

NAMIBIAN AGRONOMIC BOARD

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Issue No. 2

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*Easons* ARVEST

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elcome to the second edition of the "Season's Harvest", the NAB's quarterly newsletter.

At the NAB, we pride ourselves on resolutely adding value and serving our industry stakeholders. Hence, giving back to our stakeholders and community at large through various initiatives is one of our objectives.

In this edition, we shine a ray of light on the various projects that the NAB has embarked on. One, in particular, is the research on French potato varieties in Namibia. This is a project spearheaded by the NAB in collaboration with industry partners. The project has yielded promising results that will positively contribute to the overall development of the potato value chain in Namibia.

Another exciting project is that of the eye-catching display initiative which is aimed at boosting the sales of locally sourced fruits and vegetables on our local supermarkets' shelves. This is meant to further encourage consumers to support local producers as they feed the nation.

We also share with our readers some of the developments in the agronomy and horticulture industry led by the NAB as the main custodian, as well as the opportunities for investment in Namibia's crop industry. Although the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic still linger on, the agronomic and horticultural industry has persevered through the challenges and we are excited to share the highlights of the season that has passed.

With all that said, remember to support our local producers buy local fruits and vegetables.

Happy reading!

Auguste Fabian Public Relations Officer

# CEO'S CORNER

Focus on investment opportunities within the agricultural industry as drivers for economic development

In line with the NAB's strategic plan (2019/20 - 2023/24) and in pursuit of further cementing ourselves as a world-class regulator of a vibrant, diversified and sustainable crop industry, the NAB will also focus on the facilitation of investment opportunities in the green economy through stakeholder engagements locally and internationally. During the second quarter of the current financial year, the NAB focused its strategies on soliciting investment opportunities from global networks. The need for investment is not only crucial for the agricultural industry, but it also plays a crucial role in the overall development of our economy.

As captured in the words of Bernard Baruch, "Agriculture is the greatest and fundamentally the most important of our industries. The cities are but the branches of the tree of national life, the roots of which go deeply into the land. We all flourish or decline with the farmer." It is therefore vital for all stakeholders, as ambassadors of our industry, to focus efforts on attracting investment for agriculture in order to boost our economy and resultantly to be role players in employment creation.

The opportunities in the agronomy and horticulture value chain are mainly on the agro-processing and storage, manufacturing of agrochemicals and fertilisers,the establishment of nurseries for the production of fruit seedlings, and overall agricultural technology. Hence, as a facilitator for the production, processing, storage and marketing of controlled crops in Namibia, we aim to enhance the capacity of crop value chain activities that promote Namibia as a potentially lucrative investment destination to the world. The contribution of high-value crops such as potatoes, onions, carrots, pepper, tomatoes, grapes, dates and citrus can contribute significantly to our economy. Thus, effectively utilising platforms such as the 2020 Dubai EXPO amongst other avenues, enhances the marketability of Namibia to the world.

#### **Chief Executive Officer:** Dr. Fidelis Nyambe Mwazi

For Namibia to attract more investors, in addition to the crop opportunities, land should be accessible and made available so that it can become easy for us to convince investors. Thus, the NAB will be engaging the leadership across the 14 regions in order to understand the available land that could be utilised for intensive agriculture, especially for irrigated agriculture.

Another critical area for attracting investment within the agronomy and horticulture value chain is research. The NAB has partnered with Comptoir du Plant, the Embassy of Namibia in France and the University of Namibia to conduct trial research for testing the adaptability of six French seed potato varieties under the Namibian environmental conditions. This ground-breaking research will further enhance the development of our industry and the nation at large. In conclusion, the NAB remains committed to supporting initiatives aimed at attracting investment for the agronomic and horticultural value chain through the implementation of our mandate as outlined in the Agronomic Industry Act, Act 20 of 1992.

Ithank you!



## THE ADAPTABILITY OF FRENCH POTATO VARIETIES IN NAMIBIA

Potato (Solanum Tuberosum) is the most consumed horticultural produce in Namibia, with more than 33 000 tons traded through the formal market during the 2018/19 financial year, of which more than 23 000 tons were imported from South Africa. However, potato farming remains a challenge in Namibia especially in terms of access to seeds and value addition. The availability and access to good quality seed potatoes remains the biggest challenge to Namibian potato producers as they have to order seeds in bulk and at least three months in advance, which has negatively affected local potato production. Moreover, potato breeding in Namibia is nonexistent as seed potatoes are sourced from South Africa, which is a costly exercise. Namibian potato growers have especially expressed concern about the limited supply of seed potatoes from South Africa during the period of February to May each year, due to South African seed producing companies prioritising their local farmers first.

Therefore, in an attempt to facilitate the development of the potato value chain, the Namibian Agronomic Board (NAB) collaborated with the University of Namibia (UNAM) and some farmers in conducting on-farm trials to test new seed potato varieties obtained from the Comptoir Du Plant company in France, through the Namibian Embassy in France.

