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September 2025

No 149

Dry Anaerobic Digestion Turning Wastewater into Gold

Cover photo: Tiaan Barkhuizen



Agricultural Technology

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Editorial

September is Heritage Month—a time to honour the agricultural traditions that have nourished generations and continue to shape our future. In this issue of *AgriAbout*, we celebrate the richness of our farming legacy alongside the innovations that are redefining it.

We begin at the heart of heritage: food. This month's recipes pay tribute to timeless flavours with a basic oxtail potjie simmered in red wine and baby onions, and the comforting aroma of African steamed bread (Ujeqe)—a staple that speaks to home, history, and hospitality.

On the innovation front, we explore how precision farming is helping producers farm smarter—tackling yield, cost, sustainability, and ESG goals with data-driven confidence. We report on the record-breaking success of Nampo Cape 2025, a showcase of agricultural excellence and future-forward thinking.

From turning wastewater into gold to dry anaerobic digestion—a water-wise, waste-to-energy breakthrough—we highlight solutions that prove agriculture's role in environmental stewardship. Our agroecology feature from East Africa offers a compelling case study in grassroots innovation and resilience.

And finally, we celebrate some Young Farmer of the Year finalists and winners—torchbearers of legacy and leaders of tomorrow. Their stories remind us that agriculture is not just a livelihood, but a life's work rooted in passion, perseverance, and pride.

We trust you will find inspiration, insight, and a sense of belonging in these pages. Enjoy the read.

Until next time

Chris

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Photo: Tiaan Barkhuizen

- 6 Agri Gauteng Jongboer van die Jaar: Gerrit Maritz
- 11 CP Kriek: 'n Ingenieursgees met 'n boer se hart
- 17 Agri Noordkaap Jongboer van die Jaar: Stephan Becker
- 22 TLU SA se Jongboer van die Jaar 2025 Kompetisie
- 23 Tiaan Barkhuizen: Wenner met visie en vasberadenheid
- 26 Thian Heyns: Boer met roeping, bouer van nalatenskap
- 29 Van der Merwe Boerdery: 'n Span wat boer met geloof en visie
- 33 How to farm smarter: precision farming tackles yield, cost, sustainability, and ESG
- 35 Open and fair trade is the only good path for major agricultural producers
- 36 NAMPO Kaap 2025 breek rekords en versterk die toekoms van Landbou
- 40 Putting Research in the Spotlight at NAMPO Cape 2025
- 42 Turning Wastewater into Gold: ARC Researchers' Biohydrogen Quest for Sustainable Agro-Processing
- 45 Dry Anaerobic Digestion: A Sustainable, Water-Wise, Waste-to-Energy Solution for Diverse Regions
- 48 Agroecology in East Africa: Grass Roots Innovations Case-study
- 52 A Food Security Initiative Changing Rural Households' Lives
- 56 Basic Oxtail Potjie with Red Wine & Baby Onions
- 58 African Steamed Bread (Ujeqe)

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Contributors

Medewerkers

Louis Strydom: Marketing Director, Omnia

Wandile Sihlobo

Anelisa Gusha

Zikhona Buyeye: ARC-Natural Resources and Engineering

Primrose Magama: ARC-Natural Resources and Engineering

Ashira Roopnarain: ARC-Natural Resources and Engineering

Haripriya Rama: ARC-Natural Resources and Engineering

Kau, J. S: Agricultural Economics Manager: Agricultural Research Council of South Africa

Dr Siphe Zantsi: Agricultural Economist, Agricultural Research Council

Nyange, E. Director and Founder: Nasec Agro Supplier Tanzania

Ina Paarman

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Chris Kriel
Editor

chris@agriabout.com
082 788 2467

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Agri Gauteng Jongboer van die Jaar Wenner:

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Gerrit Maritz:

'n Pluimvee-pionier met
geloof, vuur en familie as anker

In die hart van die Magaliesburg-omgewing, waar die berge stil toekyk en die son opkom oor hoenderhokke vol lewe, staan 'n jong boer met 'n visie wat verder strek as sy plaasgrense. Gerhardus Marthinus Maritz – vir almal net Gerrit – is die wenner van Agri Gauteng se Jongboer van die Jaar-kompetisie. Sy verhaal is een van geloof, vasberadenheid en 'n ongekende groei in 'n kort tyd.

Brandvlei Hoenders, die onderneming waarvan Gerrit mede-eienaar is, is 'n braaikuikenplaas wat jaarliks sowat 4,8 miljoen hoenders produseer – 600 000 per siklus. In net vier jaar het hy die onderneming opgebou tot 'n volhoubare en hoogs produktiewe eenheid. Gerrit boer alleen op die plaas en hanteer alles – van voerbestedings en ligteprogramme tot onderhoud en tegniese bestuur. Sy betrokkenheid is intens en persoonlik, en sy dryfkrag is duidelik: "Jy moet op hoogte bly van die nuutste verwickelinge in die industrie om jou plaas tot die beste van jou vermoë te bestuur."

'n Roeping van kleins af

Vir Gerrit was boerdery nooit 'n opsie nie – dit was 'n roeping. "Ek wou nog altyd van kleins af, vandat ek kan onthou, geboer het," sê hy. "Ek het 'n groot omgee-kant in my, en om 'n boer te wees, gee jy verseker baie om oor alles wat jy doen. Ons is voedsel voorsieners vir Suid-Afrika."



Maar agter elke suksesvolle boer staan 'n gesin wat die visie deel. Gerrit is getroud met Mignon, en saam het hulle twee dogtertjies: Miané (2 jaar en 8 maande) en Leah (1 jaar en 8 maande). "Hulle is my anker," sê hy. "Elke besluit wat ek neem, elke verbetering wat ek aanbring, is met hulle in gedagte. Ek boer nie net vir vandag nie – ek bou vir hulle 'n toekoms."

Hy sien boerdery as 'n multidissiplinêre beroep: 'n boer is tegelyk veearts, finansiële beplanner, ingenieur en bestuurder. Hierdie holistiese benadering is duidelik sigbaar in die manier waarop hy Brandvlei Hoeders bestuur – met presisie, innovasie en 'n diepgewortelde geloof.

Geloof, werk en volhoubaarheid

Gerrit glo dat drie eienskappe 'n boerdery suksesvol maak:

- 1. Geloof** – "Deur geloof word jy gelei deur die moeilike tye."
- 2. Hardwerkend en innoverend** – om voortdurend te verbeter en aan te pas.
- 3. Finansiële volhoubaarheid** – elke verbetering moet winsgewend wees in die lang termyn.



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Namens Plasson SA wens ons Gerrit Maritz van Brandvlei kuikens hartlik geluk met sy nominasie vir die **Agri jong boer van die jaar** toekenning. Ons is baie trots om met jou geassosieer te wees Gerrit, en deel saam met jou in die groot prestasie! Jou passie vir die industrie is aansteeklik, en die hele Plasson familie staan bankvas agter jou!

10 *Years*
Local Commitment

Sy benadering is prakties en strategies, en hy is nie bang om moeilike besluite te neem nie. "Jy moet seker maak dit wat jy aanpak, is volhoubaar – nie net vandag nie, maar oor jare."

Uitdagings en oplossings

Gerrit identifiseer drie groot uitdagings in landbou:

1. **Stygende insetkoste** en kleiner winsmarges.
2. **Risiko's buite jou beheer** – natuurlike rampe en menslike faktore.
3. **Korttermyn besluite** wat jou langtermyn doelwitte kan beïnvloed.

Sy oplossing? Presisie boerdery, robuuste beplanning en 'n langtermyn ingesteldheid. "Moet nooit uit planne hardloop nie – solank jy altyd 'n plan C en D ook in plek het." Hy verkies die moeiliker pad as dit hom nader aan sy groter doelwitte bring.

'n Kompetisie wat groei bring

Vir Gerrit was deelname aan die kompetisie 'n kans om anders na sy boerdery te kyk. "Die mense wat die 'wow' sien in wat ek in 'n kort

tydjie bereik het – wie is ek dan om teen so 'n geleentheid te skop?" sê hy. "Ek het alreeds gegroei in my denkwysse en kyk anders na dinge as wat ek altyd vanselfsprekend aanvaar het."

Hierdie self refleksie en openheid vir groei is deel van wat hom onderskei – nie net as boer nie, maar as leier.

Raad vir jongboere

Gerrit se raad is eenvoudig, maar kragtig:

- **Gryp geleenthede met albei hande aan.**
- **Moenie bang wees nie – glo in jouself.**
- **"Elke dag later is geld in die water."**

Vir hom is daar geen beter tyd as nou nie. "As jou drome jou bang maak, weet jy jy is op die regte pad – en dit sal 'n sukses wees."

'n Boer met 'n boodskap

Gerrit se leuse is duidelik: "Wees so goed soos die beste, maar beter as die meeste." Hy glo dat boerdery nie net 'n beroep is nie, maar 'n roeping – 'n manier om 'n verskil te maak. "Moet nooit sê 'nooit' nie. Streef jou drome na."



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Met sy geloof, sy dryfkrag en sy onwrikbare toewyding aan kwaliteit – en met 'n gesin wat hom inspireer – is Gerrit Maritz nie net 'n boer nie. Hy is 'n bouer van toekoms, 'n draer van hoop, en 'n waardige wenner van Jongboer van die Jaar.

Benewens die eer van die wen trofee, het Gerrit ook 'n dubbel kajuit Toyota-bakkie ontvang, geborg deur Avis – 'n praktiese en simboliese beloning vir sy harde werk. Hy het



groot waardering uitgespreek vir al die borge wat die geleentheid moontlik gemaak het, en die rol wat hulle speel in die ondersteuning en ontwikkeling van landbou in Suid-Afrika.

Gerrit Maritz sal vervolgens Agri Gauteng in die nasionale Jongboer van die Jaar-kompetisie verteenwoordig wat later vanjaar aangebied word – 'n geleentheid om sy boerdery en waardes op 'n nog groter verhoog te deel.

Agri Gauteng Jongboer van die Jaar Finalis:

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in English

CP Kriek:

'n Ingenieursgees met 'n boer se hart

Wanneer Christoffel Petrus (CP) Kriek soggens opstaan, is dit nie net vir die varkboerdery, die voermeule of die stelsels wat alles aan die gang hou nie. Dit is vir iets groter – 'n nalatenskap van verantwoordelikheid teenoor sy mense, sy diere, sy land. As finalis in Agri Gauteng se Jongboer van die Jaar-kompetisie, is CP se verhaal een van visie, aanpasbaarheid en 'n diep geloof in die toekoms van landbou in Afrika.

Saam met sy vrou Gerda, besit CP die Taaibosch Groep – 'n geïntegreerde boerderyonderneming wat 2,500 kommersiële sôe in produksie het, van dek tot slag. Die onderneming sluit ook 'n voermeule in, sowel as 'n organiese vertakking waar mis optimaal benut word op lande, hooi en beeste. CP dien as besturende direkteur en Gerda as finansiële direkteur, met albei aktief betrokke by strategiese beplanning. Die Krieks se kundigheid as bedryfsingenieurs het ook aanleiding gegee tot 'n stelsels- en tegnologie konsultasie firma wat hul boerdery se bestuurstelsels ondersteun – 'n voorbeeld van hoe tegnologie en landbou hand aan hand kan loop.

'n Keuse met wortels en visie

Vir CP was landbou nie 'n toevallige keuse nie. Hy en Gerda het albei op plase grootgeword en het vroeg besef dat hul passie vir stelsels en mense perfek inpas by die kompleksiteit van moderne boerdery. "Landbou is vir my die ideale samekoms van produksie, diere,



mense, markte en kreatiwiteit,” sê hy. “Dit bied die geleentheid om ’n rol te speel in ons land se ekonomie en om ’n nalatenskap te bou vir ons familie en gemeenskap.”

