

TRANSFORMATION PROJECT REPORTS 2006/7

WESTERN, SOUTH WESTERN, EASTERN FREE STATE

PROJECT TITLE: POTATOES SA – GLEN AGRIC COLLEGE TRAINING AND RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP
PROJECT MANAGER: Charl Nel- Potatoes South Africa, Bloemfontein; Melvin Makungu- Glen Agric College
BEGIN DATE: July 2002
END DATE: Continuous, as long as need exist.

SUMMARY

Potato Production forms part of the Glen College curriculum for all horticulture students. The "Guide to Potato Production in South Africa" 2003 ARC-Roodeplaat Vegetable and Ornamental Plant Institute is used as reference and for practical training a potato planting of at least one hectare of potatoes are done in January each year.

OBJECTIVES 2006/2007

- To give first year students a good background on the Potato Industry in SA which includes: potato production, marketing and the structures within the industry;
- To identify students who would like to "specialise" in potato production, marketing etc;
- To identify students to work closely with the workplace experience farmers at the 2007/8 planting at Glen;
- To evaluate the interns and put them under a workplace experience program under mentorship of Glen;
- To host a potato short course for students, extension officers and emerging farmers.

PROGRESS REPORT

Introduction

The project form part of the curriculum at Glen Agricultural College (30km from Bloemfontein) and therefore all students are introduced to the Potato Industry on first year level.

In their second year they make a choice between animal- and crop production. At this stage the potato curriculum will form part of crop production. At third year level the students who have chosen to do so will "specialise" in potato production under supervision of a student co-ordinator.

Materials and Methods

Potatoes SA supply all inputs and co-ordinate all experienced / specialist guest speakers, lifting and marketing. Potatoes SA also donated ten copies of the "Guide to Potato Production in SA" to the Glen library. Glen Agric College supply the entire infrastructure (land, irrigation and most implements) for the plantings, the lecturers and students. The program commence every year in late January, after the students arrived, with the practical planting of a potato planting of at least one hectare of 12 different cultivars (2006). The students are involved by doing the fertilization, planting etc. themselves (involvement depends on level at that time).

During the growing season the students, under leadership of the student co-ordinator who is assisted by the pest control- and fertilizer representatives, the lecturers and myself, are managing the potato planting. In the winter the crop get lifted, sorted and marketed on the Bloemfontein Fresh produce market. This whole process involves a commercial farmer who assists with the lifting, washing and sorting of the potatoes. Important to mention is that the students, with the help off casual labour do the entire pick up of the potatoes in the land. At the washing and sorting pack shed the students, who man the sorting machine get trained on the grading and marking of the potatoes in the different sizes and classes as been prescribed by law.

The potatoes are then sent to the market. The following morning the students visit the market and are present, get first hand experience, when their potatoes are inspected by the local Prokon inspector. Any defects, if any, are then pointed out to them. They then also view the inspection and quality of other farmers' potatoes. The market agent also inform the students on fixing of prices, liaison with your market agent, the commissions charged on the market, the documentation needed etc. The market visit is normally concluded by a tour through the market premises and the pointing out of all the other opportunities that arise from the market environment. The internship will consist of: planting of trails for emerging farmers, work with the Prokon inspector on the market, doing seed certification with Potato Certification Services etc.

Results

Over the past four seasons about 170 students were introduced to the Potato Industry (PI).

INTRODUCTION OF AN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

As from July 2006, the Potato SA–Glen College Training and Research Partnership introduced an Internship Program that is essentially an extension of the training that is offered to students. The internship in fact involves mentorship of graduates of

Glen College of Agriculture for at least a year. The intention of the internship is to further the objectives of the partnership in a manner that will allow a selected number of graduates to be mentored in a manner that will further their chances of acquiring their own farms where they will produce potatoes among other crops. Being that they are graduates, Interns are further exposed to role players in the potato value chain as they engage in feasibility studies that lead to generation of actual production plans that they use to produce potatoes at different farms around the Free State. Interns also use the knowledge they have acquired to assist emerging farmers who are keen to enter the potato production fraternity. The following are the initial interns that were enlisted in July 2006:

LIST OF INTERNS AS AT JULY 2006

- **Intern N° 1** : Mr. Fanyane Mokoena (22 year old male diploma graduate from Qwa Qwa in the Free State)
- **Intern N° 2** : Mr. Mpokopelo Hlongwane (23 year old male diploma graduate from Bergville in Kwa-Zulu Natal)

Speaking in an inaugural interview with mentors; both Interns had fondly indicated their desire to become successful potato farmers. They both indicated that they are, for now, happy with the fact that Potato SA is paying them a monthly stipend (*not exceeding R3 400*) for participating in the Internship Program and they went on to say that they, in the near future, yearn to be self reliant as successful potato farmers who will create jobs rather than remain job seekers for life.

