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03**

Industry Premium
Payment for small-
scale farmers



**PG
05**

SAFDA 2020/21
Annual General
Meeting (AGM)



**PG
06**

SAFDA
Fertilizer



**PG
07**

SAFDA marches
to DA offices in
KwaZulu-Natal



Thriving rural communities - Thriving rural economies

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CONTENTS

- 3 Industry Premium Payment for small-scale farmers >
- 5 SAFDA 2020/21 Annual General Meeting (AGM) >
- 6 SAFDA Fertilizer >
- 7 SAFDA marches to DA offices in KwaZulu-Natal >
- 8 SAFDA's Media Briefing >
- 9 SAFDA Farm profiles >
- 11 Vuka Usebente Agricultural Co-op- Mpumalanga >
- 12 Rallying the Mpumalanga growers to revitalize the spirit of growth >
- 13 SAFDA Logistics >
- 14 August Special Women Feature >
- 15 Industry transformation Intervention brings joy to an 84-year-old grower and many other growers in the industry >

Industry Premium Payment for small-scale farmers

The South African Farmers Development Association (SAFDA) has once again celebrated yet another massive win for our farmers. At its meeting held in June 2021, the Council (Board) of the South African Sugar Association (SASA) approved a new premium price for small-scale farmers valued at around R60 million. This was in line with the undertaking of the Sugarcane-Based Value Chain Master Plan which sought to ensure small-scale grower support and retention through a dedicated small-scale farmer Master Plan.

Farmers in the sugar industry are paid using a Recoverable Value (RV) which recognizes investments made in the production process to achieve sugarcane of good quality. Because of poor economies of scale, long distances to sugar mills, and the inability to own farming equipment, small-scale farmers struggle to produce good quality cane. The RV price is made up of proceeds derived from the sale of sugar and molasses the industry sells in the local and international markets. For sugar, international markets are distorted, loss making and residual. They dilute revenue for small-scale farmers. The Premium Price will bring farmers' price in line with the local market and compensate them for international market losses as well as correct the disadvantages linked to the scale and location of their operations.

SAFDA was formed in 2015 to deal with the decline of small-scale farmers and

ensure the sustainability of black farmers in general in an industry where their wellbeing was always under threat. "It is something to celebrate to see that SAFDA is delivering tangible benefits for our farmers in the short period that we have been in existence. This premium price did not come on a silver platter. SAFDA stood firm when industry participants who have been in the game for decades, cried foul about affordability. We reminded them that small-scale farmers are supposed to be foundational to the industry in terms of the Master Plan." Said Dr Siyabonga Madlala.

This premium price payment will add to the SASA Transformation Initiatives that were approved on 29 November 2018 to a tune of R 1 billion over a period of five (5) years. In terms of this Transformation Fund, R200 million is disbursed to farmers on an annual basis according to 8 original interventions that the industry has tweaked a bit to accommodate with other needs like topping up the bursary fund of the industry and supporting a study to map out the impact of transformation in the sugar industry.

Of the total funds allocated to Transformation Initiatives in 2021/22, small-scale growers received R118 million that was disbursed to them. Land Reform farmers received R51 million. The following table provides a breakdown of the Interventions and Premium Price when they are payable and the rates applicable.

Summary of 2021/22 sugar industry payments to growers

	Quantum	Payment period	Rate
Small-scale			
Intervention 1	R44 million	80 % will be paid in July 2021, then monthly until November 2021. Balance will be paid out in January 2022.	R17,69 per ton flat rate
Intervention 1A	R43 million	80 % payment in November 2021. Balance will be paid out in January 2022.	R17,29 per ton flat rate
Intervention 3	R23 million	80 % paid in July 2021, then monthly until November 2021. Balance to be paid out in January 2022.	R 8,65 per ton flat rate
Intervention 5	R8 million	80 % paid in July 2021, then monthly until November 2021. Balance to be paid out in January 2022.	R3,01 per ton flat rate
Premium Price	R60 million	100 % paid out in January 2022.	Provisional rate of R31,41
Supplementary Payment Fund	R71 million	100 % paid out at the end of March 2022	Sliding scale based on tonnage.
Total	R249 million		
Land Reform			
Intervention 2	R51 million	July 2021. Payments in subsequent months for growers that qualify for Intervention 2. Balance in January 2022.	R 65 000 once-off per Grower Code. January balance varies.
Total	R51 million		