Die geleentheid om ’n projek op die varkboerdery te doen, en later die besigheid te koop, was die keerpunt. Vandag is CP opgewonde oor die potensiaal van Afrika en glo dat landbou die sleutel is tot volhoubare groei en ontwikkeling.

Strategie, aanpasbaarheid en balans

Vir CP is sukses in boerdery nie net ’n kwessie van harde werk nie – dit verg insig en beplanning. Hy identifiseer drie kernbeginsels:

1. **Strategiese visie** oor alle aspekte van die boerdery, met ’n langtermyn vooruitsig van 20–30 jaar.
2. **Aanpasbaarheid en vlugvoetigheid**, om besluite vinnig en rasioneel te neem sonder om deur emosie of sentiment gelei te word.
3. **Balans tussen stelsels, mense en produksie**, sodat elke komponent mekaar versterk.



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Hierdie beginsels is veral belangrik in die lig van die uitdagings wat CP raaksien in die landboubedryf: beperkte handelstrukture in Afrika, die impak van klimaat en wêreldmarkte, en die delikate balans tussen omgewingsvriendelike praktyke en kostedoeltreffende produksie.

Sy oplossing? Aktiewe betrokkenheid by infrastruktuurontwikkeling, kwaliteitversekering en bewusmaking – plaaslik én internasionaal. “Luister na mense wat anders dink as jyself,” sê hy. “Die gevolgtrekking en toepassing daarvan is dan jou eie besluit.”

’n Kompetisie as katalisator

Vir CP was deelname aan die kompetisie ’n geleentheid om sy boerdery met vars oë te beskou en te toets teen die beste in die bedryf. “Die proses bied die kans om jou eie besigheid te herevalueer en deur eksterne persone ondersoek te word,” verduidelik hy. “Dit gee wyer blootstelling aan ander se sienings wat jou eie boerdery verbeter.” Vir hom is dit nie net ’n erkenning nie, maar ’n leergeleentheid



Hartlik geluk aan **C.P. Kriek**

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Here's to your curiosity, and your impact.
Congratulations, CP!



– 'n kans om te groei, te reflekteer en te verbeter.

Raad vir jongboere

CP se raad aan jongboere is prakties en strategies:

- Doen deeglike navorsing oor die bedryf, klimaat en ligging.
- Stel 'n duidelike visie en meet jou prestasie teen kritiese maatstawwe.
- Wees aanpasbaar en neem besluite vinnig – sonder sentiment.
- Verseker dat uitbreidings ondersteun word deur voldoende kontantvloei.

Hy glo dat sukses nie net in produksie lê nie, maar in die vermoë om vooruit te dink en slim te bestuur.

'n Boer met 'n breër roeping

“Die dag toe ek besluit het om te boer, het ek besluit om deel te wees van landbou, Suid-Afrika en Afrika,” sê CP. “Ek glo in die toekoms en die nalatenskap van wat ons bou. Elke dag weet ek daar is iets belangriker as ek – diere,



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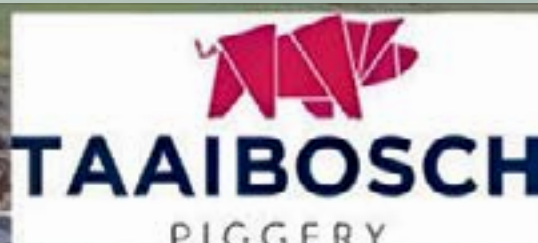


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Jong boere soos CP Kriek wys dat landbou se toekoms in bekwame
hande is.

Dankie aan al ons boere – julle deursettingsvermoë, harde werk en
opofferinge verseker voedselproduksie en hou die landbougemeenskap
lewendig en vol hoop.

September 2025 is 'n maand van trots en viering. Ons eer almal wat hul
stempel in landbou afdruk en die pad baan vir toekomstige geslagte.
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mense, verskaffers, die gemeenskap en die
land. Dit is my verantwoordelikheid om buite-
die-boks te dink en aanpasbaar te wees.”

Met sy ingenieursdenke, strategiese
ingesteldheid en diepgewortelde passie vir
landbou, is CP Kriek nie net 'n boer nie – hy is 'n
bouer van toekoms, van stelsels, en van hoop.



Jongboer van die Jaar 2025 Kompetisie

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Stephan Becker:

'n Jongboer met 'n roeping vir
herlewering

Stephanus Johannes Becker (34), van die plaas Smalhoek in die Kalahari, is op 23 Augustus 2025 tydens Agri Noord-Kaap se jaarkongres in Kimberley as die provinsie se Jongboer van die Jaar aangewys. Met sy diepgewortelde geloof, ekologiese insig en strategiese denke, boer hy nie net vir vandag nie—hy boer vir die toekoms.

Stephan boer saam met sy pa, Koos Becker, op 'n klassieke Kalahari-veeboerdery 110 km noord-oos van Upington. Die streek ontvang gemiddeld net 230 mm reën per jaar, en die Becker-familie het hul boerdery aangepas om in hierdie ariede savanna bioom te floreer. Stephan bestuur Smalhoek, terwyl sy pa die ander drie plase hanteer. Op Smalhoek het Stephan die afgelope ses jaar herlewingslandbou en wisselweiding toegepas, wat die drakrag van 18 ha/GVE na 13 ha/GVE verbeter het—'n merkwaardige prestasie in 'n droogte gevoelige streek.

Boerdery as roeping, nie net beroep

Stephan se pad na landbou was nie net 'n beroepskeuse nie, maar 'n diep persoonlike roeping. "Die natuur het 'n aantrekking op my wat moeilik is om te beskryf," sê hy. "Toe ek moes kies tussen ingenieurswese en boerdery, het ek die natuur gekies. Dit is deel van my genetica." Sy boerderyfilosofie





rus op drie pilare: herlewingslandbou as praktiese raamwerk, die Oneindige Spel as lewenshouding, en God se Koninkryk as geestelike rigtingwyser. Hy glo dat 'n suksesvolle boer die fisieke, psigiese en geestelike dimensies moet integreer om holisties te boer—nie net vir die 'nou' nie, maar as 'n verlenging van die ewige.

Gesinslewe en generasie-oordrag

Stephan is getroud met Estelle en hulle het drie kinders: Jonelle (8), Marcus (4) en Miené (3). Die gesin is sentraal tot sy motivering en visie. "Die toekoms kan net bereik word een generasie op 'n slag," sê hy. "Ons kinders is die hoeksteen van toekomstige landbou in Suid-Afrika."

Uitdagings en oplossings

Stephan identifiseer drie kern uitdagings in landbou: droogtes, politieke onsekerheid en demografiese verskuiwing.

- Droogtes is 'n konstante bedreiging in die Noord-Kaap. Hy bepleit herlewingspraktyke soos reënwateropvangstelsels, swales, dammetjies en die herplant van droogtebestande bome. "Elke druppel reën



Stephan Becker, Baie geluk met die prestasie as wenner van Agri Noord-Kaap se jongboer van die jaar. Veekos is trots om 'n besigheids vennoot van die Beckers te wees!

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moet vasgehou word, en elke stuk grond moet bestuur word,” sê hy.

- Polities is Suid-Afrika 'n riskante opkomende mark. Stephan verwys na Dr. Frans Cronje se scenario-raamwerke en bepleit strategiese vooruitbeplanning, markdiversifikasie, regsbeskerming deur trusts, en deelname aan georganiseerde landbou. “In onsekere tye is dit die veelsydige boer wat oorleef.”
- Demografies is die gemiddelde ouderdom van 'n boer in Suid-Afrika 63 jaar. Stephan waarsku dat 'n massiewe generasie-oordrag op hande is. Hy bepleit formele suksessieplanne, deel-eienaarskap en mentorskap vir jonger boere. “Dit gebeur geleidelik, eers stadig vir jare en dan baie vinnig as almal op aftrede staan.”

Motivering en mentorskap

Stephan se deelname aan die kompetisie is geïnspireer deur sy rol as naaswenner in die Klimaatslim Ambassadeur-projek. “Ek het 'n passie om my storie te vertel van hoe om nie net volhoubaar te boer nie, maar om hierdie land te hernu,” sê hy. Hy hoop om jong boere te motiveer om 'n sinvolle bestaan in Suid-Afrika te bou.



**Baie geluk aan Stephan Becker
Agri Noord Kaap Jongboer van
die Jaar vir 2025!**

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verseker.**

Skoenmaker, hou jou by jou lees, reg?

Jy het die boerdery onder beheer. Dit is jou wêreld. Ons sin is om seker te maak jy het dekking. Van pasgemaakte versekering tot slim risikobestuur, ons fokus op die beskerming van wat jy opgebou het. Niks tierlantynkies nie, net die regte dekking en 'n vennootskap wat saam met jou groei.



**Integri
Sure**
Business

Jou Agri-Risiko Spesialiste

Jolien Labuschagne
072 450 5687 | jolien@integrisure.co.za

Mario Botha
078 566 0640 | mario@integrisure.co.za

business@integrisure.co.za | 010 271 2277

WWW.INTEGRISURE.CO.ZA

Sy raad aan jongboere is eenvoudig maar kragtig: "Think big, but start small." Hy moedig jong boere aan om hul omgewing op die kleinste moontlike vlak te bemeester en dan hul sirkel van invloed uit te brei. "Jy sal nie iets groot kan bereik sonder daai eerste klein treetjie nie."

'n Boodskap aan mede-boere

Stephan se finale boodskap is 'n oproep tot verantwoordelikheid en gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid: "Ons boer nie in 'n eerste wêreld land nie, maar ons het 'n betekenisvolle bestaan hier. Ons voorouers het dit nie maklik gehad nie, maar hulle het die land vir ons voorberei. Nou is dit ons beurt. Word deel van die strukture en organisasies in jou gemeenskap, lewe met liefdadigheid en voorsien aan die wat jou hulp benodig. Dit is ons taak. Boer vir more."

Stephan sal vervolgens in die nasionale Toyota SA/Santam Agri Jongboer Kompetisie teen die ander provinsiale wenner kragte meet later in die jaar. Ons wens hom alle sterkte toe!



AGRIMARK

Baie geluk, Stephan Becker – Agri Noord-Kaap Jongboer van die Jaar 2025!

Agrimark werk trots saam met produsente wat plant en oes, droom en doen, versorg en groei.

Dis ons voorreg dat ons die landboubedryf al vir meer as 100 jaar lank bedien en ons ondersteun die erkenning en ontwikkeling van produsente en bedryfsleiers.

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DEEL VAN KAL GROUP BEPERK





TLU SA se Jongboer van die Jaar 2025 Kompetisie

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Jongboere wat die toekoms vorm – Tydens TLU SA se jaarlikse kongres is die wenner van die Jongboer van die Jaar-kompetisie 2025 aangekondig — 'n Eenheid wat die toewyding, vernuf en visie van jong boere regoor Suid-Afrika vier.

Die **eerste plek** is toegeken aan *Tiaan Barkhuizen* (34) van Garies in Namakwaland. As eienaar van *Loersand Boerdery*, boer hy met 'n Dorperstoet, boerbokke en verskeie skaaprasse, en bestuur elke fase van sy onderneming — van genetika tot bemaking — met presisie en trots. Tiaan glo dat landbou die hartklop van die land is, en dat jong boere moet aanhou boer, vasbyt en help om onbenutte grond weer produktief te maak.