Both interns had expressed willingness to visit schools in order to encourage youth to study potato production. Unfortunately, circumstances beyond the partnership's control forced Intern N° 2 (*viz Mr. Mpokopelo Hlongwane*) to withdraw (*around mid September 2006*) from the Internship program for a career at Spoornet where he was offered a full time job. Suffice it to mention that the said Mr. Hlongwane left an amazingly high phone bill on his official cell phone which the partnership is presently trying to have Mr. Hlongwane to pay for. Having felt unhindered by the latter developments, the partnership was duty bound to replace Intern N° 2 (*i.e. Mr. Hlongwane*) with another Intern. Gender took centre stage at this stage of the Internship program. This is the reason why the 24 year old Ms. Jeannete Msaule from Viljoenskroon was appointed to replace Mr. Hlongwane resulting in the following Intern landscape:

LIST OF INTERNS AS AT MID SEPTEMBER 2006

- **Intern N° 1** : Mr. Fanyane Mokoena (22 year old male diploma graduate from Qwa Qwa in the Free State)
- **Intern N° 2** : Ms. Jeannete Msaule (24 year old female Higher Certificate graduate from Viljoenskroon in Free State)

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN THE QUARTER JULY 01 TO SEPTEMBER 30TH 2006

The following are the specific achievements that were scored during the quarter July 01 to September 30th 2006:

➤ **50/50 GENDER BALANCE AMONG INTERNS**

The temporary setback that arose from the withdrawal of Intern N° 2 (*viz Mr. Mpokopelo Hlongwane*) actually turned out to be a blessing in that the partnership was able to address gender balance by appointing a female intern. The resulting gender balance for the internship program is 50% male and 50% female.

➤ **PLANTING AT ZASTRON (1 ½ Ha)**

Whilst collaborating with specialists from Potatoes SA and Glen College, Interns managed to mentor a farmer from the Zastron area of the Free State (*Mr. Otto Mbangula*) who consequently has planted 1½ ha of potatoes under irrigation. Your attention is drawn to the fact that the Interns actually drew up the business plan for the farmer and were actively involved in the planting. The Interns are busy with daily telephonic consultations with Mr. Mbangula coupled with weekly visits to Mr. Mbangula's potato field. Note that Zastron is approximately 250km from Glen where the Interns are stationed. It is envisaged that Mr. Mbangula will harvest his crop at the end of this year or early 2007.

➤ **PLANNING FOR PLANTING AT GLEN**

During the period in question, Interns have collaborated with specialists from Potatoes SA and Glen College when drawing up a business plan for the yearly January planting at Glen. The Interns will actually run this particular planting at which they will take students (*from Glen College*) through all practical steps of potato production.

➤ **VISITING STAKEHOLDERS IN THE POTATO VALUE CHAIN**

During the period in question, Interns have been afforded the opportunity to visit input suppliers and fast food outlets that predominantly serve potatoes. Interns also worked (*for approximately 15 days*) with a leading potato marketing agent (*Bloemfontein General Marketing Agency*) and were introduced to a leading potato inspector (*Mr. Koos Kruger*) at the Bloemfontein Fresh Produce Market.

➤ **GOODWILL OF THE PARTNERSHIP via THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

During the period in question, Interns had assisted in boosting the goodwill of the Potatoes SA–Glen College of Agriculture Training & Research Partnership via participation in a TV program called Living Land. The said program was recorded at many locations including the Bloemfontein Fresh Produce Market, a commercial potato farm belonging to Willie Eersthuysen in

Bainsvlei, near Bloemfontein and Glen College campus. Judging by the telephonic numerous enquiries that the college has been receiving after the screening of the said TV shoot, one is compelled to state that registering to for potato production courses at Glen College of Agriculture was in the process actually sold out to the public.

➤ **FOUNDATIONS LAID FOR NEXT QUARTER (1ST OCTOBER TO 31ST DECEMBER 2006)**

○ **FOUNDATION 1 (VISITATION OF STAKEHOLDERS)**

Your attention is drawn to the fact that a firm foundation has been laid that will ensure that Interns will (*in the next quarter*) visit and/or work with other role players in the potato value chain such as potato seed growers, small scale state funded projects in Jagersfontein, Jacobsdal and Sandvet.

○ **FOUNDATION 2 (PLANTING AT GLEN)**

Your attention is drawn to the fact that a firm foundation has been laid that will lead to Interns actually planting potatoes at Glen in January 2007. It is wise to reiterate that it is at this particular planting where the Interns will take students (*from Glen College*) through all practical steps of potato production. Note that this planting will further the other objectives of the partnership that are contemplated above.