SAFDA is very pleased to see changes that result from its efforts invested in robust discussions within industry corridors. We are sure that this will make a positive impact on our farmers. They will now have a positive cash flow at critical times of the off-crop season and will be able to invest in their operations to improve yields and take advantage of overall sugarcane prices. All these interventions combined will assist our struggling farmers be sustainable.

We commend industry colleagues that have embraced and shown commitment to the transformation of our industry which means long-term survival of our farmers.



SAFDA 2020/21 Annual General Meeting (AGM)



On the 30th of September 2021, the South African Farmers Development Association held its 6th Annual General Meeting at its headquarters in KwaShukela. At the AGM, 50 delegates participated from across all SAFDA operating areas, including those from Mpumalanga. AGMs are meetings between shareholders and the board of directors of a company. It is generally around this time that the directors and shareholders will meet during the year, so the directors will have the opportunity to present the company's annual report. In addition to giving all company stakeholders the opportunity to participate in company affairs, the AGM also provides a platform for sharing information, debates, and decisions.

Before the official start of the AGM, SAFDA members participated in a focused prayer session where key issues were addressed in prayer. Executive Chairman Siyabonga

Madlala, during his opening remarks, emphasized that this was an emotional year. "It was an unprecedented year. We started this financial year with a hard lockdown. This impacted the country and its people in different ways. Businesses failed. People lost jobs. Some even lost their lives and that was painful for surviving relatives. We lost some of our farmers during this time and I wish to offer my sincere condolences to those who lost loved ones" says Dr. Madlala.

The Chair's welcoming remarks were followed by the Deputy Chairperson's remarks, Lindiwe "Lee" Hlubi, who openly declared SAFDA as an unstoppable tsunami that is still making waves in the sugar industry. "We are the last hope for thousands of small-scale growers (SSGs) and land reform farmers in South Africa. We dare not fail them. We have just come out of a very difficult period in this province.

The recent unprecedented post-1994 civil unrest hit our farmers hard. More than 34 growers were negatively impacted when arsonists set fire to their cane. In terms of the monetary value, the arson cane amounted to at least R37 million" said Hlubi.

As part of the presentation, SAFDA's CFO highlighted how the organization worked during the past financial year 2020/21. In the Mfuyi Business Services audit report, there were no irregularities found, which proved that the organization had made good financial decisions. In the CFO's presentations, growers expressed concern about a decline in government grants that the organization received during the past financial year due to the pandemic as the government had to funnel some funds to help combat the outbreak. The annual report presented at the AGM, as well as the financial statements, was adopted successfully.



SAFDA Fertilizer

SAFDA has a Fertilizer Blending Plant that is located in Cato Ridge, west of Durban. The SAFDA Fertilizer Company was incorporated in September 2018, the motivation behind for SAFDA to establish its own blender company was to reduce the costs of fertilizer for the growers. Growers spend a lot of money in inputs costs which includes fertilizer. The company sells its fertilizer at a reasonable price that does not include VAT. Dennis Kondonis, who runs the fertilizer plant, says that everything is going well and smooth at the SAFDA fertilizer blender plant right now. Getting closer to the growing season, the growing season is becoming increasingly busy. "We are having more business, particularly among growers in rural areas that are interested in the SAFDA fertilizer brand. The price is lower compared to the rest of the brands," explains Denis. SAFDA Fertilizer plant is the only plant that can blend coated urea in KZN, which makes this plant outstanding compared to the rest that does the same function.