Die **naaswenner**, *Thian Heyns*, boer in die Vrystaat met 'n sterk fokus op genetiese

verbetering en volhoubare vleisproduksie. In **derde plek** is *Willem van der Merwe en Francois du Toit*, wat as 'n vennootskap onder *Van der Merwe Boerdery* ingeskryf het. Hulle boer in Mpumalanga en het 'n model ontwikkel wat jong boere insluit en bemagtig deur samewerking en gedeelde kapasiteit.

Die pryspakket vir die wenner sluit onder meer 'n BYD-bakkie vir 'n jaar se gebruik in, sowel as R50 000 kontant. Die naaswenner en derde plek ontvang kontantpryse geborg deur Santam.

Volgens *Clemens Senekal*, voorsitter van die Jongboerkomitee, is hierdie boere 'n inspirasie vir die bedryf: "Hulle wys wat moontlik is met harde werk, visie en 'n liefde vir die plaas. Ons jongboere is die toekoms van landbou in Suid-Afrika."





TLU SA Jongboer van die Jaar Wenner:

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Tiaan Barkhuizen:

Wenner met visie en vasberadenheid

In die semi-woestyn landskap van Namakwaland, waar die Kamiesberg se ruwe reliëf en onvoorspelbare klimaat boere daaglik toets, het Tiaan Barkhuizen (34) 'n boerdery opgebou wat nie net volhoubaar is nie, maar ook bekroon. As die **wenner van TLU SA se Jongboer van die Jaar 2025-kompetisie**, is Tiaan die eienaar van *Loersand Boerdery* — 'n onderneming wat getuig van beplanning, trots en die wil om self te bemark, bestuur en groei.

Hy woon saam met sy vrou Wilma (33) en hul twee dogtertjies, Jani (2) en Bea (6 maande), op Loerkop — die hart van sy boerdery, net buite Garies.

'n Boerdery met verskeie takke en een visie

Loersand Boerdery bestaan uit verskeie plase wat Tiaan afsonderlik bestuur. Loerkop is die kern — hier woon die gesin, en hier word die Dorperstoet, boerbokke en voerkraaldiere aangehou en markgereed gemaak. Langkloof, 48 km verder, bestaan uit agt aanliggende plase wat as een kommersiële eenheid bestuur word. Hier boer Tiaan met Meatmasters, Dorpers, SA vleismerino's en Boerbokke. Hy het 'n toegewyde span werknemers, elk met 'n spesifieke taak. Tiaan self oorsien alles, doen die keuring en bestuur van diere, en probeer minstens twee keer per week by elke trop uitkom. Hy bemark ook self sy diere en verwerkte produkte — 'n sleutelstrategie wat hom in staat stel om sy eie pryse te bepaal en elke fase van die boerdery winsgewend te bestuur.



'n Roeping wat uit eie wil ontstaan het

Tiaan kom nie uit 'n boerderygesin nie, maar het van jongs af geweet hy wil boer — veral met diere. Hy het naweke en vakansies op ander plase gewerk om ervaring op te doen en 'n inkomste te verdien. Hierdie selfgedrewe pad het hom gevorm tot die boer wat hy vandag is: vasberade, prakties en trots op elke aspek van sy onderneming.

“Jou naam loop jou vooruit,” sê hy. “As jy trots is op jou boerdery, sal jy net die beste produk lewer — en dit dryf jou om daai ekstra moeite in te sit.”

Eienskappe van sukses

Vir Tiaan is drie dinge ononderhandelbaar:

- **Beplanning:** Hy doen niks sonder deeglike navorsing en 'n plan B nie. Dit maak bestuur eenvoudiger en help om vinnig op te staan wanneer dinge nie uitwerk nie.
- **Finansiële insig:** Elke faset van die boerdery moet op eie meriete winsgewend wees. Hy teel sy eie ramme, voer lammers self, en bemark direk aan slaghuise en kettingwinkels.
- **Trots:** Dit is vir hom 'n dryfkrag. 'n Netjiese produk en goeie naam skep aanvraag en beter pryse.

Uitdagings en oplossings

Tiaan noem drie groot uitdagings:

- **Ekonomiese druk:** Insetkoste soos diesel, medisyne en arbeid styg voortdurend. Sy oplossing: bemark self, skep waarde in elke fase, en bou 'n geïntegreerde model wat genetika, voer en bemarking verbind.
- **Klimaat:** Die reënval in Namakwaland daal, en natuurlike weiding is beperk. Hy het sy seleksie verskerp — ooie moet tweeling gee binne 18 maande, anders word hulle uitgesluit. Hy gebruik kunsmatige bevrugting en streng rekordhouding om lamtye te optimaliseer.
- **Biosekuriteit:** Siektes beperk uitvoer. Tiaan handhaaf streng maatreëls: geen onbeheerde toegang tot plase nie, ramme word twee keer per jaar getoets, en nuwe ooie ondergaan “spot checks.” Hy bou ook kudde by mede-telers in ander provinsies en belê in genetika uit die buiteland.

Motivering en deelname

Tiaan se inskrywing was nie net vir erkenning nie — dit was 'n manier om homself te toets, nuwe idees te kry en sy boerdery te verbeter. “Ek hou daarvan om myself uit te daag,” sê hy. “Die kompetisie het my geleer hoe ek as jongboer kan groei.”





Georganiseerde landbou en raad

Hy glo sterk in georganiseerde landbou. “Dis die hartklop van elke land,” sê hy. “Ons moet saamstaan en werk vir die volgende generasie boere.” Sy raad aan jongboere is eenvoudig maar kragtig: “Moet nooit ophou probeer nie. Doen wat vir jou werk op jou plaas — elke boerdery is uniek en kan ’n verskil maak.”

’n Erkenning van onskatbare waarde

“Ek is ongelooflik dankbaar om as wenner aangewys te word,” sê Tiaan. “Die geleentheid wat TLU SA en die borge vir ons jongboere skep, is van onskatbare waarde. Die ervaring, blootstelling en ondersteuning is iets wat ek vir altyd sal koester.”

In ’n streek waar die grond hard is en die reën skaars, het Tiaan Barkhuizen gewys dat vasberadenheid, vernuwende denke en trots op jou produk die verskil maak. *Loersand Boerdery* is nie net ’n onderneming nie — dis ’n bewys dat jy nie uit boerdery hoef te kom om ’n boer te wees nie.





TLU SA Jongboer van die Jaar Finalis:

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Thian Heyns:

Boer met roeping, bouer van nalatenskap

In die hart van die Oos-Vrystaat, net buite Clocolan, lê die plaas Bellevue — 'n plek waar die aarde en erfenis saamwerk om 'n jongboer se droom te dra. Hier boer Theunis Johannes Heyns, beter bekend as Thian, met 'n toewyding wat nie net sy eie toekoms vorm nie, maar ook die nalatenskap van vier generasies se boerdery bevestig. Op 29-jarige ouderdom, en met die ondersteuning van sy vrou Natasha, is hy as finalis in TLU SA se Jongboer van die Jaar-kompetisie 2025 — 'n erkenning van sy visie, vasberadenheid en roeping.

'n Gemengde boerdery met karakter

Thian se boerderyonderneming op Bellevue is 'n voorbeeld van slim diversifikasie en harde werk. Hy boer op sy eie en het die onderneming van onder af opgebou — sonder 'n gevestigde basis, maar met 'n duidelike doel. Die boerdery bestaan uit 'n Sussex stoet, kommersiële beeste, en gewasproduksie van mielies, soja en sonneblom. Elke aspek van die plaas dra sy handtekening: van die beplanning tot die uitvoering, van die diere versorging tot die landerye.

Wat Thian se boerdery besonders maak, is nie net die omvang van sy werk nie, maar die feit dat hy dit alleen aanpak. Sy benadering is prakties, doelgerig en volhoubaar — 'n weerspieëling van sy karakter as boer én as mens.

'n Lewe lank geroep na die grond

"Ek wou van kleins af net boer," sê Thian. "Ek het 'n groot liefde vir diere." Hierdie



eenvoudige stelling dra die gewig van 'n lewensroeping. Vir hom is boerdery nie 'n beroep nie, maar 'n manier van leef — 'n uitdrukking van sy identiteit en sy waardes.

Hy glo dat sukses nie net in opbrengs gemeet word nie, maar in die manier waarop jy boer. "Deursettingsvermoë, passie en roeping — dis wat 'n boerdery laat werk," sê hy. Hierdie filosofie is sigbaar in alles wat hy doen: van die kwaliteit van sy vee tot die netheid van sy landerye.

Uitdagings en oplossings

Soos alle boere, staan Thian uitdagings in die gesig. Hy noem onvoorspelbare weerstoestande, hoë insetkoste en die bemerking van produkte teen billike pryse as die grootste struikelblokke. Maar hy glo in aanpasbaarheid en beplanning: "Jy moet 'n manier kry wat by jou en jou boerdery pas," sê hy. Hierdie ingesteldheid — om oplossings te vind wat werk vir jou unieke situasie — is deel van sy sukses.



TLU JONGBOER VAN DIE JAAR 2025

Hiermee wens **United Seeds** vir Thian Heyns baie geluk met sy uitsonderlike prestasie. Hy is aangewys as naaswenner van TLU jongboer van die jaar 2025.

Thian is 'n gewaardeerde kliënt van United Seeds en ons wens hom alle sterkte toe met die nuwe oes wat op hande is.

Saad vir Sukses
**UNITED
SEEDS**





'n Stem vir jong boere

Thian se deelname aan die Jongboer van die Jaar-kompetisie is nie net vir erkenning nie, maar vir inspirasie. "Ek boer nie baie groot nie, maar ek wil graag ander mense wat ook klein begin, motiveer om aan te hou." Hierdie nederige maar kragtige boodskap is 'n herinnering dat sukses nie net in skaal lê nie, maar in kwaliteit en volharding.

Hy is ook 'n sterk voorstander van georganiseerde landbou. "Boere beleef baie uitdagings, en georganiseerde landbou tree op as 'n spreekbuis en bied ondersteuning op grondvlak," sê hy. Vir jong boere is hierdie ondersteuning dikwels die verskil tussen volhou en moed opgee.

Raad en nalatenskap

Thian se raad aan mede-jongboere is eenvoudig maar diep: "As jy net tien beeste het, moet dit die beste tien wees." Hierdie beginsel — om alles wat jy doen goed en deeglik te doen — is die kern van sy boerdery filosofie.

As vierde generasie op Bellevue is Thian bewus van die nalatenskap wat hy dra. Maar hy boer nie net vir vandag nie — hy boer doelgerig vir môre. "Ek probeer nie net vir die hede boer nie, maar ook vir die toekoms," sê hy. In 'n tyd waar landbou onder druk is, is dit jong boere soos Thian wat die lig laat skyn — nie net op die land nie, maar ook op die pad vorentoe.





TLU SA Jongboer van die Jaar Finalis:

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Van der Merwe Boerdery:

'n Span wat boer met geloof en visie

As finaliste in TLU SA se Jongboer van die Jaar-kompetisie, is Willem van der Merwe (36) en Francois du Toit (35) nie net boere nie — hulle is bouers van 'n vennootskap wat hoop, insluiting en volharding beliggaam. Saam vorm hulle die kern van *Van der Merwe Boerdery*, 'n onderneming in die Chrissiesmeer-omgewing van Mpumalanga wat uit niks ontstaan het, maar vandag 'n model van volhoubare groei en gemeenskapsgerigte boerdery is.

'n Boerdery gebore uit geloof en opoffering

Willem, getroud met Danielle en pa van Angelique (5) en Abigail (3), het in 2018 as junior prokureur besluit om sy droom van boerdery te volg. Met Danielle se spaargeld en geleende toerusting het hy 19ha brakgrond begin bewerk — sonder kalk, sonder kunsmis, en met die hulp van bure. In 2019 sterf sy pa, en Willem moes besluit: verkoop of volhou. Hy kies om aan te hou, al beteken dit naweke ver van sy gesin en lang ure op die pad.