○ **FOUNDATION 3 (REPOSITIONING GLEN COLLEGE TRAINING MODUS OPERATION)**

The Internship program has inspired the college management in attempting to exploit the practical training *niche* that the college is endowed with. The college management has in-fact requested the custodian of the college (*i.e. the Free State MEC for Agriculture*) to allow the college to drastically change its training inclination to 100% practical. The said suggestion will entail the halting of the intake of full time students at Glen in 2007 (*onwards*) in preference to collaborative registration of students, farmers and members of state funded projects who will be registered at Technikons, Universities and FET colleges for the theory provision and will later register at Glen for the mandatory 1 year practical session. Should permission be granted, future Interns under the Potatoes SA/ Glen College Partnership will then be drawn from the new kind of students who will be attending the 100% Proactive Appropriate Training (PAT) program at Glen College of Agriculture. Glen College in this regard yearns to transform into a **Centre of Excellence that will run a Pro-Active Appropriate Training (PAT) program in 2007 onwards.**

➤ **SUCCESSFUL BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE FOR THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

Please view the table below that elucidates the expenditure pattern from July 2006 and the projections for the coming quarter ending December 2006.

BUDGET CONTROL SHEET: REMITTANCE AND PAYMENT ADVICE FOR INTERNS FOR 2006 REVISED ON 08/11/06

MONTH	AMOUNT REQUESTED FOR AS PER SPECIFIC INVOICE	AMOUNT REMITTED FROM POTATO SA TO GLEN ACCOUNT FOR SPECIFIC MONTH	AMOUNT TO BE PAID FOR INTERN'S PHONE BILLS BY POTATO SA	MONTH END BALANCE OF INTERN MONEY (IN GSTF) FROM POTATO SA	AMOUNT TO BE PAID TO INTERNS PER MONTH (i.e .OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2006)
JULY 2006	R6800 AS PER INVOICE : INT – 001-06	R20 400 QUARTERLY STIPEND REMITTANCE FOR JULY, AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2006 AS PER INVOICE: INT – 001-06	N/A	R20 400 LESS R6800 JULY 2006 STIPEND PAY OUT JULY MONTH END BALANCE = R13 600	R3400 PAID TO FANYANE MOKOENA FOR JULY 2006 R3400 PAID TO MPOKOPELO HLONGWANE FOR JULY 2006
AUG 2006	R6800 AS PER INVOICE : INT – 001-06	N/A (REFER TO QUARTERLY STIPEND REMITTANCE ABOVE)	N/A	R13 600 LESS R6800 AUGUST 2006 STIPEND PAY OUT AUGUST MONTH END BALANCE = R6 800	R3400 PAID TO FANYANE MOKOENA FOR AUG 2006 R3400 PAID TO MPOKOPELO HLONGWANE FOR AUG 2006
SEPT 2006	R6800 AS PER INVOICE : INT – 001-06	N/A (REFER TO QUARTERLY STIPEND REMITTANCE ABOVE)	N/A	R6800 LESS R3400 + R660 = R4060 SEPTEMBER 2006 STIPEND PAY OUT SEPTEMBER MONTH END BALANCE = R2 740	R3400 PAID TO FANYANE MOKOENA FOR SEPT 2006 R660 PAID TO JEANE MSAULE AS ORIENTATION STIPEND FOR SEPT 2006 MPOKOPELO HLONGWANE WAS NOT PAID FOR SEPT 2006 BECAUSE HE

					SUDDENLY RESIGNED FROM THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AND HE LEFT UNRESOLVED PHONE BILLS
OCT 2006	R6800 AS PER INVOICE INT – 002-06	R20 400 QUARTERLY STIPEND REMITTANCE FOR OCT, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER AS PER INVOICE: INT – 002-06 LESS CELL PHONE ACCOUNTS = R13 900 REMITTED FROM POTATO SA	R2 000 FIRST CELL PHONE ACCOUNT R4500 SECOND CELL PHONE ACCOUNT TOTAL BILL = R6 500	R2 740 (SEPT 2006 BALANCE + R13 900 (OCT – DEC REMITTANCE FROM POTATO SA) = R16 640 LESS R3400 + R600 = R4000 (OCTOBER 2006 STIPEND PAY OUT) OCTOBER MONTH END BALANCE = R12 640	R3400 TO BE PAID TO FANYANE MOKOENANA FOR OCT 2006 R600 PAID TO JEANETTE MSAULE AS ORIENTATION STIPEND FOR OCT 2006
NOV 2006	R6800 AS PER INVOICE INT – 002-06	N/A (REFER TO QUARTERLY STIPEND REMITTANCE ABOVE)	N/A	R12 640 LESS R3400 + R2920 = R6 320 NOVEMBER 2006 STIPEND PAY OUT NOVEMBER MONTH END BALANCE = R6 320	R3400 TO BE PAID TO FANYANE MOKOENANA FOR NOV 2006 R2 920 TO BE PAID TO JEANETTE MSAULE AS ORIENTATION STIPEND FOR NOV 2006
DEC 2006	R6800 AS PER INVOICE INT – 002-06	N/A (REFER TO QUARTERLY STIPEND REMITTANCE ABOVE)	N/A	R6320 LESS R3400 + R2920 = R6 320 DECEMBER 2006 STIPEND PAY OUT DECEMBER MONTH END BALANCE = R0.00	R3400 TO BE PAID TO FANYANE MOKOENANA FOR DEC 2006 R2 920 TO BE PAID TO JEANETTE MSAULE AS ORIENTATION STIPEND FOR DEC 2006

