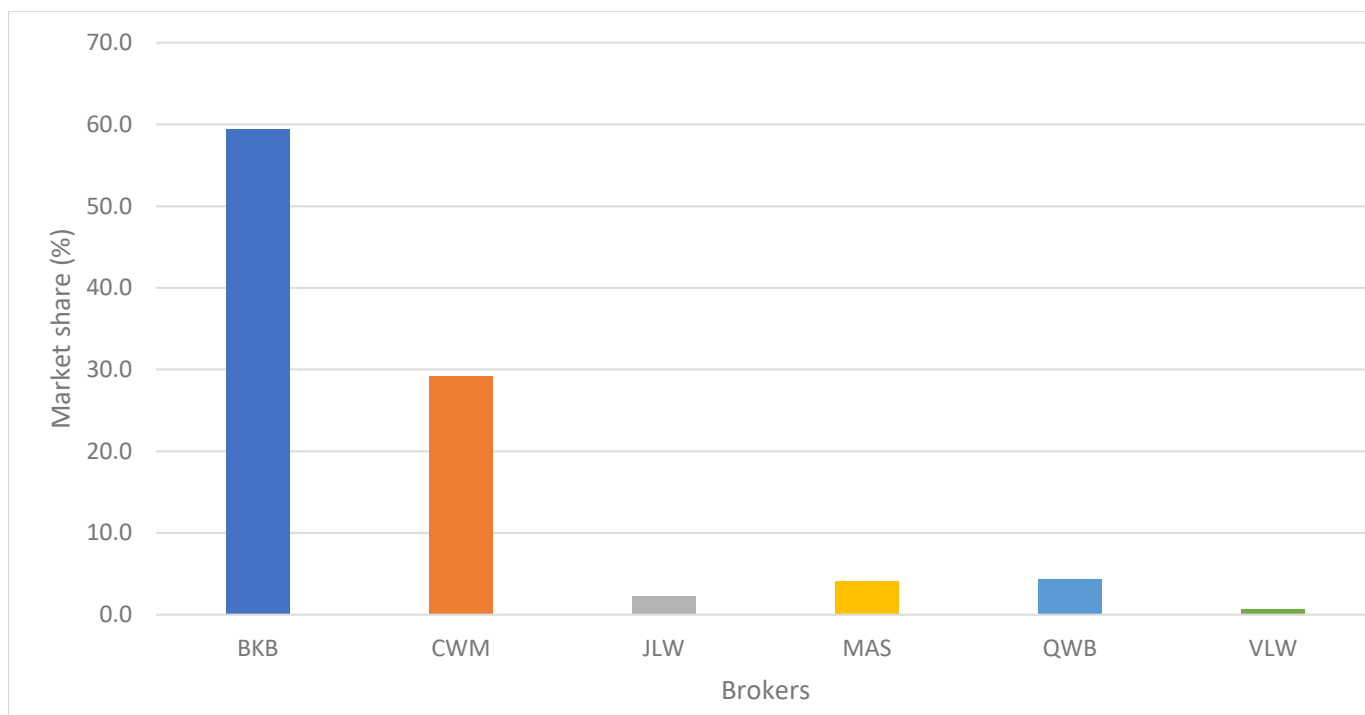


South Africa's wool industry, a key player in the global market accounting for 11% of the wool traded globally after Australia at 79% (TradeMap, 2025), is dominated by a few heavyweights. Figure 1 shows the market share held by various brokers in the wool industry since the beginning of 2025. BKB leads with the highest market share at approximately 60%, followed by

CWM with around 30%. JLW, MAS, QWB, and VLW have significantly lower market shares, each below 10%, with JLW at about 5%, MAS and QWB around 2-3%, and VLW at less than 1%.

Access to industry information and data is a stumbling block for agripreneurs to participate in the commercial mainstream, thus lessening competition. The

statutory measures for records and returns enforced by Cape Wools SA are levelling the playing field. Gazetted in December 2020 (Government Gazette No. 44003), these measures mandate registration and data reporting by the industry players to Cape Wools SA, fostering transparency and competition.