In 2020 kon hy 'n lening bekom en begin met basiese insette. Die oeste verbeter, en hy kon op bykans 400ha gehuurde staatsgrond begin plant — grond wat deur plaaslike trusts besit word ná onteiening, maar nie benut is nie. As deel van die huurooreenkomste tree Willem en Francois as mentors op vir die betrokke gemeenskappe.

'n Vennootskap met komplementêre kragte

Francois Du Toit, getroud met Shereeze en pa van Zelri (3) en Lumé (1,5) — met 'n derde kind op pad — woon op die plaas en bring 'n

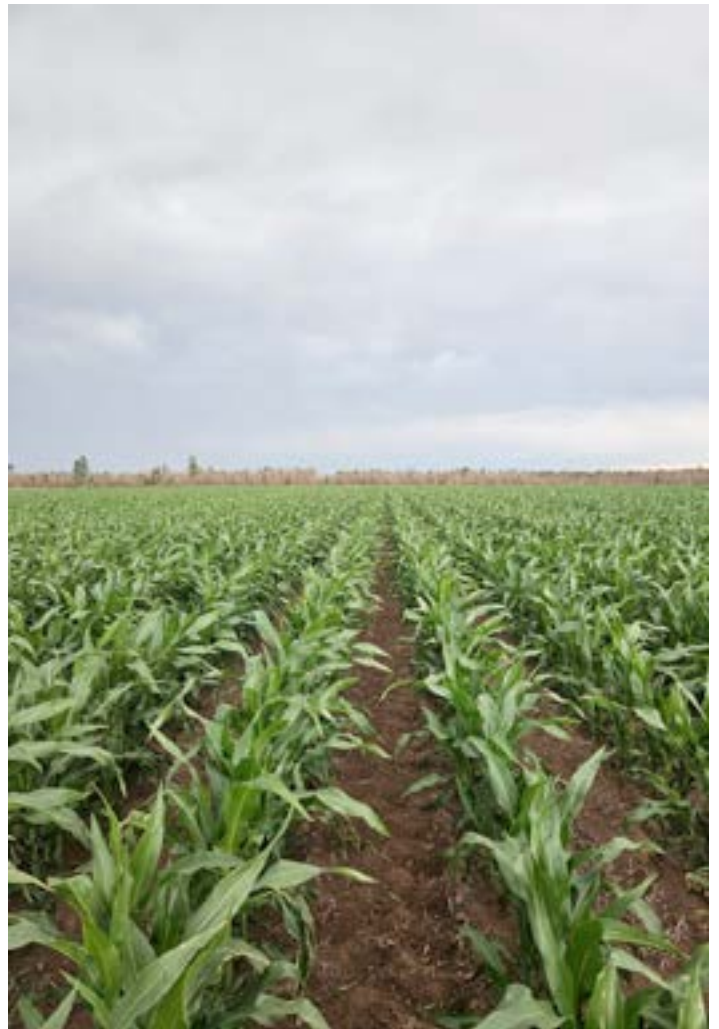


unieke stel vaardighede na die onderneming. As dieselwerktuigkundige in die bosboubedryf is hy verantwoordelik vir instandhouding, meganiese tegnologie en proewe. Sy praktiese insig vul Willem se regs- en besigheidsvernuf aan, en saam vorm hulle 'n span wat elke maand strategies saam beplan — dikwels met 'n paar bekere koffie en 'n gesamentlike besluit oor die beste roete vorentoe.

Willem fokus op finansiering, bemarking, kontrakte en marknavorsing, terwyl Francois neem leiding in toerusting, genetika en risikobepaling. Hulle glo in persoonlike betrokkenheid: albei bewerk en plant self, omdat dit help om probleme vroeg te identifiseer en presisieboerdery prakties toe te pas.

'n Model vir insluiting en groei

Die boerdery se ligging bied goeie saagrond, maar die ware waarde lê in hul benadering tot insluiting. Hulle werk saam met jong manne wat grond het, maar nie die infrastruktuur of kapitaal om te boer nie. Deur 'n persentasie-aandeel model help hulle hierdie boere om hul vaardighede te ontwikkel en deel te word van 'n groter span.



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0299

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Ons as DVS bestuur en span wil net vir Willem van der Merwe en Andre Francois du Toit hartlik gelukwens met hulle nominasie as die TLU SA se Jongboer-finaliste.

Ons is baie trots op julle harde werk en deursettings vermoë om julle vennootskap/boerdery bedryf 'n suksesvolle besigheid te maak.

Daar is baie jong opkomende boere in die distrik wat julle inspireer en motiveer om hulle drome en visie na te jaag.

Sterkte met die finaal – weet net julle het ons al reeds baie trots gemaak wat ookal die uitslag mag wees.

“Een klein boer gaan dit nie maklik maak nie,” sê Willem, “maar ’n groep klein boere as een eenheid het die vermoë om ’n span te wees waarmee gereken kan word.”

Motivering en mentorskap

Hul inskrywing as ’n vennootskap in die TLU SA-kompetisie is ’n bewuste poging om hul verhaal te deel en ander jong boere te inspireer. “Ons wil hoop saai waar daar onsekerheid is,” sê Willem. “Dit verg tyd, geduld, opoffering en geloof — maar dit is moontlik.” Hy sien dit as ’n prestasie wat elke jongboer behoort te beleef: ’n bevestiging dat hul werk en opoffering waarde het.

Uitdagings en oplossings

Willem noem drie groot uitdagings: finansiële druk, onvoorspelbare klimaatpatrone en politieke inmenging. Sy benadering is strategies: hou produkte terug vir beter pryse, doen intensiewe marknavorsing, en fokus op genetika wat weerbaarheid verhoog.



Hy beklemtoon ook die noodsaaklikheid van georganiseerde landbou. "Insetkoste ruk hand uit, toerusting kos wat plase self kos — daar is min ruimte vir foute," sê hy. "Georganiseerde landbou help om hierdie kompleksiteite te bestuur en voedsakeerheid te verseker."

Raad en nalatenskap

Willem se raad aan jongboere is prakties en wys: begin klein, identifiseer risiko's, leer by suksesvolle bure, en bou jou geloof. "Boerdery gaan jou as mens beproef in al die fasette van die lewe," sê hy. "Maar dis 'n erfenis — nie net 'n beroep nie."

Francois se praktiese benadering en tegniese insig dra by tot 'n boerderymodel wat nie net volhoubaar is nie, maar ook aanpasbaar. Saam wys hulle dat *Van der Merwe Boerdery* nie net 'n onderneming is nie, maar 'n nalatenskap van hoop, insluiting en volharding.

In 'n tyd van ekonomiese onsekerheid en veranderende klimaatstoestande, bou Van der Merwe en Du Toit nie net 'n boerdery nie — hulle bou 'n toekoms.



AGRI SILVER

Growing a Silver Lining for Agriculture

Dit was met trots dat ons kon kennisneem dat Van Der Merwe Boerdery een van finaliste in die TLU Jongboer van die jaar kompetisie is.

Ons as Agri Silver TM, heg groot waarde aan ons assosiasie met jul boerdery. Ons bid en vertrou dat julle as wenners sal seevier by die TLU se kongres. Nogmals geluk met jul suksesvolle boerdery.

Henry Kuyler

+27 71 414 0602

henry@agrisilver.co.za

www.agrisilver.co.za



How to farm smarter:

precision farming tackles yield, cost, sustainability, and ESG

Louis Strydom,
Marketing Director, Omnia

Most South African farmers are faced with the dual challenge of producing optimal yields while managing rising input costs. Add to this the imperative to ensure that operations remain sustainable, and the need is clear – farming practices need to evolve. A tried and tested solution to this problem is precision farming,

supported using speciality products and advanced technologies, enabling farmers to do more with less.

As the term suggests, precision farming entails the targeted application of agricultural inputs (such as herbicides, pesticides, or fertilizers) in the correct amount necessary, at the right



time and in the right place. In contrast to traditional methods, which relied on applying these products in averages across entire fields, precision farming allows each segmented piece of land to be treated separately. This approach allows farmers to optimise inputs from a usage and cost perspective and ultimately, increase return on investment.

Micronutrients matter

There are two main components to the “how” in which precision farming delivers these results, the first being specialised products. While conventional fertilizers typically supply only a handful of nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and zinc, crops in fact require 17 essential nutrients to reach their full potential. Even trace deficiencies can have a major impact on yields.

South African producers have seen maize yields increase exponentially over the last 60 years. To sustain the increase in harvests, producers need to pay attention to replenishing the micronutrients that have been depleted over time, while also maintaining healthy soil biology and microbial activity to ensure nutrients remain available and efficiently absorbed by plants.

Meeting these nutritional demands requires more than standard fertilizers. This is where Omnia’s chemically granulated products assist, formulated to deliver all the registered nutrients in every granule.

The right technological tools

The second pillar of precision farming is technology. Across the industry, innovation is driving advances such as genetically modified seeds, advanced imaging, and smart monitoring systems. At Omnia, our scientific approach to optimising crop production leans on accessing the latest technology to reduce risk and improve yields and quality.

Omnia provides advanced soil analysis through its laboratories, using technology and chemical testing to assess nutrients, pH, and texture which assist in creating tailored nutrient plans (OmniSoil) to boost crop yields and sustainability.

Through satellite imagery and advanced algorithms, we provide producers with tailored recommendations on nutrient application, irrigation, and crop management. AI-powered systems further refine this process and are used in the application of herbicides, for example. Where before, a blanketed approach was taken to spray weeds, AI can now identify weeds within a field and apply herbicides to that specific area resulting in less chemicals used and reduced costs.

The result: better yields, better returns

Together, specialised products and advanced technology add up to an environmentally friendly and resource-efficient way of farming that reduces the cost of inputs while maximising yield. In terms of water and nutrients, using speciality products combined with the right technology means that “drop per crop” is less. Similarly, from a nutrient content perspective, can the soil be maintained at the levels needed for the specific crop.

No money needs to be lost, and no pollution needs to be caused due to the over-application of chemicals. It’s a far cry from the “spray and pray” method of product application and in terms of the future of farming, it’s also far smarter.

In one case study, a producer using Omnia’s CarbonBee system saved up to 70% on the cost of his pesticides – a clear example of how taking the guesswork out of farming can directly increase profitability.

Turning datapoints into action

Distil the power of precision farming down to its most granular level, and the solution is better quality data. With technology such as AI, autonomous machinery, and satellite imagery, producers have way more information at their disposal than ever before. The true advantage lies in putting that data to work.

Through Omnia’s Nutriology® model, we integrate satellite data, weather data, crop information, and the physical, chemical, and biological status of specific units of soil, supported by a qualified agronomist to provide producers with custom made recommendations. This transforms raw data into correctional and preventative strategies—unlocking sustainable growth, reduced risk, and long-term profitability.

Open and fair trade is the only good path for major agricultural producers

Wandile Sihlobo

The challenges that American farmers face, struggling with exports of their soybeans and other crops, show once again the importance of open and fair trade. The current higher U.S. tariffs, along with retaliatory measures by trading partners, pose a problem for everyone.

For example, China, which is not only a significant market for U.S. farmers but also imports roughly half of the world's traded soybeans, has progressively shifted its suppliers, now sourcing more produce from South America and Latin America.