					FOR DEC 2006
TOTALS	R40 800	R34 300	TOTAL BILL = R6 500	(- R34 300)	R34 300

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN THE QUARTER 1ST OCTOBER 31ST DECEMBER 2006

The following are the specific achievements that were scored during the quarter Oct 1st to Dec 31st 2006:

PLANTING AT ZASTRON (1 ½ Ha)

Whilst collaborating with specialists from Potatoes SA (*Mr. Attie vd Berg*) and Glen College, Interns continued to mentor a farmer from the Zastron area of the Free State (*Mr. Otto Mbangula*) who had earlier planted 1½ ha of potatoes under irrigation. Your attention is drawn to the fact that the Interns actually drew up the business plan for the farmer and were actively involved in the planting. The Intern were busy with daily telephonic consultations with Mr. Mbangula coupled with weekly visits to Mr. Mbangula's potato field.

Note that the lack of a boom sprayer led to Mr. Mbangula's controlling weeds manually which is not as effective as using herbicides. The latter will definitely have a significant effect of the expected yield.

VISITATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

During the period in question, Interns had been afforded the opportunity to visit input suppliers and fast food outlets that predominantly serve potatoes. Interns Again worked (*for approximately 15 days*) with a leading potato marketing agent at the Bloemfontein Fresh Produce Market. Your attention is drawn to the fact that a firm foundation has been laid that will ensure that Interns will (*in the next quarter*) visit and/or work with other role players in the potato value chain such as potato seed growers, small scale state funded projects in Jagersfontein, Jacobsdal and Sandvet. Note that the Interns have already drawn a business plan for planting 1ha of potatoes at Sandvet by early 2007.

PLANTING AT GLEN SHARED WITH JAGERSFONTEIN

Despite the fact that Interns have already drawn up a business plan for early January 2007 planting at Glen, negotiations are underway with project owners so that this particular planting is shared with a government funded project in Jagersfontein.

Students will under the proposed re-arrangements be bussed in at state cost from Glen to the project as frequently as once a week. The proposed re-arrangements have been necessitated by the following:

- The project at Jagersfontein has all relevant equipment for potato production but potato production is failing
- The project at Jagersfontein is failing because of no close expert supervision
- Interns on the other hand will have to accrue finances that they will use to "Start Up: potato farming at the end of the Internship
- Unfortunately, Interns do not have a plot of their own from which they can grow potatoes and retain such finances after harvest for Starting Up their own potato farms after the end of the Internship program
- Note that proceeds from growing potatoes at Glen are by law supposed to be deposited in the state account

Note that should the above arrangement be successful, the Internship Program will have achieved one of its main objectives which is to "Identify students who would like to specialize (*in earnest*) in potato production, marketing etc.

REPOSITIONING GLEN COLLEGE TRAINING MODUS OPERATION)

The MEC has acknowledged the suggestion from the college management by actually limiting the intake of first year students to only 15 for 2007. The MEC went on to state that the 15 entrants will have to be recruited with the understanding that they will be developed into farmers at the end of their training. The said 15 students will be given a new kind of Proactive Appropriate Training that will be more practically inclined. Obviously future Interns under the Potatoes SA/ Glen College Partnership will then be drawn from the new kind of student who will be attending the 100% Proactive Appropriate Training (PAT) program at Glen College of Agriculture. Glen College in this regard has been transformed into a **Centre of Excellence that will run a Pro-Active Appropriate Training (PAT) program in 2007 onwards.**

SUCCESSFUL BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE FOR THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

It is with delight to report that all the funds that were allocated (under the Zero budget system) and remitted to the Internship account were exhausted on the purpose for which they were voted.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN THE QUARTER 1ST JANUARY 2007 TO 30TH APRIL 2007

