

Press release: 17 August 2023

Transformation is a process, not an event



Hortgro bursary holders at the function last night, with Hortgro's Astrid Arendse (second from left) and Hortgro Director, Unati Speirs (far right).

STELLENBOSCH. - Hortgro, the South African deciduous fruit industry organisation, has invested nearly R50 million in bursary schemes over the past ten years.

During 2023, 35 undergrad students from eight higher education institutions received financial aid to the value of R1.86m, while 28 post-graduate students linked to the Hortgro research programme, received bursaries to the value of R2.84m.

Hortgro Executive Director, Anton Rabe, shared these “agricultural investment” figures at the annual Hortgro Bursary Function that was held at STIAS, last night. “Transformation is a process, not an event, and requires a suite of diligent, consistent and competent technical support, training, and mentorship covering various dimensions of farming and agri-businesses,” Rabe said.

Hortgro started its transformation journey in 1998, just after deregulation, with the adoption of a “Transformation Declaration of Intent” and the subsequent appointment of a transformation manager. With several different transformation programmes implemented over the years, Hortgro has always maintained that these must be sustainable, impactful, and meaningful.

“We are not chasing numbers, but want to ensure success over time, including bridging the generational challenge to ensure that the next generation continues with the journey,” Rabe said.

The Hortgro Bursary Programme is one of Hortgro’s success stories – with the aim to attract young people to choose agriculture as a career and equip them for positions in the value chain.

Rabe said that Hortgro’s bursary programme received an astounding 850 applications for 2024.

“Over the past ten years 262 undergrad students received bursaries to the value of R13m, and 483 post-graduates received R35.5m. We have a long way to go, but I believe we have established a sound foundation to build on.”

Portia Solomon, a Hortgro bursary holder doing her MSc in horticulture, shared her journey with the other students. “After qualifying and working as a civil engineer, I had serious doubts about my career choice. As a city girl, I have never had exposure to agriculture, but after being exposed to the incredible world of orchards and farming, I decided to change track. Who knew there was a whole science involved in producing a plum?”

Solomon said that not everyone understood why she left behind a lucrative career to start from scratch, but that she was certain that she “wanted to work with plants”. Solomon received an undergraduate and post-graduate bursary from Hortgro and is currently working as an intern at Provar, an independent cultivar evaluation company. “We are the next generation of innovative thinkers. We are like athletes. Hortgro is like Adidas or Nike, enabling us to reach success. We have the privilege of being supported, make the most of this opportunity.”

Darryl Jacobs, Western Cape Deputy Director-General: Agriculture Development and Support Services, also shared his journey into agriculture with the students. He encouraged students to find their own life philosophy but to remain humble, keep a sense of humour, stay optimistic, have passion, and purpose, and always strive for excellence. “The two most important days in your life are the day you are born, and the day you discover your purpose for living. I challenge you to discover your ‘why’ and become the best version of yourself.”

Learning and development initiatives by Hortgro include:

- Mentorship programme for about 30 interns per year with at least 80% of them finding permanent jobs in the industry annually.
- A leadership programme aimed at developing future industry leaders.
- Production manager development programme.
- Sponsorship for an 18-month NQF4 level plant production learnership programme.
- Partnering with other industries to develop QCTO qualifications.
- Worker leadership training programme for trade unions.
- Various health and safety training courses.

For more information contact: learn@hortgro.co.za

Visit our website: www.hortgro.co.za and follow us on social media.



Darryl Jacobs, Western Cape Deputy Director-General: Agriculture Development and Support Services receives a thank-you gift from Hortgro's Lindy Sigonyela.



Hortgro Chairperson, Nicholas Dicey, bursary holder, Portia Solomon, and Hortgro Executive Director, Anton Rabe.

Persverklaring: 17 Augustus 2023

Transformasie is 'n proses nie 'n gebeurtenis nie



Hortgro beursohouers by die funksie gisteraand, met Hortgro se Astrid Arendse (tweede van links) en Hortgro Direkteur, Unati Speirs (ver regs).

STELLENBOSCH. - Hortgro, die Suid-Afrikaanse sagtevrugtebedryfsorganisasie, het die afgelope tien jaar byna R50 miljoen in beursskemas belê.

Gedurende 2023 het 35 voorgraadse studente van agt hoëronderrysinstellings finansiële hulp ter waarde van R1,86 miljoen ontvang, terwyl 28 nagraadse studente verbonde aan die Hortgro- navorsingsprogram beurse ter waarde van R2,84 miljoen ontvang het.

Hortgro se uitvoerende direkteur, Anton Rabe, het dié "landboubeleggings"-syfers gedeel by die jaarlikse Hortgro-beursfunksie wat gisteraand by STIAS gehou is.