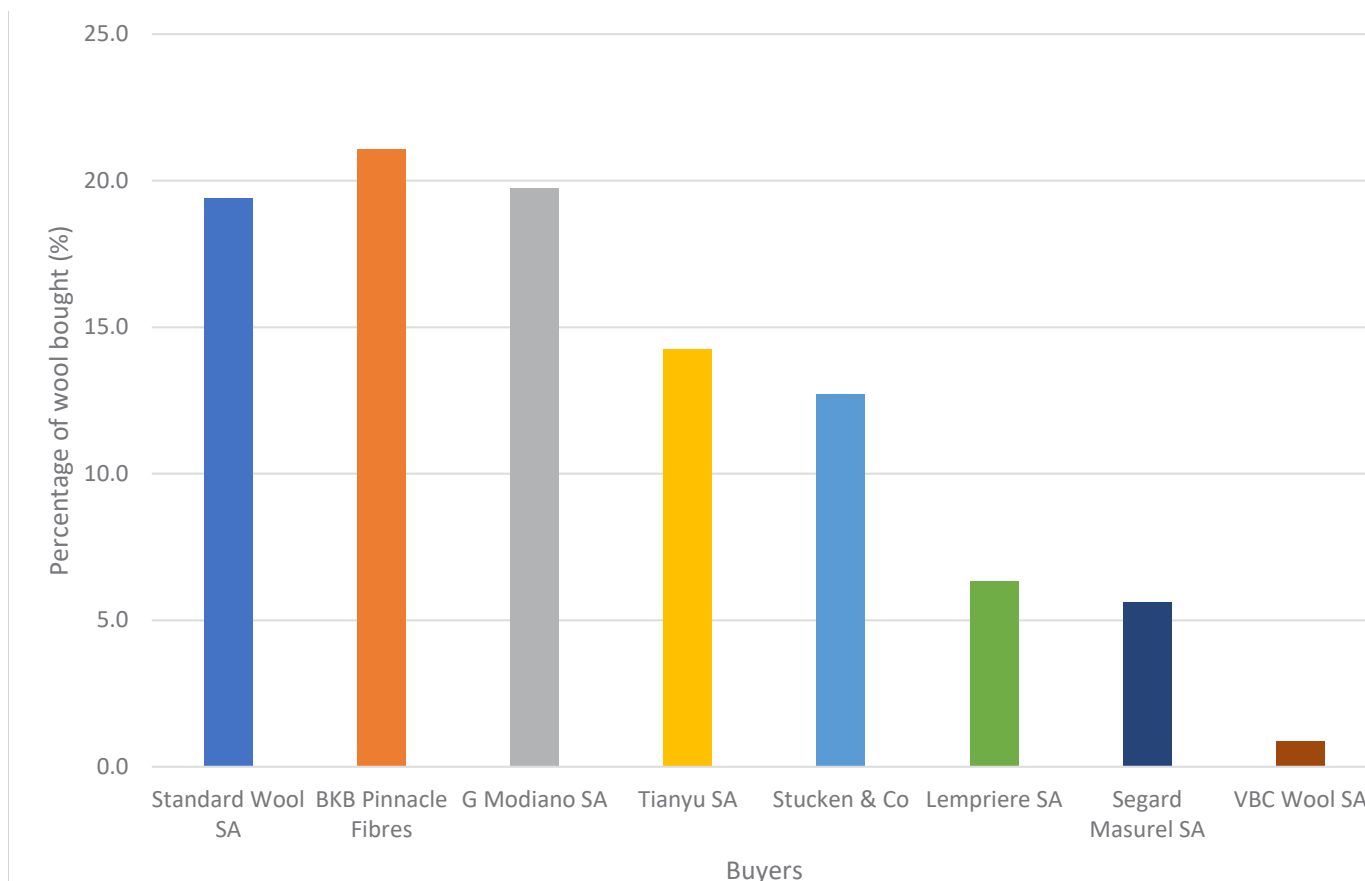
**Figure 1: Market share held by brokers in the wool industry since the beginning of 2025.**

Source: Cape [Wools](#) (2025)