The following are the specific achievements that were scored during the quarter Jan 1st to April 30th 2007:

- **HARVESTING AT ZASTRON (1 ½ Ha)**

Whilst collaborating with specialists from Potatoes SA (*Mr. Attie vd Berg*) and Glen College, Interns managed to mentor a farmer from who harvested his potatoes in the Zastron area of the Free State (*Mr. Otto Mbangula*). The said farmer had had earlier planted 1½ ha of potatoes under irrigation. The Interns were busy with daily telephonic consultations with Mr. Mbangula coupled with weekly visits to Mr. Mbangula's potato field. Mr. Mbangula was scheduled to harvest his crop at the end of 2006 year or early 2007. However Mr. Mbangula harvested later than what was advised to him leading to reduction in the expected yields due to their being damaged by sclerotina bacteria. The lack of a boom sprayer led to Mr. Mbangula's controlling weeds manually which is not as effective as using herbicides. The latter also had a definite and significant effect of the yield which was 600 kg from the 1ha that was planted.

VISITATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

During the period in question, Interns had been afforded the opportunity to visit more input suppliers and fast food outlets that predominantly serve potatoes. Interns also worked with other role players in the potato value chain such as potato seed growers (in Douglas) in addition to mentoring small scale state funded projects in Jagersfontein, Jacobsdal and Sandvet. Note that the Interns had already drawn a business plan for planting 1ha of potatoes at Sandvet and 1ha of potatoes at Jagersfontein by early 2007.

PLANTING AT GLEN AND JAGERSFONTEIN (PREAMBLE TO LAUNCHING AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A "FARMER DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP")

Following the business plans that were drawn for production of potatoes early in January 2007 at Glen (1ha), Interns managed to plant at Glen and also at Jagersfontein (1ha) and Sandvet (1ha) after protracted successful negotiations with project members. The said plantings at the 3 sites will be harvested during winter 2007 and marketed at the Bloemfontein Fresh Produce Market. Note that the above collaborative production arrangement has heralded the dawn of the Internship Program's main objective which is to "Identify students who would like to specialize (*in earnest*) in potato production, marketing etc.

The latter means that the 2 interns will graduate (on 30th June 2007) from the Internship Program to become "**FARMER DEVELOPMENT FELLOWS.**" Glen College of Agriculture was in this regard requested by Potato SA to provide water, land and equipment for production of potatoes and other crops with proceeds being retained by the interns for as their equity and startup capital when they acquire their own farms. Potato SA on the other hand pledged to supply potato production inputs for 6ha. Regrettably, it was revealed in a meeting on 30th April 2007 that Glen College cannot provide land and equipment for "private gain production." Glen College of Agriculture has however pledged use the newly established "**OUTREACH**

PROGRAM” to provide logistical and strategic support to the **“FARMER DEVELOPMENT FELLOWS”** when they form production partnerships with state funded projects and even after the **“FARMER DEVELOPMENT FELLOWS”** acquire their own land via the LRAD process.

To date, the **“FARMER DEVELOPMENT FELLOWS”** have struck a gentleman's agreement with the Lechabile State Funded Project in Jagersfontein where they will do the following:

- Mentor the production of potatoes for the project members in what will be termed “Batch 1”
- Produce a second batch of potatoes whose proceeds they will retain as equity for the impending LRAD process

In readiness for “Take Off,” the **“FARMER DEVELOPMENT FELLOWS”** have embarked on the following:

- Negotiated with project members at Jagersfontein for accommodation, land & usage of equipment and irrigation
- Arranged for testing the 3 borehole aquifers at Jagersfontein for suitability and fitness for purpose
- Arranged to negotiate with extension officers for production at other state projects such as Sandvet

Conclusion

The partnership between PSA and Glen has yielded more results this year with the introduction of the internship programme. The internship programme has broken into new ground and has exposed two students into the practicalities of the potato business. The experienced gained will ensure that they have a good foundation and will set them up for success as potato farmers.

PROJECT TITLE: SANDVET EMERGING FARMERS

PROJECT MANAGER: Charl Nel, Potatoes South Africa, Bloemfontein

BEGIN DATE: January 2005

END DATE: Re-evaluate annually

SUMMARY

The group of emerging farmers worked at the Sandvet Research station and obtained the farm through LRAD. No further assistance was given to them and had led to the deterioration of the infrastructure.

The farm is in the middle of a potato production area with commercial potato farmers who are willing to assist with knowledge and equipment.

OBJECTIVES 2006/2007

PROGRESS REPORT

Introduction

A potato planting was planned for January 2006 but due to low levels of water in the Aldam (Sandvet Irrigation scheme) the water quota was not available and therefore no planting could take place.