Sugarcane growers seems to be enjoying the cheaper rates that comes with buying SAFDA Fertilizer as this allows them to buy enough fertilizer that will cover their entire crop and they do not have to manipulate other parts of their field because they do not have enough for their crop. "When it's a growing season we see more farmers especially small-scale farmers buying our fertilizer because of their rates" says Dennis. This has a good impact on the SAFDA brand and the fact that all the raw materials used to blender this fertilizer are locally sourced.

While the plant started being operational in 2018, a considerable amount of work is still needed for this establishment, the plant needs a financial boost.

SAFDA Fertilizer uses a cash on delivery (COD) system, which is not convenient for many farmers. The plant still needs funds in order to fully operate like other companies that perform the same operation. Denis says that the company is still trying to get funding from the government to grow its operations and serve its growers. "We have submitted proposals to government to assist us with funding, currently, we understand that there might be slim chances of us getting this funding as the whole country is faced with the deadly pandemic, and money is being channelled to things that might assist in curbing the spread of the virus" says Dennis

The plant has a capacity to produce roughly 10 000 tons of bags on a monthly basis, on a daily basis the plant can produce up to 450 tons of bags per day. Civil unrest that erupted in KwaZulu Natal and Gauteng earlier this year, where businesses were looted and burned, this however did not affect the SAFDA Fertilizer blender plant, although business was slow since almost 80% of its employees were unable to come to work. While the plant was not damaged but business was slow as most employees were unable to come to work, and we were also unable to transport raw materials as the province was disrupted and everything was on stand still. At the present moment everything is back on track and the plant is fully operational again, says Denis.

Many SAFDA farmers, particularly those in the sugarcane industry, have benefited from the sale of fertilizer by SAFDA as it is available at an affordable price. For enquiries on SAFDA Fertilizer prices you can contact Ms. Ayanda Khulu on 060 547 4240 or you can email her on akhulu@sa-fda.org.za

The South African Farmers Development Association (SAFDA) led a big march to the Provincial Head Office of the Democratic Alliance (DA) in KwaZulu-Natal. The message was very clear, SAFDA wanted Annette Steyn to stop her reckless "divide and rule" agenda perpetrated amongst beneficiary restitution communities, which would cause instability and strife, paving way for unscrupulous former landowners in Melmoth, to come back to take over farms that had been transferred to these communities. SAFDA called for Annette Steyn, the DA MP serving in the Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development Parliamentary Portfolio Committee, to retract the baseless statement that she published in the DA website and on social media about SAFDA which in the organisation's opinion was racist and meant to sow divisions and kindle conflict amongst black communities. "SAFDA reject and condemn her racist attitude in insinuating that SAFDA is involved in irregular arrangements with the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD). SAFDA is not the only organization to receive funding from the Department' said Dr Siyabonga Madlala, SAFDA's Executive Chairman.

There are white non-governmental and corporate organizations, some operating within the sugar industry that have been and are currently busy implementing farmer support programmes funded by government, yet Annette is targeting our organization, wrongly so, because she seems to hold an attitude that anything managed by black people is corrupt. SAFDA was deeply disappointed by the fact that the DA or Annette did not come to receive our memorandum about which we formally made them aware, well in advance, communicating date, time, and reason for our march in terms of the directives of the

Section 4 meeting held with law enforcement authorities in terms of the Regulation of Gathering Act, Act 205 of 1993. "We were very disappointed that no one from the DA was able to come and receive our memorandum, but this did not dampen the spirit of our farmers who had travelled from all over KZN and Mpumalanga provinces to voice out their anger at Steyn's statement," said Dr Madlala.

Having staged the march, SAFDA is still willing to go and address to the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and clear all Steyn's questions because SAFDA has nothing to hide. We have already written to the Chairperson to ask for an opportunity to present to their committee. The progress report about projects we implement that was submitted to the Department, which was also discussed with Steyn, proves that we fulfilled the organization's mandate, which is to serve and prioritize our farmers needs. We did work that is also aligned with Departmental mandate too. This funding which Steyn questions played a huge role to most of our farmers who have been struggling financially to buy farming inputs.