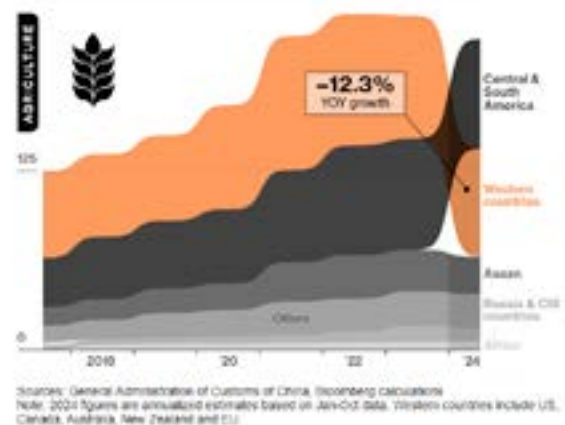
The renewed trade friction between the countries has only accelerated the trend and left the U.S. farmers in a challenging position with one of their key export markets.

China learned from the first time President Trump levied higher tariffs on them, and their consequent retaliatory tariffs, and started shifting its sources for some of its agricultural products.

Clearly, the trade war has not only challenged farmers in terms of export markets, but they also face labour shortages in some regions. The anti-immigration policy has arguably been unsuitable for agriculture, which, to some extent, relies on foreign labour. Of course, the challenges differ from farmer to farmer and by region. However, it is probably fair to say that so far, the U.S.'s higher tariffs and retaliatory measures by some trade partners are causing more damage to farmers.

Shifting Allegiances

China is reducing overall agricultural imports from Western nations
250 billion dollars



There is perhaps a message here for South Africans who care about agriculture, a recognition that the trade friction is causing headaches for all. For us, it presents profound uncertainty for exporting farmers and agribusinesses (to the U.S.), mainly citrus, table grapes, ostrich, wine, and nuts, amongst others. It has also introduced volatility into the global grains and oilseed markets, which in turn affects our grains market.

Equally, the U.S. farmers [face economic pain](#) as some of their key markets have retaliated. The core message is that open and fair trade is the only good path for major agricultural producers, and this includes us in South Africa.

Acknowledgement:

Republished courtesy of Mr Wandile Sihlobo, Agricultural economist and author from South Africa. [Wandile Sihlobo | Substack](#)

NAMPO Kaap 2025 breek rekords en versterk die toekoms van Landbou

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Die sesde NAMPO Kaap-ekspo het op 'n hoogtepunt afgesluit en 'n rekordgetal van 49 326 besoekers van 10 tot 13 September by Bredasdorp Park gelok. Die geleentheid het homself gevestig as 'n toonaangewende platform vir landbou in die Wes-Kaap en het produsente, landboubesighede, beleidmakers en die breër gemeenskap bymekaar gebring in 'n atmosfeer wat sowel innovasie as tradisie gevier het.

Sedert sy ontstaan in 2018, toe 16 000 mense die eerste ekspo bygewoon het, toon NAMPO Kaap bestendige groei. Vanjaar se bywoning het die 45 894 van verlede jaar ver oortref. Uitstallers het hul tevredenheid uitgespreek oor die gehalte van gesprekke en terugvoer gegee dat daar sterk besigheid gedurende die vier dae van die skou gedoen is. "Gesprekke het vinnig in besigheid verander – dit is presies die waarde wat NAMPO Kaap bied," het een uitsteller gesê en beklemtoon dat die ekspo

beide 'n ontmoetingsplek en 'n mark vir landbou in die streek is.

Getrou aan die 2025-tema, "Slim Tegnologie vir Doeltreffende Hulpbronbestuur", het NAMPO Kaap 'n groot verskeidenheid innovasies vertoon wat produsente help om meer te produseer met minder hulpbronne. Van outonome trekkers en drones tot presisie-besproeiing, hernubare energie-oplossings en vee-sensors, het die demonstrasies en uitstallings praktiese insig in die toekoms van boerdery gebied. Produsente het positief gereageer en beklemtoon dat slim tegnologie nie meer 'n luukse is nie, maar 'n voorvereiste vir volhoubaarheid in 'n omgewing wat gekenmerk word deur klimaatsverandering, stygende insetkoste en toenemende druk op natuurlike hulpbronne.

NAMPO Kaap 2025 was ook 'n trekpleister vir Adjunkpresident Paul Mashatile wat die ekspo op Vrydag 12 September besoek het.

Sy program het begin met 'n inligtingsessie waaraan Wes-Kaapse Landbou-MPL dr Ivan Meyer en Graan SA se Landbou-ontwikkeling divisie, Phahama Grain Phakama (PGP) se Voorsitter, Jeremia Mathebula deelgeneem het, gevolg deur 'n interaktiewe sessie met rolspelers uit die sektor, insluitend Graan SA, Agri SA, Absa, Land Bank, die Landbounavorsingsraad, SA Wyn, SA Olyf, Syngenta en SABI. Die Adjunkpresident het die gehoor toegesprek voordat hy 'n wandeling deur die uitstallings geneem het, waar hy direk met produsente, landboubesighede en uitstallers in gesprek getree het. In sy opmerkings het hy die belangrikheid van samewerking en vennootskappe binne die waardeketting beklemtoon en die behoefte aan volgehoue samewerking om voedselsekerheid te versterk.

Die ekspo het ook 'n platform gebied vir belangrike sektor-spesifieke gesprekke, onder meer 'n gefokusde paneelbespreking oor die toekoms van die garsbedryf in Suid-Afrika wat deur Graan SA aangebied is. Die gesprek het die huidige ekonomiese uitdagings vir produsente belig, maar het ook op nuwe

geleenthede vir groei gewys. Soufflet het sy R2 miljard-belegging in 'n nuwe moutery in Sedibeng bevestig, wat vanaf 2027 jaarliks 100 000 ton sal produseer. SABBI het die aanstelling van Willem Botes as nuwe hoofbestuurder aangekondig om plaaslike teelprojekte te versterk, en produsente en opbergingsverteenwoordigers het standaard, risiko's en geleenthede vir groter stabiliteit in die garsbedryf bespreek. "Hierdie gesprek wys dat gars werklike geleenthede vir diversifikasie en volhoubare groei bied," het Graan SA se HUB dr Tobias Doyer gesê.

NAMPO Kaap 2025 het ook 'n besondere rol gespeel as 'n platform van hoop tydens 'n tyd van ongunstige weertoestande in die winterreënval produksiestreke. Baie produsente gaan tans deur 'n moeilike tyd en wag dringend op reën, maar NAMPO Kaap het hulle die geleentheid gegee om weer inspirasie en moed te kry. Vir baie het die skou 'n plek geword waar hulle met mede-produsente kon gesels, weer kon glimlag en kon onthou dat landbou deel van 'n groter gemeenskap en toekoms is.



Volgens dr Dirk Strydom, NAMPO se Besturende Direkteur, het die week weereens getoon watter belangrike rol NAMPO Kaap speel om 'n ruimte te skep waar produsente toegang tot die nuutste kennis en tegnologie kan kry sonder om ver van hul plase af te reis. "Die groei van NAMPO Kaap wys net hoe relevant en noodsaaklik hierdie platform vir produsente in die wintergraangebiede is. Dit is 'n plek waar idees uitgeruil word, uitdagings aangespreek word en oplossings uitgestal word wat werklik verandering op plase kan dryf," het Strydom gesê.

Buite die landboufokus het NAMPO Kaap weereens sy impak op die plaaslike ekonomie en gemeenskap bevestig. Bredasdorp en omliggende dorpe het vol besproekte gastehuse, besige restaurante en die skepping van seisoenale werkseleenthede gedurende die week van die ekspo gerapporteer. Die





geleentheid het gesinne en gemeenskapslede gelok, met hoogtepunte soos die Boerboel-kampioenskappe, die Merino Classic en pensteek wat kulturele kleur by die tegnologie-vertoning gevoeg het. "NAMPO Kaap is nie net 'n platform vir boere nie, maar ook 'n gemeenskapsfees," het Henk Aggenbach, Voorsitter van Bredasdorp Park NPC gesê, wat die ekspo saam met Graan SA aanbied.

By die terugblik op die sukses van NAMPO Kaap 2025 het Doyer, die week in een woord opgesom: inspirerend. "NAMPO Kaap het 'n gevestigde instelling geword. Die sukses daarvan is die gevolg van sterk vennootskappe, toegewyde uitstallers, lojale produsente en die trotse ondersteuning van die Overberg-gemeenskap. Hierdie jaar se geleentheid het landbou se veerkragtigheid, vindingrykheid en vasberadenheid om te floreer, getoon."

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Putting Research in the Spotlight at NAMPO Cape 2025

Anelisa Gusha

At the core of South Africa's agricultural success is the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), a powerhouse of innovation whose work underpins the country's food security.

Every seed planted, every trial conducted, and every breakthrough achieved contributes to feeding millions across the nation.

And for the renowned organisation aimed at improving agricultural practices, these

achievements are not just statistics they are stories that deserve to be told, celebrated, and shared.

This year, the ARC-Crop Sciences team brought these stories to life at Nampo Cape 2025, hosted in the picturesque town of Bredasdorp in the Western Cape.

As one of the leading exhibitors, the ARC's stand became a hub of curiosity, learning, and innovation, drawing thousands of visitors





eager to explore the latest in agricultural science.

Hosted by GrainSA, the largest agricultural exhibition was much more than an exhibition, it was a festival of agriculture, technology, and science, bringing together farmers, researchers, industry leaders, and enthusiasts under one roof.

The event usually allows stakeholders to connect, exchange ideas, and experience firsthand the innovations that are shaping South Africa's agricultural landscape.

Leading the ARC delegation was Professor Ndimba Bongani, who emphasised the council's central role in advancing agricultural research. "We are the largest plant breeders' rights owner in the Southern Hemisphere," he said proudly.

"Our work is about more than crops, it's about ensuring food security, supporting farmers, and showing the impact research can have on the ground."

At the ARC stand, visitors were treated to a hands-on experience, from interactive demonstrations of crop science innovations to detailed presentations on the council's latest research projects.

One of the dignitaries who graced the stands having products produced in the ARC was the deputy presidents of SA Paul Mashatile.

The team of researchers and technicians highlighted products and solutions that are already making a difference in fields across the country, showcasing the practical outcomes of years of rigorous research.

Professor Bongani noted, "Events like Nampo give us a unique platform to take research out of the lab and put it into the hands of people who can use it. It's about bridging the gap between science and everyday farming, showing that innovation doesn't just exist on paper, but it thrives in the fields."

According to Ndimba the participation in NAMPO Cape was about more than exposure.

"It is a celebration of the scientists, agronomists, and researchers whose daily dedication ensures South Africa remains a leader in agriculture.

"It's also a chance to inspire the next generation of agricultural innovators, showing that science and technology are at the heart of sustainable farming," he said.

Visitors left the ARC stand not only informed but inspired.

The conversations were sparked about new farming techniques, crop resilience, and innovative research pathways.

Farmers shared their experiences, students asked probing questions, and industry leaders explored potential collaborations. Ndimba said through it all, the ARC's message was clear that the research is not an abstract concept but it's the foundation of food security, the lifeline of farmers, and the future of South African agriculture.

The acting executive manager said the organisation took pride in participating in such platforms.

"We are proud to showcase our work, and we hope that every person who visited our stand left with a sense of how science touches their plate every day. Nampo Cape reminded us that agriculture is a living, breathing story and we're here to write it, together."

