New intern at Sapo Trust

Maelea David Maphothoma joined SAPO Trust on 3 August 2009 as an intern in conjunction with the Deciduous Fruit Producers’ Trust Bursary Scheme. David originally hails from Zebediela, Limpopo, and later attended the Tshwane University of Technology. He obtained a National Diploma in Agriculture, majoring in Crop Production, in 2007. He subsequently joined Hygro, in Delmas as a Project Manager for hydroponics and a Vegetable Garden Project, and was next employed at Blueberry Hill Farms as a supervisor. David will join the Plant Pathology and Registration Business Unit of SAPO Trust, where he will be introduced to the cultivation and disease management strategies within the nucleus facilities of this plant improvement organization at Fleurbaix, Stellenbosch.

Ms Dudu Matsebula completed her internship at SAPO Trust during May and was immediately permanently employed. Ms Matsebula’s personality, work ethics and ability to work as part of a team made her the ideal candidate for the job. Ms Matsebula will definitely be an asset to the plant improvement environment.

CGA appointments

Following on from the Transformation Workshop held in July 2008, it was decided that the Transformation Portfolio would have to be restructured as the position was too unwieldy and large to be the responsibility of only one person at the CGA offices as was the case when Andile Hawes held the title of Transformation Manager up until June 2008.

There are now two Extension – Transformation Officers employed by the CGA, Andrew Mbedzi in the North, and Melton Mulaudzi in the South, and a new position of Transformation Administrator has been created to co-ordinate from the CGA offices.

Lukhanyo Nkombisa has been appointed to the position with effect from August 2009. Lukhanyo was born in 1973 in Kwa-Zakhele, Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape, attending primary, secondary and high school between Port Elizabeth and Bathurst. On obtaining his Matric, Lukhanyo moved to Cape Town to pursue a diploma in human resources management at Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

His first step was doing in-service training a Bonwit clothing company as an intern in their HR unit in Cape Town, then moving on as a community development worker at Khanyisa Education Trust as a volunteer, working with emerging farmers and youth in agriculture in the surrounding areas such as Kirkwood and Hankey.

From 2006 to 2008 he was employed by the national department of agriculture, directorate: education, training and extension services as an admin officer, coordinating the implementation of internship for the department, mainly focusing on the programme Agriculture Industry Development Programme (AIDP). In January this year Lukhanyo was appointed again by the same directorate: ETES, within the department of agriculture as admin officer for information management for the implementation of the national extension recovery plan.

On 3rd August he was successful in his application at the Citrus Growers’ Association as Transformation Administrator, overseeing the roll-out of mentorship programmes, Extension Services and all other transformation matters within the Citrus Industry.

Lukhanyo is unmarried but is “blessed with a daughter that I name Simnikiwe". His hobbies are reading and debating on the current issues in South Africa.

News from ARC Horticulture & Fynbos

With the restructuring within the ARC, the fynbos group from ARC-Roodeplaat was transferred to the “new” Horticulture and Fynbos Division of ARC Infruitec-Nietvoorbij. A member of the Fynbos group, Dr Claude Bekaadrt started his career in agricultural research through the Professional Development Program (PDP) as Junior Researcher at the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) in 1999. He was involved in the Guayule research project (crop science), funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and enrolled for a Masters’ degree at the University of Stellenbosch (US) in 1999. He was selected to participate in the Agricultural Research Internship Program (ARIP), funded by USDA - Agricultural Research Services (USDA-ARS), and enrolled for a Doctorate degree at Colorado State University (CSU) in 2003 with a study on Seed quality of Guayule (Parthenium argentatum). He completed his PhD at CSU in 2005.

Claude continued his employment at ARC as Senior Researcher, involved in crop science of Fynbos and community development. With the restructuring process in 2009 he was exposed to fruit crops and involvement in research and evaluation of Stone and Pome fruit crops, and especially in rootstock evaluations of fruit crops to determine crop performance under different growing conditions in the Western Cape.

Dr Bekaadrt sees this development as an exciting challenge to be involved in aspects of rootstock research and is looking forward to making a contribution to the South African fruit industry.