SAFDA marches to DA offices in KwaZulu-Natal



On the 18th of May 2021 the South African Farmers Development Association (SAFDA) held an informative media briefing at the Head Quarters of the sugar industry in Mount Edgecombe. The media briefing outlined the key fundamentals on how SAFDA Projects, Funding and Accountability Mechanisms work. Opening the media briefing was the Executive Chairperson of SAFDA, Dr Siyabonga Madlala who first and foremost expressed the organization's support for the new Zulu Monarch King Misuzulu kaZwelithini. "As SAFDA we want to pledge our full support to the new Zulu King, we trust that as farmers we will be able to work with him smoothly as the custodian of the land that we use for farming," said Dr Madlala.

Addressing the Media on the funding of SAFDA projects, Anwhar Madhanpall, GM: SAFDA Farm Management Services, said the industry lost 23% of production at the height of sugar imports at which period also the small-scale growers were facing total collapse due to this loss. SAFDA appealed to the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform to assist these farmers who were at a verge of giving up their farming operations. "SAFDA signed an MOU and projects SLA with the department, and R71 million was made available to assist small-scale farmers with ratoon management fertilizer", said Madhanpall. This gives a total of 213 750 bags of fertilizer distributed to 9594 growers. Growers were given on average 5 bags of fertilizer per hectare, that means growers would have ratooned 42 750 hectares of cane at the conclusion of the programme said Madhanpall during his presentation. He further said if there had been no assistance forthcoming the growers would have been forced to take out loans to carry out ratoon management of their sugarcane field.

SAFDA's Media Briefing



Speaking for Umthonjaneni Farmers Association, its Chairperson, uMntwana Mandla Zulu said, former landowners presented a model of a 35-year lease, Joint Venture (JV) model of 30/70 shareholding in favor of previous landowners. "The communities approached SAFDA to present an alternative model as opposed to the one presented by former land-owners. SAFDA presented a co-management model where 100% of revenue flows to the beneficiaries with a maximum 5% management fee that SAFDA charges based on performance. 4 out of 5 Community Trusts opted to partner with SAFDA" said Zulu.



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SAFDA

Farm profiles

Melmoth Harvesting

SAFDA has a co-management agreement with four communities in Melmoth namely Entembeni, Isizwe Sakwa-Dludla, Emakhasaneni, and Entembeni Royal House communities surrounding the greater Mthonjaneni Municipal area. SAFDA has been working with the Trust for 19 months and has been able to maintain jobs on the farms. The farms employ over 50 permanent and 350 seasonal

workers, and their incomes contribute significantly to the local economy of Melmoth and the surrounding area. Speaking to one of the seasonal workers in Emakhasaneni she says even though she has hoped for a permanent job, but she is grateful that she can put food on the table. "Jobs are very scarce these days; I am not a picky person when it comes to jobs, my ultimate goal is to put food on the table for my family" says one of the Avocado seasonal employees.

When SAFDA started in Melmoth in 2020, the organizations biggest commitment was to put in place a graduate programme for the beneficiaries as part of the skills transfer and that has been successfully been implemented as through this program 6 graduates

have been promoted into junior management positions into avocado, timber and sugar cane production. "We are very proud of the work we have done and the goals that we have achieved since starting with the Melmoth projects. We have managed to fulfil most of the promises we made through our signed agreement within a short period of time" says Dr Madlala. SAFDA has also organized training programmes in sugar cane production and financing in order to capacitate Trustees and the Directors of their respective business entities on the cane production cycle and the sugar industry in general.

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) has approved the grant funding to the tune of R66 million

for all four communities who are in co-management with SAFDA. These grants will be used for procurement of communities' machinery, equipment, as well as for other agricultural activities on the farms. This intervention will further boost the bottom line of revenues since the project will no longer relying on rented equipment.