Turning Wastewater into Gold: ARC Researchers' Biohydrogen Quest for Sustainable Agro-Processing

Zikhona Buyeye and Primrose Magama
ARC-Natural Resources and Engineering

South Africa's agro-processing sector is a booming industry comprising largescale, well-established companies and a growing number of small-scale enterprises. It is a very diverse industry, spanning meat-, fish-, fruit-, vegetable-, grain-, sugar-, and milk processing as well as alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverage production. Agro-processing also includes tannery and the paper and pulp industries. As a result, wastewater produced by the sector is varied in nature, depending on factors such as the source, type, and level of processing activities. Regardless of its variation, the composition of agro-processing wastewater can make its treatment difficult and costly to manage. Insufficiently treated wastewater can negatively impact the environment, threatening the quality of human and animal life. Furthermore, conventional treatment methods do not harness the valuable resources contained in wastewater. Thus, resulting in a missed opportunity for wastewater valorisation. To seize this opportunity and contribute towards circularity in the agricultural space, the Renewable Energy unit under Natural Resources and Engineering at the Agricultural Research Council is currently undertaking research into the production of biohydrogen using dark fermentation. The research aims to demonstrate and evaluate the application of microbial biorefineries to produce biohydrogen and other value-added bio-products from agro-industrial wastewaters. The study looks to support the enhancement of sustainability and circularity in agro-processing by extracting valuable commodities in wastewater and producing cleaner effluent water that can potentially be reused before final disposal.

Agro-processing wastewater is (effluent) liquid waste that is generated when agricultural raw materials are processed into finished and semi-finished products. Depending on the processing activities, agro-processing wastewater typically contains a varying combination of high levels of organic matter, excessive nutrients, high concentrations of suspended and dissolved solids, bacteria, sugars, salts, fats and oils, detergents, and other constituents that complicate its handling and treatment. Proper treatment of agro-processing wastewater is essential to prevent environmental pollution and to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. Typically, treatment of agro-processing wastewater is achieved in four stages, depending on the wastewater composition. These stages, namely preliminary, primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment, are done to improve final effluent quality. High-quality treated wastewater is, at times, re-used in processing facilities for landscape irrigation, toilet flushing, cleaning, and other non-potable uses. Wastewater re-use can reduce facilities' freshwater intake, which is particularly valuable in South Africa considering the country's water scarcity challenges. Pre-liminary study results show that while most agro-processing companies apply secondary treatment, very few companies are extracting resources from their wastewater. Tertiary treatment is limited with sparse cases of on-site water reuse. A missed opportunity in resource recovery or on-site water reuse.

Conventional treatment practices perceive waste and wastewater as challenges to be addressed rather than opportunities to be exploited. However, changing environmental conditions and depleting natural resources



Figure 1 Greasy effluent at one of the food processing facilities partaking in the study by the ARC

are leading to a global paradigm shift in waste perception. Concepts like the circular economy model promote finding value in waste, thus minimising waste and maximising resource recovery while reducing reliance on raw materials. As such ARC researchers, in line with global trends, where there is a movement, although slow, towards resource recovery from waste and wastewater, are exploring waste valorisation for the local agro-industry. Ironically, the very characteristics that make agro-processing wastewater difficult to treat are what make it a promising resource for recovery. The high organic matter and nutrients contained in agro-processing wastewater can be extracted and processed into valuable commodities.

Nutrients, water, and energy are recovered from agro-processing wastewater through both proven and emerging technologies globally. Two most recovered nutrients from agro-processing wastewater are nitrogen and phosphorus which can be extracted through various methods including chemical, biological and physical processes. Once recovered, these nutrients can be used as fertilisers. Water, in varying degrees of cleanness, can also be recovered from wastewater. Ideally, potable water should be recovered for reuse. However, water clean enough for other reuse purposes is sufficient. The goal of resource recovery is the overall reduction of reliance on



Figure 2 A sample of wastewater collected from one of the study participants

raw resources. Energy generation from waste and wastewater is a fast-growing field. The recovery of energy from waste is pertinent considering that fossil fuel-derived energy is the primary driver of climate change. An added advantage of waste-derived energy over other types of renewable energy is the resultant reduction of waste through its generation.

A well-established process of energy recovery from waste is the anaerobic digestion of organic matter to produce biogas and a nutrient-rich digestate as a byproduct. Biogas digesters are growing in popularity because of their reduction in organic waste, feedstock diversity, and production of biomethane which can be used directly as heat or upgraded to produce electricity. Furthermore, biogas digesters are suitable for varying locales due to their diverse nature. They vary from simple, household level brick-and-mortar digesters to complex, industrial scale digesters. Adoption of the technology is gaining traction in South Africa. The South African energy space stands to benefit greatly from waste-derived energy considering the country's energy and waste handling woes.

Although it is still in its infancy, the production of hydrogen from waste and other biomass sources (biohydrogen) using technology such as anaerobic digestion can also play a critical



Figure 3 Hydrogen Image by Wirestock on Freepic

role in the country's efforts towards energy security, waste reduction, and transitioning to a green economy. Biohydrogen can be produced from various renewable sources such as food waste, agricultural waste, wastewater, and other types of biomass. Hydrogen has high energy content per unit of mass, and it burns clean and only produces water as a byproduct. This makes biohydrogen an even more attractive renewable energy source. Unfortunately, biohydrogen production is still limited to lab-scale research because of challenges associated with scaling up. Some of these limitations include process stability challenges, low yield, storage and transportation issues, and cost of production.

Nonetheless, continued research into addressing the challenges and optimising biohydrogen production is vital to support the development of a green economy. Hence the ARC has undertaken research to help address some of the challenges. A crucial aspect of the research is participation of different stakeholders in the agro-processing sector, including industrial enterprises, treatment facilities, regulators, suppliers, academia, and environmental NGOs. In addition to wastewater information, stakeholder participation can provide perspective into the opportunities and challenges of implementing circular wastewater treatment in the agro-processing sector, ensuring that the research is insightful.



Figure 4 A manhole at one of the study participants' wastewater treatment facilities

There is a major opportunity cost associated with the conventional perspective of waste management. Simply treating waste and wastewater for disposal fails to capitalise on the valuable resources that are contained therein. The agro-processing sector stands to make a considerable contribution to resource recovery and waste management due to the nutrient and organic matter rich nature of the industry's wastewater. Agro-processing effluent is not just a problem to solve; it is an opportunity to seize. With the right support, technologies like biogas and biohydrogen could transform South Africa's waste into a vital part of its clean energy future. Turning this vision into reality will take more than innovative ideas, it will take action from industry, researchers, and policymakers.

Zikhona Buyeye is a junior researcher in the Renewable Energy unit at the Agricultural Engineering campus of the Agricultural Research Council. She is passionate about the advancement of renewable energy and sustainable agricultural practices. If you are a stakeholder in agro-processing or wastewater management, or an agro-processor interested in participating in the biohydrogen research study underway, please send an email to Buyeyez@arc.agric.za or Magamap@arc.agric.za for further information. Participation in the research is strictly confidential.

Dry Anaerobic Digestion:

A Sustainable, Water-Wise, Waste-to-Energy Solution for Diverse Regions

Ashira Roopnarain and Haripriya Rama
ARC-Natural Resources and Engineering

Imagine an ideal world where cattle manure, crop waste and food scraps do not end up accumulating in landfills but are used to light up homes, cook meals, heat schools and fertilize gardens. This is not a far-fetched idea thanks to dry anaerobic digestion (AD) – a clean, sustainable technology that is rapidly gaining recognition and momentum worldwide. From rural villages in South Africa to high-tech farms in Japan, dry AD is proving to be a catalyst in the fight against waste accumulation, climate change, energy poverty and reliance on fossil-fuel derived energy and chemical fertilizers.

What is dry anaerobic digestion?

Dry AD is a natural process that occurs in the absence of oxygen, whereby special microorganisms, including bacteria and archaea, break down organic matter such as animal manure, food waste and crop residues. The products of this process are biogas and digestate. Biogas is a renewable energy source that is rich in methane that can be burnt for cooking, heating, and even electricity generation. The semi-solid material that is produced during the process is referred to as digestate, which is nutrient-rich and perfect for agricultural applications. Anaerobic digestion is classified as wet or dry, based on the amount of solids in the system. Unlike the traditional wet AD, dry AD works with waste containing a much higher solid content (15-45%). This means that it requires substantially less water, thus providing a huge advantage in water-scarce regions.

Regional applications of dry anaerobic digestion

Let us now explore how dry AD may be adopted in South Africa (SA), Mozambique and Japan. These three very different countries are united by one common goal, namely turning waste into treasure in a water-wise manner.

South Africa: Empowering rural communities by tackling waste management and energy poverty

Rural areas in SA are plagued with improper waste management systems leading to disease and environmental pollution. Moreover, livelihoods are impaired due to a lack of reliable and eco-friendly energy sources. Dry AD in these regions may provision a decentralised solution, requiring lower water input. The often-times underutilised on-farm waste may be used by farmers to power biogas digesters. Dry AD is particularly promising because it is not limited to regions with access to copious amounts of water but can be applied in arid regions such as the Karoo and Limpopo Province.

The adoption of the technology in SA is anticipated to result in several benefits including the provision of clean energy for cooking and lighting, improved soil health and crop yields with the use of the digestate, reduction in the dependence on fuel wood and coal which are unsustainable energy sources, and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions which are copiously produced during fuel wood combustion. Overall, with adequate training and investment in

the technology, dry AD has the potential to contribute substantially to off-grid energy independence in the rural areas of SA.

Mozambique: Decentralised energy provision and turning waste into opportunities

The rapidly growing urban waste management challenges in Mozambique, especially in cities like Maputo, emphasise the need for alternatives to landfilling. A large portion of the generated municipal solid waste consists of organic waste, which is commonly dumped or burned, releasing harmful pollutants into the environment.

The adoption of dry AD in Mozambique presents a sustainable approach to managing organic waste. Technology adoption may contribute to a reduction in landfilling and waste burning. It can also result in the generation of decentralised energy for households or public facilities such as restaurants. It could even lead to the creation of green jobs like waste collection, as well as the development of specialised skills such as the construction and operation of AD plants. Moreover, the digestate from AD systems can

be valorised to form nutrient-rich fertilizers that can be applied to improve agricultural productivity.

Japan: High-tech efficiency in a developed economy

Japan is well known as a global leader in green technology and efficient waste management so the adoption of dry AD may contribute from a different angle compared to African countries. The space constraints and elevated population density in Japan warrant the adoption of the technology from the perspective of its reduced space demand in comparison to conventional wet AD systems. Compact dry AD systems may be utilised for the management of food waste from households, supermarkets and restaurants. Dry AD plants in Japan can be modified and optimised to incorporate various pre-treatment stages and augmenting agents to maximise biogas production. Furthermore, AI could be integrated to optimise system performance and the lessons learned then relayed globally. Rural households in Japan may also benefit from the technology for the conversion of manure and household organic waste to green energy and fertilizer.