"Transformasie is 'n proses, nie 'n gebeurtenis nie, en vereis konsekwente en bekwame tegniese ondersteuning, opleiding en mentorskap wat verskeie dimensies van boerdery en agri-besighede dek," het Rabe gesê.

Hortgro se transformasiereis het in 1998, net na deregulering, begin, met die aanvaarding van 'n "Transformasieverklaring van Voorneme" en die daaropvolgende aanstelling van 'n transformasiebestuurder.

Met verskeie transformasieprogramme wat oor die jare geïmplementeer is, strewende Hortgro se programme na volhoubaarheid, betekenisvolheid en wat impak maak.

"Ons jaag nie getalle na nie, maar wil sukses verseker, wat die generasie-uitdaging oorbrug sodat die volgende generasie met die landboureis kan voortgaan," het Rabe gesê.

Die Hortgro-beursprogram is een van Hortgro se suksesverhale – en het ten doel om jongmense te kry om Landbou as 'n loopbaan te kies en hulle toe te rus vir posisies in die waardeketting.

Rabe het gesê Hortgro se beursprogram het 'n verstommende 850 aansoeke vir 2024 ontvang. "Oor die afgelope tien jaar het 262 voorgraadse studente beurse ter waarde van R13 miljoen ontvang, en 483 nagraadse studente R35,5 miljoen. Ons het nog 'n lang pad om te stap, maar ek glo ons het 'n goeie fondament gevestig om op te bou."

Portia Solomon, 'n Hortgro-beurshouer wat haar MSc in tuinbou doen, het haar reis met die ander studente gedeel. "Nadat ek gekwalifiseer en as siviele ingenieur gewerk het, het ek ernstige twyfel oor my loopbaankeuse gehad. As stadsmeisie het ek nog nooit blootstelling aan landbou gehad nie, maar nadat ek aan die verstommende wêreld van boorde en boerdery blootgestel is, het ek besluit om van baan te verander. Wie het geweet daar is 'n hele wetenskap betrokke by die produksie van 'n pruim?"

Solomon het gesê dat nie almal verstaan hoekom sy 'n winsgewende loopbaan agtergelaat het om van voor af te begin nie, maar dat sy seker was dat sy "met plante wou werk". Solomon het 'n voorgraadse en nagraadse beurs van Hortgro ontvang en werk tans as 'n intern by Provar, 'n onafhanklike kultivarevaluasiemaatskappy. "Ons is die volgende generasie innoverende denkers. Ons is soos atlete. Hortgro is soos Adidas of Nike, wat ons help om sukses te behaal. Ons is bevoorreg om hierdie ondersteuning te kry, maak die meeste van hierdie geleentheid."

Darryl Jacobs, Wes-Kaapse adjunkdirekteur-generaal: landbou-ontwikkeling en ondersteuningsdiens, het ook sy reis na landbou met die studente gedeel. Hy het studente aangemoedig om hul eie lewensfilosofie te vind, maar om nederig te bly, 'n sin vir humor te behou, optimisties te wees, passie en doel te hê en altyd na uitnemendheid te streef.

"Die twee belangrikste dae in jou lewe is die dag waarop jy gebore word, en die dag waarop jy jou doel vir lewe ontdek. Ek daag jou uit om jou 'hoekom' te vind en die beste weergawe van jouself te word."

Leer- en ontwikkelingsinisiatiewe deur Hortgro sluit in:

- Mentorskapprogram vir ongeveer 30 interns per jaar met minstens 80% van hulle wat jaarliks permanente werk in die bedryf kry.
- 'n Leierskapsprogram wat daarop gemik is om toekomstige bedryfsleiers te ontwikkel.
- Produksiebestuurder ontwikkelingsprogram.
- Borgskap vir 'n 18-maande NKR4-vlak aanlegproduksie-leerderskapprogram.
- Vennootskap met ander bedrywe om QCTO-kwalifikasies te ontwikkel.
- Leierskapsopleidingsprogram vir werkers wat betrokke is by vakbonde.
- Verskeie gesondheids- en veiligheidsopleidingskursusse.

Vir meer inligting kontak: learn@hortgro.co.za

Besoek ons webwerf: www.hortgro.co.za en volg ons op sosiale media.



Darryl Jacobs, Wes-Kaapse adjunkdirekteur-generaal: landbou-ontwikkeling en ondersteuningsdienste ontvang 'n geskenk van Hortgro se Lindy Sigonyela.



Hortgro voorsitter, Nicholas Dicey, saam met beurshouer, Portia Solomon, en Hortgro se uitvoerende direkteur, Anton Rabe.