Melmoth Harvesting programme

Sugarcane

Through SAFDA Logistics, SAFDA managed to harvest and transport 76 000 tons of cane, realizing around R33 million in gross revenue across three communities

Avocados

SAFDA was able to secure both GLOBAL GAP and SIZA Accreditation, that enable the avocados to be

exported. SAFDA secured the services of the Fruit Farm Group (Second biggest avocado exporter in South Africa) to explore the fruit. SAFDA advanced CAPEX to the communities to acquire the specialist equipment for the avocado spraying and farm management. SAFDA has spent R7, 4 million in CAPEX relating to equipment for the avocado orchard management and harvesting programme.



Timber

With the advent of COVID-19, the export market for timber has all but collapsed. Mondi and SAPPI lost significant export contracts resulting in them cutting back on supply agreements with commercial farmers. The three communities were not able to secure supply agreements with both MONDI and SAPPI. SAFDA however secured contracts with independent companies that have export contracts, and operations have been on Entembeni and Emakhasaneni owned farms.



Vuka Usebente Agricultural Co-op- Mpumalanga

Vuka Usebente, previously known as Mangweni Dairy Project in Komati, got its direct management by SAFDA at the beginning of 2020 season. The project is a resuscitation of a previous initiative which had seen farmers being subjected to liquidation and repossessions as a result of project failure. The initiative is a 76h field funded through a loan from Akwandze Agricultural Finance. At its inception, SAFDA allocated its farm manager Brian Shongwe, who started the project as a new cane establishment, with new irrigation infrastructure. The project has yielded its first harvest on a 40h portion and has declared initial dividends totaling R220 000 to its nine members. Over and above the dividends the Vuka Usebente has created permanent job opportunities to four (4) of its members and seasonal employment to over 15 community members that does weed control and fiend maintenance in the community of Emangweni in Nkomazi. Four (4) local contractors have secured contracting opportunities in areas of irrigation infrastructure, Bulk water maintenance, security and harvesting.

Gabisile Mkhonto who is one of the Vuka Usebente Agricultural Co-op farm owners says they started the process of gaining their parents'

land back in 2014 but were confronted with many financial challenges until they heard about SAFDA. " After so many attempts of trying to start over the farming operations we almost gave up because we could not get help, we did not know anything about farming operations, until when we were introduced to SAFDA in 2019 just when we thought we are giving up, SAFDA bought us hope and started assisting us from scratch as this was now a bush field, from securing funding from the Job's fund and a loan from Akwandze, (An Agricultural finance facility)" says Gabisile.

Brian Shongwe who is SAFDA's junior farm manager is tasked as a manager of this farm and has been very successful in getting this operation off the ground. Speaking to Shongwe who was on the farm he says the 76 ha farm was a bush field when he came to assess it after he heeded a call to assist these young farmers who had already lost hope on trying to revive their parents' operations. "I started assisting this co-op in 2019 by trying to get the funding which we used as capital as this farm was not operational in the last 10 years, we had to start with getting the irrigation system in place, good crops, and all the other important farming input to get this project off

the ground. Fortunately, we were able to secure funding from the Job's fund which assisted us from starting this project as in May 2020 we were able to plant 46 ha of this land and in September 2020 we were able to plant the rest of the remaining 76 ha" says Shongwe.

SAFDA has been able to bring hope to many people who had lost hope in ever being in the agricultural business as there are many barriers particularly financial needs that many struggles to secure. This farm is one of the many success stories of the liberation movement of SAFDA which carries a great mandate of assisting small-scale farmers particularly black farmers. SAFDA which was formed just a few years ago has managed to do what organizations with more than 50 years had failed to do which is to bring hope and being the voice of the voiceless. Vuka Usebente agricultural co-op can attest to SAFDA's good deeds, they already have had two harvestings since when they started to plant in this area.

The initiative is a 76 field funded through a loan from Akwandze Agricultural Finance.