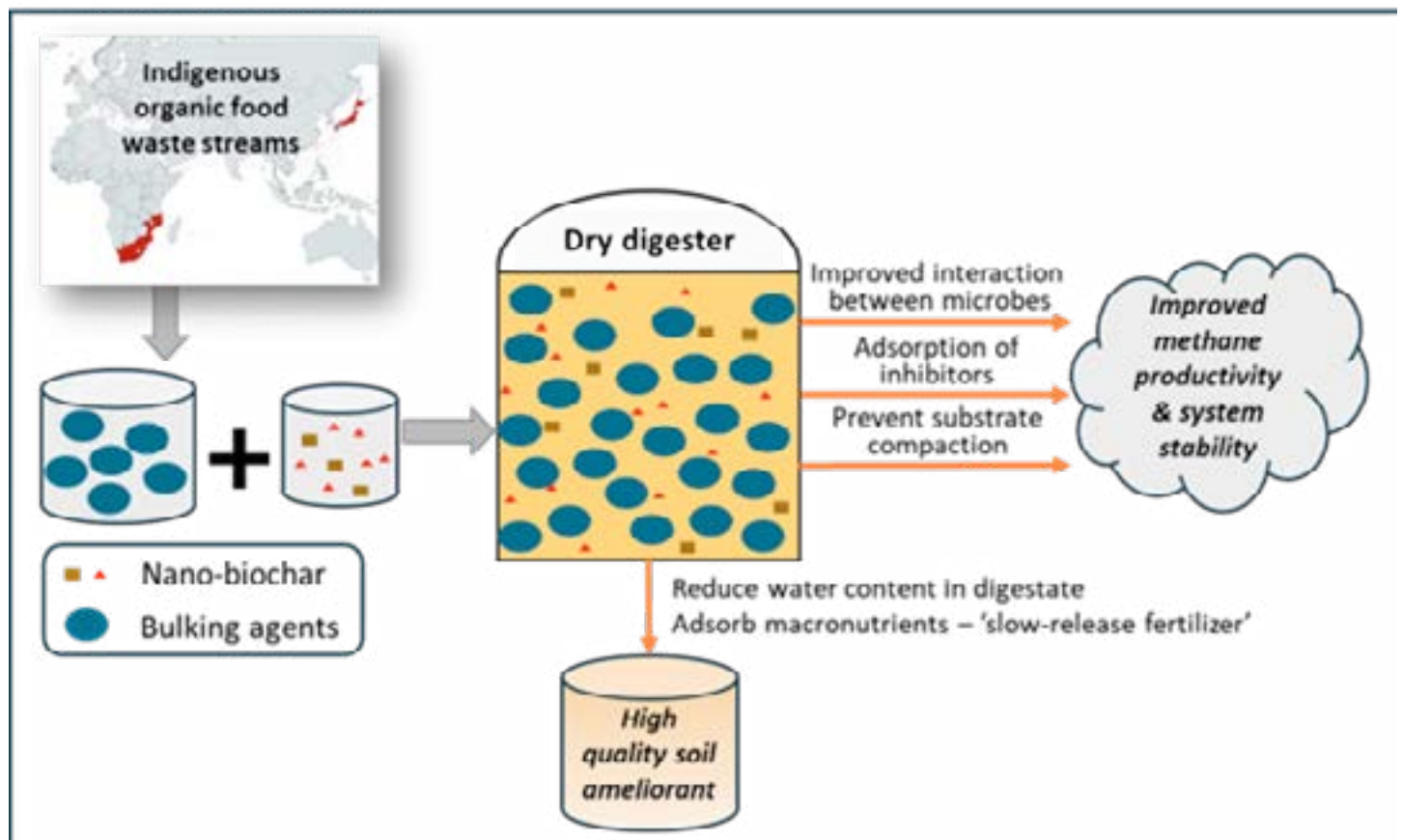


Figure 1: Overview of W3M-Dry AD project.



Global potential of dry anaerobic digestion

Dry AD is a sustainable and scalable waste-to-energy conversion technology that may be adopted as a global solution to waste management and energy poverty, so is not limited to SA, Mozambique and Japan. However, the focus on those three countries is considering 'a recently initiated project that was awarded to collaborating researchers in SA, Mozambique and Japan titled **"Water wise waste management: Two ends of the size scale, macro and nano augmentation for dry anaerobic digestion optimisation (W3M-Dry AD)"**.

The W3M-Dry AD project is aimed at developing an augmenting agent composed of nano and macro elements to optimise dry AD of agricultural waste streams, thereby contributing to sustainable agricultural practices and energy production (Figure 1). It is anticipated that the project will devise a strategy to improve dry AD in the three participating countries, thereby showcasing the true potential of the technology and promoting its global adoption. The project also forms a platform for knowledge sharing among the different countries with the common goal of advancing green energy security.

Overall, the W3M-Dry AD project aims to convey the message that dry AD is more than a technology but serves as a bridge between waste management and clean energy. Irrespective of whether it is adopted in a village in South Africa, a small farm in Mozambique, or high-tech plants in Japan, the benefits are expected to be universal. Dry anaerobic digestion can contribute to our global shared dream of a greener and cleaner future!

The SA project team is funded by the National Research Foundation (NRF) with team members affiliated to the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), University of South Africa (UNISA) and University of Venda (UNIVEN).

Please contact Dr Ashira Roopnarain (e-mail: RoopnarainA@arc.agric.za) or Dr Haripriya Rama (e-mail: RamaH@arc.agric.za) at the ARC-Natural Resources and Engineering to relay your thoughts, questions and comments on the technology and our project. We would love to hear your feedback!

Agroecology in East Africa:

Grass Roots Innovations Case-study

Kau, J. S. Agricultural Economics Manager:
Agricultural Research Council of South Africa

Nyange, E. Director and Founder:
Nasec Agro Supplier Tanzania

Conference events serve as an important platform for bringing researchers together to share and exchange knowledge, to provide networking opportunities and allow students to identify emerging trends in the economy and thereby allowing space for creativity and innovation. The conference held at Kenya, Nairobi on 25-28 March 2025, which was about Agroecology, in terms of standards and quality raised the bar to a prominent level. This is because it focused on a concept, i.e., Agroecology, which is there to provide solution regarding climate-change mitigation, for dealing with environmental degradation but more

importantly integrating the livelihood needs of communities. The programme for the Agroecology conference in Kenya, hosted diverse practitioners, comprising of farmers, researchers, investors, entrepreneurs, academics, and policy makers and allowed for active engagement between farmers and policy makers.

Why the interest in Agroecology, why is it relevant?

FAO (2018) www.fao.org/agroecology defines Agroecology as an integrated approach that simultaneously applies ecological and social concepts and principles to the design





and management of food and agricultural systems. It is based on the application of ecological concepts and principles to optimize interactions between plants, animals, humans, and the environment while taking into consideration the social aspects that need to be addressed for a sustainable and fair food system. This is because it addresses the triple-bottom-line challenges, encompassing environment, social and economic factors, in an integrated and holistic manner. It is an important strategy for mitigating against the negative effects of climate change.

In South Africa and around the world, the concept of agroecology is gaining traction, yet it faces several challenges. There is resistance by multilateral organizations generating huge revenues from the sale of synthetic inputs and the GMO products, to embrace Agroecology, as it is perceived as a threat. Furthermore, the rates of adoption for agroecology, are low as the Agri-business structure in the country is more orientated towards Export markets, this being an avenue characterized by supply of high-volume fast produced food. There is also a misconception that Agroecology is only relevant for smallholder farming systems. For farmers that are interested, there is often a common mistake of confusing Agroecology



practices with concepts such as regenerative agriculture, conservation agriculture, or organic farming.

Forums such as the 2nd East Africa conference, therefore, serve as an important platform for clarifying misconceptions about Agroecology, streamlining the thinking on the subject matter but more importantly exposing and uncovering talent emanating from farmers. Based on the sponsorship derived the Department of Agriculture and the Biovision NGO, the Agricultural Research Council of South Africa, participated in the 2nd East Africa Agroecology conference. This conference comes at the heels of another one that happened in 2023, which was also a success. The one in 2023, focused mainly on policy development for Agroecology. Just in less than two years since the 2023 conference, three countries in East Africa, namely Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya had their strategies on Agroecology approved by government. This is an important milestone, considering that in South Africa, policy development on Agroecology has been stalling for some time now. The purpose of this article is to encourage youth, farmers, and entrepreneurs to learn from their counterparts in East Africa.



Grass Roots Innovation exhibited at the Conference, the case of Mr. Emmanuel Nyange

The quality of products exhibited at the conference were of high quality and in certain instances, farmers had their products labelled and graded, this being a signal that they under-went some form of quality control.

Of many outstanding exhibitions show-cased at the conference, there was one handpicked for further insight, and that was the one by Mr. Emmanuel Nyange. This is because the exhibitor was a young person, a 33-year-old graduate. He has a degree in environmental studies and community development and could communicate fluently in English and was willing to share further information.

The participation of Mr. Nyange at the 2nd East Africa conference was sponsored and facilitated by the Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in East Africa (KHEA) and International Agroecology Exhibition Agency by the name of Dodoma-Tanzania. More information regarding the exhibitions that happened at conference and facilitated by KHEA at the conference can be accessed from the following link: [KHEA at the 2nd Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference: Advancing Agroecology Through Knowledge and Collaboration - KHEA](#).

Faced with the challenge of unemployment, and armed with a formal qualification, in the form of a degree in Environmental studies, Mr. Nyange decided to innovate the farming practices on the farm, that belonged to his parents. The aim was to introduce sustainable and environment-friendly solutions and to enhance biodiversity on the farm.



By doing online desk-top research to find sustainable agricultural solutions, little did Mr. Nyange, know that he will be venturing into a new area for entrepreneurship, in the field of Agroecology. On the internet he came across a training programme on Agroecology, run by an international NGO by the name of Floresta, which also had offices in Tanzania. Getting in contact with Floresta, changed the life of Mr. Nyange, as he would later become a flourishing entrepreneur in Agroecology. Floresta trained Mr. Nyange on several Agroecological practices, including but not limited to, sustainable farm-designs, sustainable cultivation practices, sustainable water harvesting and irrigation solutions, agro-processing and technology development. Working with Agricultural Extension Officers, Nasec Agro Supplier started rendering services to farmers. An organization called Hand in Hand Eastern Africa, trained Mr. Nyange on production of Biogas, organic farming and sustainable irrigation technologies, whereas training on sustainable irrigation practices, was offered by Tanzania Horticultural Association.

Tanzania Horticultural Association and KHEA assisted Mr. Nyange to exhibit products such as bio-fertilizers, bio-pesticides, indigenous seedlings, and drip irrigation technologies under the national green initiative, at the Conference. Figure 1 presents, an example for some of the products, exhibited by Mr. Nyange at the conference.

The bottles represent a product called Niem Sol Six. It is an organic pesticide which is used for dealing with pests like thrips, white flies and spider mites. Mr. Nyange, is an entrepreneur who is hands-on and always experimenting with different technologies. In figure 2, there is a picture that shows Biocaps



which is an organic fungicide applicable to protect crops, such as beans, tomato and pepper.

Also in figure 2, is the picture for packaged legume and vegetable seed.

Nasec Agro Supplier, specialize in the construction of portable fishponds using UV-treated plastic liners supported by either wooden or metallic frames. These ponds are designed for flexibility; they can be dismantled and reassembled elsewhere. This portability suits farmers with limited space or those who practice rotational or seasonal farming. The ponds, either elevated or installed on levelled ground—offer key advantages such as water conservation, easier management, and better disease control. Fishponds integrate with Azolla cultivation, a symbiotic aquatic fern valuable as livestock and fish feed due to its high protein content and nitrogen-fixing ability.

In Tanzanian Agricultural sector, Nasec Agro supplier, is well recognised as a reliable mentor for imparting knowledge on Agroecology. In figure 3, Mr. Nyange uses a demonstration plot to impart knowledge to school children.

Collection of indigenous seed

Nasec Agro Supplier promotes the propagation of indigenous tree species due to their ecological, medicinal, and cultural significance. These trees support biodiversity, contribute to food and herbal medicine systems, and combat deforestation. The ones collected to date include: Mringaringa (*Moringa oleifera*), Mfundu (*Albizia* spp.), Mkuyu (*Ficus sycomorus*), Mvule (*Milicia excelsa*), Mlonge (*Moringa stenopetala*) and Mringamalie (*Senna spectabilis*). The seeds are collected during their natural fruiting seasons and in their natural habitat. After sun-drying and

manual cleaning, the seeds are sorted by size and stored in airtight-labelled-containers in cool, dark storage conditions. This is done to preserve germination potential.