Figure 2 shows the percentage of wool bought in the wool industry by several buyers since the beginning of 2025. BKB Pinnacle Fibres leads with approximately 22%, closely followed by

Standard Wool SA at around 20%, indicating their dominant positions in the market as buyers. G Modiano SA buys about 18%, while Tianyu SA and Stucken & Co follow with roughly 15% and 12% respectively. Lempriere SA accounts for about 5%, Segard Masurel SA has a 3% share, and VBC Wool SA trails with the

smallest portion at approximately 1%. This distribution highlights that the concentration of buying power among the top 4 players is ranging around the same average, with BKB Pinnacle Fibres and Standard Wool SA standing out as the biggest buyers in the wool industry.



**Figure 2: Percentage of wool bought in the wool industry by several buyers since the beginning of 2025.**

Source: Cape [Wools](#) (2025)

Here is how the statutory measures for records and returns are making a difference for agripreneurs, especially those who were previously disadvantaged.

### 1. Transparency: shining a light on market dynamics

The heart of these measures is a centralized database managed by Cape Wools SA, tracking everything from production to sales. For the over 45,000 communal farmers in South Africa's wool sector, many of whom lack market influence, this transparency is a game-changer. Access to real-time data on volumes, prices, and trends allows these farmers to see what major players like BKB or CWM prefer compared to smaller brokers. This transparency chips away at the dominance of big players. While it doesn't dismantle their market share outright, it equips smaller agripreneurs with the knowledge to compete strategically, fostering a more dynamic market environment

### 2. Efficiency

Competition thrives not just on information but on access to

markets. The statutory measures ensure all players operate on equal informational footing by standardizing records and return information. A small broker in the Eastern Cape, for example, can use the database to identify supply gaps overlooked by giant buyers. Similarly, niche buyers can analyze processing trends to bid on wool types undervalued by major processors like Gubb & Inggs. This efficiency lowers barriers to entry, enabling smaller players to carve out their niche.

### 3. Inclusion: empowering the marginalized

Perhaps the most significant impact is on South Africa's previously disadvantaged farmers, who form a substantial portion of wool producers. The dominance of BKB, CWM, Standard Wool SA, and Gubb & Inggs has historically been daunting, with BKB alone brokering over half the wool clip and Gubb & Inggs' processing capacity being the biggest. The statutory measures shift the narrative by treating data as a public good.

Continuously, the records reveal opportunities the big players might miss. For instance, if a major broker prioritizes long, fine

Merino wool, smaller brokers can target coarser grades. Similarly, if a big buyer favours certified wool, non-certified communal clips might find new buyers who spot the gap. This data-driven approach empowers marginalized farmers to disrupt the status quo and claim their stake in the industry.

### Conclusion

South Africa's wool industry remains far from a free-for-all. The scale, expertise, and infrastructure of BKB, CWM, Standard Wool SA, and Gubb & Inggs ensure their continued dominance. However, the statutory measures introduced in 2020 are rewriting the rules. By mandating transparency, boosting efficiency, and prioritizing inclusion, they ensure competition isn't just about the survival of the biggest. For previously disadvantaged farmers, the centralized data is a powerful tool to challenge entrenched giants and open doors in a game long dominated by a few. The wool industry is transforming, not with a bang, but with the quiet, steady hum of data-driven opportunity.



## **What is SMAT?**

Smallholder Market Access Tracker (SMAT) is a tool that has been developed by the NAMC, with the help of a reference group, to measure the progress in the achievement of the market access goal for smallholder farmers in South Africa.

## **Why do we need SMAT?**

Despite a number of interventions that seek to enhance market access (both locally and abroad) for farmers in the country, smallholder farmers still face barriers to entry into the mainstream marketing channels. Furthermore, there is no tool used currently to track market access for this group of farmers, hence there is a need for the SMAT tool.

## **Who is going to use SMAT?**

The SMAT seeks to provide information to assist with policy debate and the formulation of more effective programmes towards achievement of market access. As such, the SMAT could be used (largely) by policymakers.

[www.namc.co.za/about-smat](http://www.namc.co.za/about-smat)