Rallying the Mpumalanga growers to revitalize the spirit of growth

In the ongoing efforts to keep members informed, SAFDA held a 3-week project roadshow in Mpumalanga. The focus of the roadshow was on what services are available and offered by SAFDA, including SAFDA Farm Management Services which was established as a farming management services company to assist farmers with their farming operations, bringing efficiencies thereto. Some of the services that were presented to the growers include:

BOOKKEEPING

- a service designed to assist growers in staying in compliance with SARS, CIPC, and the Department of Labour.

BULK WATER SUPPLY

- this service is designed to assist with irrigating small-scale and land reform growers in consolidated farming cooperatives and associations. The service offers irrigation infrastructure installation, maintenance and repairs, and,

FERTILIZER AND TRANSPORT

Additionally, these roadshows also focussed on informing growers about grower affairs, seedcane programmes, interventions, industry grants, as well as Mafisa



Funding, where loans are provided to purchase fertilizer as part of the ratoon management program, as well as replanting fields that have fallen fallow. Funds will also be considered for certain projects that may need help installing or repairing their irrigation infrastructure.

The roadshows were a success as representatives from more than 15 projects attended the roadshow. Moses Mkhabela, who is Mpumalanga's General Manager, said that growers need to be updated on issues taking place within their space. "It is very imperative to keep our growers informed about things that are happening in their industry, and the services that are offered by

SAFDA, as this revives their love for the organisation and always shows that they play an important part in making this organization grow" said Mkhabela.

The growers who attended these roadshows were not only satisfied but also relieved. The discussion gave them an opportunity to clarify things they were unclear about. Ernest Mashabane, the Chairman of SSGs in Komati, highlighted the importance of this opportunity, which he felt came at the right time. He felt that the roadshows were an opportunity for them to receive answers. "Growers always have questions that we sometimes fail to answer satisfactorily", he said.



SAFDA Logistics

SAFDA Logistics company has so far about 25 trucks which are assisting the growers in various areas. These trucks are allocated to 7 Mills, which are as follows:

Sezela Mill – 1 truck

Mfolozi Mill – 1 truck

Gledhow / Maidstone Mill – 2 trucks

Pongola/Jozini Mill – 4 trucks

Felixton /Matigulu Mill – 7 trucks

Melmoth – 5 trucks also using Felixton Mill.

*Mpumalanga – 5 trucks
Mpumalanga project.*

Currently, this is the 5th month of operation for SAFDA Logistics under new management and staff. The company has managed to transport approximately 85% of cane to all the Mills that are listed above. Just like any other new company, the company is still faced with challenges in giving satisfactory and good service to its growers, this is caused by limited capacity that we have currently like, vehicles breakdowns, protests on the roads and Mills breakdowns. All our trucks were allocated as per tonnages we have. Initially we were supposed to have 30 trucks. Unfortunately, from these 30 trucks, we only managed to get 25 trucks. From these 25 trucks, 20 were allocated to 7 Mills and the other 5 trucks were allocated to Mpumalanga projects. SAFDA Logistics is working on another plan to get more trucks from other suppliers which will assist with the high demand that we are unable to meet with the current capacity that we have. We are also busy with other projects to get more contracts on board in order to generate more income that will help grow SAFDA Logistics to greater heights.



August Special Women Feature



Thuledu Biyela- Industry Affairs Analyst

Thuledu Biyela is SAFDA's Industry Affairs Analyst. She holds a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree from the University of KwaZulu-Natal majoring in Statistics and Applied Mathematics; Diploma in Monitoring and Evaluation; Diploma in Project Management; Advanced Management Development Programme and currently finalizing Post Graduate

Diploma in Industrial Engineering, specializing in Data Science from Stellenbosch University. Du says from a young age Science and Mathematics were her favorite subjects, "I always knew that my career would involve calculations and quantitative reasoning" says Du.

Prior to joining SAFDA, she worked for Statistics South Africa as a Data Operations Team Leader and as Regional Survey Manager, she was also employed as a Data Manager for Development Research Africa and as a Researcher for the Centre

for Development Research and Facilitation.