According to Mr. Nyange, given the fact that, Agroecology it is still in its infancy stage in Tanzania, the demand for Agroecology products it is growing but at a slow place. Based on this, his consultancy work for rendering training serves is an important, source of revenue. The support he receives from NGOs and Government Departments, encourages him to work hard. According to him, as markets for organic products grows in overseas markets (e.g. in Europe), the demand for his services in Tanzania and other parts of Africa will even grow more.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The deliberations in the article, delivers at several socio-economic fronts. First, at a policy front, it can be deduced that for Agroecology to prevail, there is a need for build of input-supply markets, for environment-friendly solutions. The issue of input-supply markets for Agroecology, is a missing link for South Africa. Second, it is important for Agricultural conferences, including for those in South Africa, to incorporate and exhibit the work of farmers on the ground in its programmes. Third, considering the high level of unemployment in Africa, the bio-products showcased at the conference, bears inspiration for youth to innovate their way out of poverty. As for Mr. Nyange, with additional support to deal with everyday challenges, such as the high cost for certification of organic products, production loan for manufacturing more agroecology products, the young entrepreneur is set to revolutionise the Agricultural Sector in Tanzania.

Acknowledgements

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Enquiries: for the contents of the article, kauj@arc.agric.za

Enquiries: for Agroecology products manufactured by Nasec Agro Supplier emmanuelnyangezo18@gmail.com

A Food Security Initiative Changing Rural Households' Lives

Dr Siphe Zantsi,
Agricultural Economist, Agricultural Research Council

Food security refers to a condition in which all people have consistent access to safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs for an active and healthy life. According to the South African Constitution, this is a basic human right. While notable progress has been made in alleviating poverty and food insecurity—especially among the Black population residing in former homelands—recent statistics show that one in five households in South Africa remains food insecure.

Most of these food-insecure households are in rural areas, particularly in the former homelands, where large tracts of once-cultivated arable land now lie fallow. Over the years, various government interventions have aimed to address this challenge, from the 2002 Integrated Food Security Strategy to Chapter Six of the 2011 National Development Plan. The former has since evolved into a broader nutrition programme focused not only on food availability but also on improving the population's nutritional status. These



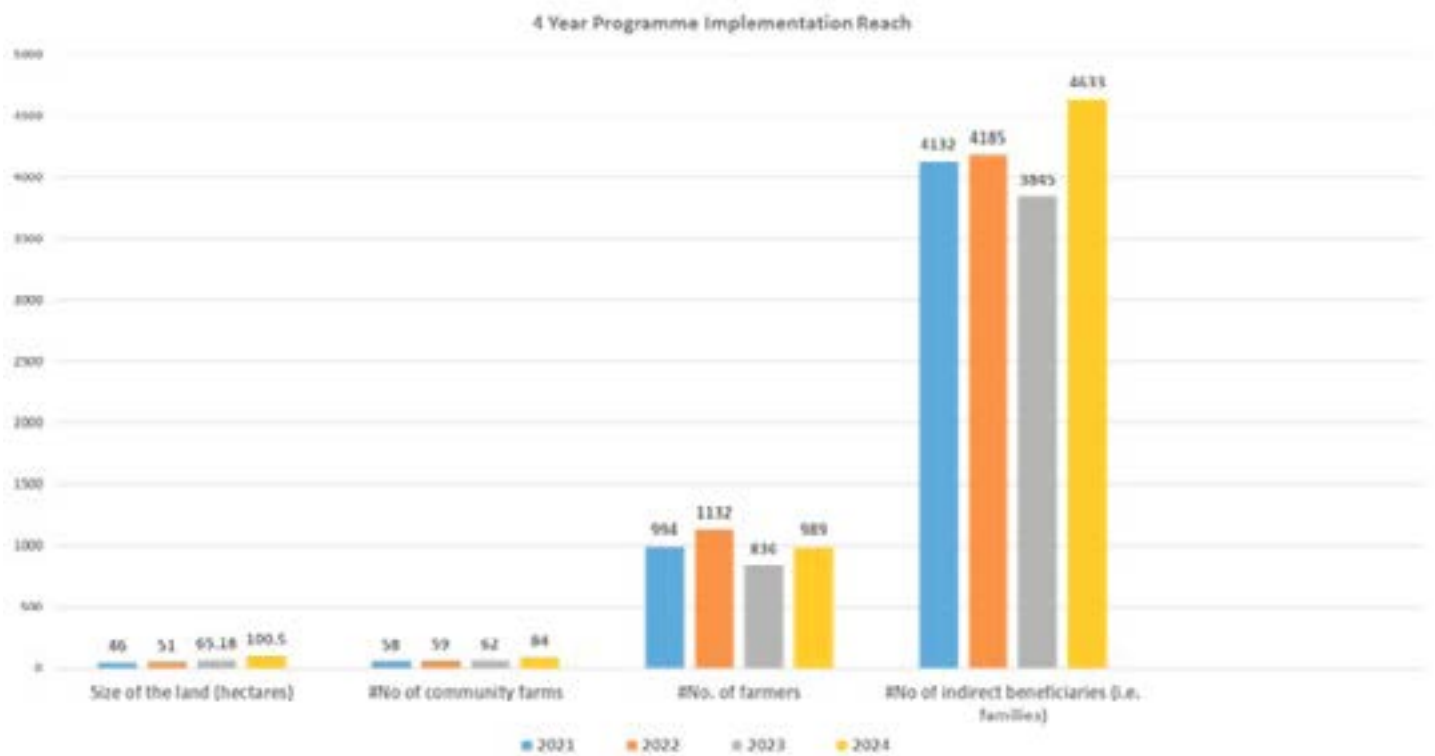


Figure 1: Farms, Land Size, and Number of Beneficiaries of the HCIF SFSI

efforts include boosting local food production, supporting smallholder farmers, and improving market access for both producers and consumers.

However, the scale of the problem demands more than just government intervention. A 2024 study by the Human Sciences Research Council revealed that approximately 12 million households in South Africa experience food insecurity. With limited public resources, tackling this crisis requires collective action from multiple stakeholders.

One such stakeholder is the HCI Foundation through its Sustainable Food Security Initiative (HCIF SFSI). Originally established during the Covid-19 pandemic as a food parcel relief effort, the HCIF SFSI has since evolved into a long-term strategy. It now partners with organizations specializing in farming and community development. The initiative began with five partners and has grown to support eight organizations across three provinces: Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Mpumalanga. To date, it has directly supported 989 farmers and indirectly benefited over 4,600 households (see Fig. 1).

I had the privilege of being involved in the initial stages of this initiative, providing research insights on the performance of

existing food security programmes, and identifying gaps. This year marked the fourth anniversary of the partnership between HCIF and one of its key partners, Siyazisiza Trust. To celebrate, a vibrant *Food Indaba* was held in Mtunzini, KwaZulu-Natal. It was inspiring to witness the progress made—farmers displayed their fresh produce, traditional dance groups performed, and stakeholders engaged in meaningful dialogue. The event culminated in a shared meal featuring traditional dishes made from local and Indigenous foods. The highlight for me? The dessert—an unforgettable taste of success.

The HCIF SFSI's impact extends beyond household-level food security. Many beneficiaries now supply local retailers such as Boxer and Spar, thereby contributing to local food systems and rural economies. In 2022, the estimated value of produce from beneficiary farmers exceeded R5.5 million, with over half of it sold to local markets (see Fig. 2). This commercial activity not only improves household food security but also supplements incomes—contributing directly to the National Development Plan's goal of building vibrant rural communities and sustainable livelihoods.

You might wonder: why sell food when it is still needed at home? The answer lies in the

HCIF Sustainable Food Security Initiative_4-year Total Produce Report



Figure 2: Monetary Value of produce from HCIF SFSI beneficiaries



nature of the produce—mostly vegetables such as cabbage, tomatoes, and spinach—which are highly perishable. Without proper storage facilities, selling the excess harvest is the most practical solution. Unfortunately, due to a lack of cold storage and exposure to natural hazards, an estimated half a million rands' worth of produce is lost annually. The consortium, in collaboration with partners such as the Agricultural Research Council, aims to address these challenges in the coming year to ensure that every seed sown reaches the table.

The HCIF SFSI demonstrates the power of collective action in tackling food insecurity and uplifting rural communities. Imagine the impact if hundreds of similar initiatives were launched across the country. The time has come to collaborate rather than compete. Local agency is crucial—these initiatives should serve as catalysts, enabling communities to eventually sustain themselves. Once beneficiaries are self-reliant, funders can move on to new communities, paving the way for a ripple effect of empowerment across the nation.

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Basic Oxtail Potjie with Red Wine & Baby Onions

Ina Paarman

One of SA's best loved meat potjies, simplified using our Farmstyle Tomato Soup.

Serves: 6

You Will Need:

- 1,8 kg oxtail, portions
- Ina Paarman's Braai & Grill Seasoning, to taste
- 3 T (45 ml) oil
- 2 medium onions, finely chopped
- 2 sprigs rosemary, stalks discarded, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, finely sliced
- 1 cup (250 ml) dry red wine
- 1 T (15 ml) Ina Paarman's Beef Stock Powder
- 3 cups (750 ml) hot water
- 1 x 500 g Ina Paarman's Farmstyle Tomato Soup
- 500 g pickling onions, peeled & kept whole
- 700 g baby potatoes



Method:

Prepare hot coals for making a potjie, with a second fire for backup coals. You'll be cooking for 5 hours, so be prepared to have enough wood on hand.

Season the oxtail portions all over with Braai & Grill Seasoning.

Using a potjie large enough for 6 - 8 people, heat the oil and fry the oxtail in batches until brown.

Remove the browned meat from the pot.

Add a little more oil, if needed. Then add the onion and rosemary, and fry until soft.

Add the garlic and stir for a minute, then add the wine and boil to reduce by half.

Mix the Stock Powder and water, and add to the pot, along with the Tomato Soup.

Stir, then add the browned meat back into the pot, submerg the meat under the sauce.

Cover with a lid and bring to a simmer.

Cook over low heat for 3 hours. Check and adjust the liquid (water) and temperature now and then to prevent burning.

Add the baby onions and potatoes, and cook until the potatoes are done and the oxtail almost falls from the bone.

Skim off the fat before serving.

Serve warm with pap, rice or steamed bread.



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African Steamed Bread (Ujeqe)

Ina Paarman

*In Ilse van der Merwe's recently published book, **Timeless South African – Celebrating 101 Iconic Dishes**, you'll find a compilation of invaluable cultural heritage stories (and accompanying recipes) that every South African should read. To know more about our collective food history across our diverse cultural hotpot, is to know more about our neighbours and ourselves. May these stories also find their way into our school curriculums, especially in the consumer science classrooms.*

Makes One Medium Loaf

Serves: 6

You Will Need:

4 cups (560 g) cake flour, plus extra for dusting

2 T (30 ml) sugar

1 t (5 ml) salt

2 t (10 ml) instant yeast

1½ cups (375 ml) lukewarm water

oil, to grease the bowl



Method:

In a large mixing bowl, mix the flour, sugar, salt, and yeast.

Add the water, then stir to mix.

Continue to knead by hand to form a soft, elastic dough (8-10 minutes), adding a little extra flour if necessary.

Place the dough in a 23 cm oiled round Pyrex bowl and cover it with a damp cloth.

Leave to rise until doubled in size.

When doubled, remove the cloth and place the bowl in a pot half-filled with boiling water.

Cover the pot with a lid, bring to a slow simmer, then steam over low heat for 1 hour 15 minutes without opening the lid.

The bread is ready when well risen and the bread springs back when pressed lightly.

Remove the dish from the pot and turn out the bread onto a wire rack to cool.

Slice and serve with butter or to mop up gravy.

To make individual rolls, shape the proofed dough into 6 - 8 balls and place them in oiled ramekins. Steam as above, for about 40 minutes, until fully cooked.



Add liquid to dry ingredients



Mix



Knead



Leave to rise



Steam in the bowl in a pot with a lid on



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