In January 2007 a one hectare planting was done with the help of a local commercial farmer. This farmer will also assist with the lifting, washing and sorting of the potatoes.

Materials and Methods

PSA, with the help of the Interns, co-ordinate / oversee the total potato production process (from soil preparation, production to marketing), of a test planting. The process includes practical training through the whole production process. A local input representative and local potato farmer are also involved so that the emerging farmers can build up a reference network with all involved in potatoes in the area. The Syngenta preventive spray program is in process. Soil samples were taken and fertilizer given as recommended.

Results

The potato planting looks good at this stage. Lifting is planned for June.

Conclusion

The project, which is 30 kilometres from Welkom, is in the ideal position to be a success due to the willingness of the neighbouring farmers to assist.

PROJECT TITLE: JAGERSFONTEIN EMERGING FARMERS (LECHABILE FARM)

PROJECT MANAGER: Charl Nel, Potatoes South Africa, Bloemfontein

BEGIN DATE: January 2007

END DATE: Re-evaluate annually

SUMMARY

The group of 10 emerging women farmers are funded by the Department of Provincial and Local Government and is supplied with the most equipment needed. The farm is just outside Jagersfontein. Although it is not a potato production area the ladies are vegetable farmers who planted potatoes in the past but with not much success. A Mr. De Wet Holtzhausen, the Headmaster of the Jagersfontein school, is also assisting them.

OBJECTIVES 2006/2007 PROGRESS REPORT

Introduction

In January 2007 a one hectare planting was done under mentorship of the PSA / Glen interns.

Materials and Methods

PSA, with the help of the Interns, co-ordinate / oversee the total potato production process (from soil preparation, production to marketing), of a test planting. The process includes practical training through the whole production process. The Syngenta preventive spray program is in process. Soil samples were taken and fertilizer given as recommended.

Results

The potato planting looks good at this stage. Lifting is planned for June.

Conclusion

The ladies are learning quickly and should be in a position to do future potato plantings with only a little assistance.

PROJECT TITLE: OPPERMANS (Vaaldam Irrigation Association)

PROJECT MANAGER: Charl Nel, Potatoes South Africa, Bloemfontein

BEGIN DATE: 14 April 2005

END DATE: Re-evaluate commitment after 3-years of actual commencement of project. At this stage June 2009.

SUMMARY

The Oppermans is in the ideal situation to become the first emerging farmer potato seed growers in SA. The family farm consists of 34000 hectares next to the Orange/Riet Irrigation scheme canal. Water rights for 210 hectares are already allocated to them. The Department of Agriculture also allocated R15 million to the project for infrastructure development, equipment etc. as well as the funding of a percentage of the inputs of the first crop to be planted. The only draw back from the Departments side is that the above amount cannot be utilised for the appointment of a mentor.

OBJECTIVES 2006/2007

PROGRESS REPORT

Introduction

PSA, ABSA, ORIS and the Departments local officials is of the opinion that the project needs a mentor, with the accentuation on training, for at least 3-years to become a long-term success. We therefore has established an advisory committee and decided to fund a mentor. PSA got the local seed potato co-op, GWK, involved and they agreed to take the Oppermans up in their potato seed pool. PSA also got a local commercial seed potato grower involved, who is willing to farm potatoes on a partnership with the group.

Materials and Methods

The Oppermans Advisory Committee, who waited for the infrastructure to be supplied at the Oppermans farm, had a meeting on 26 March and is in process to advertise for a mentor.

Results

The group of forty Oppermans were taken on PSA tours at the different production and marketing stages during the past 12-months. The Oppermans planted 40 hectares of seed potatoes in partnership with a local commercial seed grower during early February.

Conclusion

The project, with all interested role players inputs, should become a flagship example of what can be done.

PROJECT TITLE: ZASTRON PROJECT

PROJECT MANAGER: Attie van den Berg, Bethlehem

BEGIN DATE: July 2006

END DATE: June 2007

SUMMARY

The project was situated at the farm of Mr. Otto Mbangula in the Zastron region. 2.5 hectares were planted with the cultivar Rodeo. PSA supplied the seed, fertilizer and chemicals, as well as the technology transfer. Unfortunately the land preparation was done late and not of a very good standard which led to a not so good yield.

PROGRESS REPORT

Materials and Methods

We planted the potatoes on the 27th of September 2006 with the help of local labour. Mr Otto Mbangula did not invite any other farmers in the area as per arrangement with PSA. We ridged the potatoes twice in the season, and were sprayed every 7 days according to the Syngenta program.