For women like Du women's month means is about acknowledging, honoring, and celebrating women achievements globally, "In our country and in our communities for the contributions that women make in society women deserve all the recognition that can get. Women keep families together and care for their communities" says Du. Many women around the globe have constantly raised that they need to be celebrated daily and not only during the women's month. There is a Zulu saying which says "Intandane enhle umakhothwa unina" meaning a child that is raised by a woman has a high probability of being successful in life when compared to a child raised by a man.

Du says the nature of business done by SAFDA is very close to her heart. "My great grandparents were dispossessed of their land during colonial period, my grandparents and my parents had to render labor tenancy (without wages) on white-owned farms, my father used to share with us how he wished he could access some farmland so that he could farm for commercial purposes. Such stories generated in me a lot of interest in the agricultural sector. I saw the opportunity of working for SAFDA as an avenue for serving black farmers and small-scale growers who are building a legacy for their families through participating in commercial Agriculture". Says Du. Biyela says it is very fulfilling to witness black farmers creating employment, revitalizing their local economies, and contributing to the social well-being of their community members.

Being a woman in a leadership position for Du means leading by example, teamwork, communicating clearly, coaching, being goal-driven and being a role

model to your subordinates, says Du. Women are naturally nurturing, and they value relationships. This enables them to have a strong understanding of what drives performance, evident in how they motivate team members to succeed.

Message to fellow women in the farming industry by Du: With hard

work, dedication, patience, and a positive mindset; you can achieve everything you set your mind into. Let us focus on empowering ourselves through education and training. We have the whole world in our hands. Our country needs us now more than ever. We must embrace change, challenge ourselves, step outside our comfort zone and stand up for what we

believe in. We must recognize one another's strengths and abilities as allies not as competitors. In order to create and build successful women leaders in the agricultural sector, we must share knowledge with the up-and-coming professionals within the area of our expertise and focus on building cohesion in our communities.

Industry transformation Intervention brings joy to an 84-year-old grower and many other growers in the industry



Industry transformation Intervention initiative has brought more joy than what the organization anticipated to almost all growers, particularly the latest payment could have come at the right time for most growers after many had suffered the impact of the civil unrest. At the end of July 2021 growers that qualified received their payment from the Transformation Interventions. In the 2021/22 season, small-scale growers got R118 million. Land Reform farmers got R51 million. Meet Roselina Makwakwa an 84-year-old farmer from kwaHhoyi

in Mpumalanga. Make-Makwakwa started her sugarcane business which is a 14.4 h/a farm in 1991 and before her late husband was a cotton grower from 1986 until 1991 when she and her late husband decided to venture into the sugarcane business. "When I received my intervention money, I did not believe my eyes when I saw that SMS, I was expecting this money and on top of that, so much money. As soon as I received it, I quickly went to the closest shop where they sell irrigation cable and replaced the stolen one and the

old one so that my farm preserves the good tonnage that I always get. This money could not have come at a better time than this" says make Makwakwa

She says, her late husband taught her the sugarcane business in 1991 and she excelled in the business, although make-Makwakwa is in this business alone after the unfortunate passing of her husband in 1993 she still maintains the good teachings that her husband instilled in her. "My husband always wanted me to join his in the sugarcane business,

but I had constantly declined on numerous occasions as I thought it was a tough work which was designed for men, until one day I said let me give it a try and decide after I have been to the field to see if I am making a right decision, and trust me I have never looked back, I even regreted why I have been declining all the other years" says make-Makwakwa.

Make-Makwakwa is a hands-on

farmer and at her age, one would think she should be resting and nursing her high blood pressure or diabetes or any other old age-related diseases, but not make-Makwakwa. She says she believes that if you really want to see success in what you do you need not rely on people but rather DIY. In her 14.5 h/a farms, she currently has 5 permanent employees who have worked for her for over 10 years, and she says the reason she

still works with the same people is because of the loyalty they have for each other. The 84-year-old grower is one of the very few small-scale growers whose operations do not owe any of the lending companies like Akwanzde, which makes her one of the exceptional small-scale farmers SAFDA has ever had.