Results

We started to lift the potatoes on the 27th of March 2007; the yield is 650 pockets per ha. The biggest problems with the potatoes were potato tuber moth, Eelworm and insect damages.

We started to harvest 1.5 months later than planned because of the constant change in plans by Mr. Otto Mbangula, which led to more damage to the potatoes. I left the implements with Mr. Otto Mbangula to finish harvesting then I will go and pick up the implement, the process should take another 3 to 4 weeks.

Mr. Otto Mbangula did not invite any other farmers to his farm during any stages of plant spray or the harvesting process as per arrangement with PSA; therefore I can not see that PSA can carry on with this project because of a lack of interest.

Conclusion

This project is finalized at this stage and my recommendation is to assist with extension service by the two farmer/ students from Glen should Mr Otto Mbangula decide to continue planting potatoes.

PROJECT TITLE: MALUTI FET COLLEGE

PROJECT MANAGER: Attie van den Berg, Bethlehem

BEGIN DATE: July 2006

END DATE: June 2009

SUMMARY

The project is situated in Qwaqwa at the Maluti FET College which is an agricultural and Hotel College for students and post graduated students.

PROGRESS REPORT

Materials and Methods

We planted 2.5 ha of the cultivar Rodeo. PSA supplied the seed, chemicals and fertilizer, as well as the technology transfer. Land preparation was done immediately after the visit by PSA personnel and good seedbeds were prepared.

We planted on the 29th of September 2006 with the college students, as it is part of there training. Potatoes were ridged twice in the season and sprayed every 7 days according to the Syngenta programme.

Results

We started to lift the potatoes on the 13th of March 2007, the yield is 2100 pockets of potatoes per ha. The biggest problems with the potatoes were potato tuber moth, eelworm and insect damage

A potato lifter was bought by the college which helps a lot with the lifting of the potatoes. Potatoes as a subject were implemented by the college, with the planting and harvesting as practical experience.

The project was visited by myself regularly were viruses and other diseases were discussed with the teachers and students. The students from this year are selling the potatoes to next years students to also help them with developing their business skills.

Conclusion

This project is carrying on in the next season with PSA providing extension 75% help from PSA. In this process we want the college to be on their own, financial wise with the producing of potatoes within the next 3 years.

WESTERN CAPE

PROJECT TITLE: SANDVELD FERTILIZER TRIAL

PROJECT MANAGERS: Terence Brown- Potatoes South Africa, Human Kotze- S.A.N.D. Manager

GOALS:

- To give farmers theoretical and practical training on potato production
- To plant trials using organic and inorganic fertilizer
- To lease land next to the site for five farmers to plant their own crop under supervision from the mentor and his assistant

OBJECTIVES:

- Receipt of theoretical and practical training on potato production by students at S.A.N.D.
- Successful testing of organic fertilizer on potatoes
- Successful planting of potatoes by five farmers under mentorship
- On the job training of the farmers and increased yields on leased land

SUMMARY:

Potato producers developed their own experimental site, named S.A.N.D. for training purposes. The site is situated between the towns of Redelinghuys and Aurora. Various potato trails are conducted on this site annually. The Department of Agricultural is part of the project.

PROJECTS REPORT:

INTRODUCTION

The trials were planted during August 2006. Students visited the site four times during the year for practical courses. A full potato course has been developed, focusing on the following.

1. Planning
2. Handling of seed
3. Cultivar choices
4. Preparation of soil
5. Planting process
6. Different growing stages of the plant
7. Fertilizing
8. Weed control
9. Harvesting
10. Marketing and quality assurance

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Potatoes South Africa supply inputs and co-ordinate the process, including two farmers days (one July and one December) and donate copies of the "Guide for potato production" for the students. Prokon conducts the quality assurance course. The Department of Agriculture assists the project by coordinating the travel and housing of the students and also organizing the farmers' days.

RESULTS:

Seventeen students passed the two year courses. They received their certificates during November 2006 at a work study group information day. The two top students received their prizes on the same day and a article with photos of them were published in Chips. Two farmers days were held, one in June and one in December. Both farmers' days were well attended by farmers and other role players as well as all the students. Five top student were identified which will be assisted to plant potatoes under mentorship to become commercial farmers in the near future.

CONCLUSION:

There is a growing partnership between Potatoes South Africa, the Department of Agriculture and the project manager, Human Kotze. This project is becoming well known within the Agriculture sector.

PROJECT TITLE: DEVELOPMENT OF LISA PROGRAMME

PROJECT MANAGER: Terence Brown- Potatoes South Africa, Human Kotze- S.A.N.D. Manager

SUMMARY:

Potato producers developed their own experimental site, named S.A.N.D. for training purposes because of the infrastructure, knowledge and information regarding potato production on this site. Various potato trails are conducted every year on this site.

OBJECTIVES:

To develop an economic LISA programme that is aimed at sustainable potato production by emerging farmers in order to utilize available land and aid to the maximum benefit of an integrated production system.

- Successful testing of organic and inorganic fertilizer and their effects on potatoes.
- Successful testing of crop rotation and the effects it has on yields.

SUMMARY:

The experimental site is perfectly situated for the theoretical and practical training on potato farming for students and farmers. The S.A.N.D. project manager, Human Kotze is being based permanently on the site and therefore available on a daily basis.

PROGRESS REPORT:

INTRODUCTION

The trial has been planted during August 2006. The Department of Agriculture's input amounted R380 000 for the year. This project forms part of the Department of Agriculture's training programmes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Potatoes South Africa co-ordinate the process and an advisory-committee has been established to manage the practical side of this project namely:

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 1. | The Department of Agriculture | - | Adriaan Conradie |
| | | - | Marius du Randt |
| 2. | Project Manager | - | Human Kotze |
| 3. | Sandveld Work Study Group | - | Piet Brink |
| 4. | Potatoes South Africa | - | Terence Brown |
| 5. | Farmers | - | Petrus van der Merwe |
| | | - | Van Zyl van der Merwe |

THE TRIAL PLAN ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Control: Potatoes to be planted annually on the same block/land
 2. Standard control: Potatoes to be planted according to the commercial method (inorganic). Three year rotation on the same land
 3. Potatoes at three year rotation to the same land, potatoes fertilized with enriched compost
 4. Potatoes at three year rotation with compost and as standard practice
 5. Potatoes at one year rotation with compost and as standard practice
 6. Potatoes at three year rotation with compost and alternative crops in the three year period as cash crops
 7. Plant extras to keep Dover on soil
- Every treatment will be planted at a location that will be appointed to the specific trial for the time of the trial
 - Treatment 5 and 6 will make use of mustard, canola and cabbages as standard
 - Treatment 7 alternative crops will include : onions, beetroot, carrots, maize, runner crops (pumpkin, squashes, watermelon etc)

SUCCESS RATE:

1. The trial has been conducted successfully
2. Students and emerging farmers received practical training throughout the year on the different application
3. Emerging farmers attended the farmers day on 1 December 2006, practical demonstration were conducted
4. Emerging farmers are being assisted practically and assisted with quality seed as well as chemicals and fertilizers

CONCLUSION:

This trial was extremely well received at the commercial farmers day. A lot of interest was shown by commercial farmers as well

PROJECT TITLE: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TRAINING FOR THE KOUE BOKKEVELD AND CERES

PROJECT MANANGER: Terence Brown

END DATE: Continius as long as need exist

SUMMARY:

The Koue Bokkeveld Training Centre is situated on top of the mountain in the centre of the Koue Bokkeveld. The Centre is accredited and courses are being conducted for the various commodities in this region.

OBJECTIVES:

To train and develop trustees, entrants to agriculture and Junior Managers.

PROGRESS REPORT:

INTRODUCTION

All courses will be conducted at the Koue Bokkeveld Training Centre.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

The following courses will be conducted:

1. TRUSTEES

The biggest need identified by the potato farms busy with transformation projects in the Ceres area is for proper training for their trustees. On the whole they have good production advice from their commercial farmer partners and mentors, but their understanding of their role and decision making abilities is problematic.

Course content:

Weekend team building : trusting each other

Day 1 : Finances

Day 2 : Meeting procedures

Day 3 : Keeping share holders informed

Day 4 : Calculations

Day 5 : Role analyses and feed-back to directors

2. ENTRANTS INTO AGRICULTURE

Young people entering agriculture have a serious shortage of background knowledge. A 4-day short course is very popular, but because the entrants are young and tend to move around farmers are reluctant to invest their money in them. They are however the vegetable farmers of the future.

Course content:

Day 1 : Basic concepts and principles

Day 2 : The functioning of a plant

Day 3 : Monitoring

Day 4 : Irrigation

Day 5 : Field trip and assessment

3. TRAINING FOR JUNIOR MANAGERS

Every second year a select group of previously disadvantaged leaders is chosen and put into extensive training at NQF4 to become managers. It is a long and expensive process.

Course content:

Plant Production NQF4.

RESULTS:

The following students passed the course on a plant production leadership, with potatoes as their elective.

Jan Gouws – Morester

George Jika – Sneekop

Andile Pitso – Sterkwater

Donovan de Klerk – Laastedrif

Posa Mokhoabane – Howbill

CONCLUSION:

This Training Centre is growing in stature and four junior managers will conduct the junior management course throughout 2007.