The aim was to assess the adaptability of six French potato varieties to the Namibian soil and climatic conditions, that can be used to close the gap in accessing quality and affordable seed potato varieties that are adaptable to Namibia's soil and climatic conditions. Hence, on-farm trials were conducted on the six French potato varieties (Barcelona, Montreal, Nicola, Rainbow, Satis and Spunta) with three local varieties (Allison, Mondial, and Panamera) being used at four different trial sites (Hochfeld, Doringboom, Guinas and Oshikoto farm). These four volunteer farmers sacrificed their production inputs, labour, and time to manage the trials. Whereas, NAB catered for transport, technical guidance on the establishment of the trials and data collection.



NAB Team pictured during sensory evaluations at the International University of Management



Sensory evaluation conducted at IUM to determine texture, aroma and colour of French fries and boiled potatoes from different varieties

Despite some rampant climatic challenges experienced such as prolonged dry periods and sporadic heavy rainfalls, the potato trials were successfully planted, whereas three trials were successfully harvested. From a population of 240 plants per trial site (30 plants per variety), 20 plants per variety were sampled for the evaluation of dates of emergence, dates of reaching full canopy cover after emergence as well as pests and diseases, yield, tuber size, tuber shape, skin texture, skin colour, and French fries' colour, and tubers' dry matter content. Results show that on average, Allison and Mondial emerged first, whilst, Nicola and Rainbow reached full canopy cover first after emergence. Early bright disease, potato tuber moth, and American leaf miner were observed in all tubers, withinsignificant differences in the attack on both check varieties and French varieties.

Regarding the average yield, Mondial (check variety) scored the highest (73 tons/ha), followed by Spunta (66 tons/ha), Rainbow and Allison both scored (62 tons/ha), and the lowest was Panamera (38 tons/ha). Spunta and Montreal recorded the highest number of large/medium and large potato sizes with greater than 50mm in size, whilst Panamera (check variety) recorded a lot more tubers that were smaller than 50mm. There were no significant differences which were found between French varieties and check varieties in terms of the colour of tubers, the flesh colour inside of tubers, and the shape of tubers. All French varieties had yellow skin tubers, with the exception of Montreal that had whitish-yellow tubers. Allison, Mondial and Panamera (check varieties) had a whitish-yellow flesh colour inside the tubers, which looks the same as that for Rainbow. Barcelona, Satis and Spunta had a yellow flesh colour inside the tubers, whilst, Montreal and Nicola had a white flesh colour inside their tubers. Irrespective of varieties, the majority of the potatoes were long-oval, oval, and/ or short-oval, except for Barcelona which was roundish. However, all these shapes are acceptable in the Namibian market. All harvested varieties scored within the standard average dry matter content level of 15% - 25%. Allison (check variety) scored the highest (19%), followed by Rainbow and Satis both with 18%.



On the sensory evaluation, Spunta and Rainbow scored the highest with no significant difference with check varieties in tuber colours (exterior and interior) and tuber shapes. 'Strongly like' dominated the scores of all the varieties tested in terms of aroma and texture. Out of the total number of chip strips assessed for French fries, all the varieties displayed a colour of either light, slightly light, and neither light nor dark. All these are the preferred colours of French fries in the market. Lastly, there were no significant differences between the flesh colour of fresh and boiled potatoes across the varieties.

Therefore, considering the performance of potato varieties in terms of yields, the interior and exterior traits as well as sensory evaluations observed, it is worth recommending that the French potato varieties be considered for adoption by Namibian potato growers after the second trials, which are currently at harvesting stage. Access to these French seed potato varieties should be considered as a way to complement the existing local supply chain that is wholly dependent on South Africa. This is however pending on the results of the second seed potato trials that are currently being conducted in Namibia. Furthermore, the adoption of these varieties should be based on the preference of the market that each grower is targeting to supply, so as to ensure customer satisfaction since different market



Lastly, Section 34 of the Seed and Seed Varieties Act No 23 of 2018 states that the compensation to farmers "where the seed of any kind or a variety of plant is sold to a farmer, the producer must disclose the expected performance of such kind of variety to the farmer under given conditions and if such registered seed fails to provide the expected performance under such given conditions, the farmer may claim compensation from the producers as if that seed had a hidden defect and the producer was an expert in the provision of seed". Therefore, second trials on the French varieties are recommended to be conducted to get assurance of the expected performance of each variety

segments may prefer distinguished internal and external qualities.

Specific potato varieties such as Spunta, Rainbow and Barcelona are highly recommended for adoption in Namibia as they scored high yields and a significantnumber of uniformed tubers larger than 50mm as compared to other French and check varieties. Satis, Nicola and Montreal also yielded higher than the standard varieties with a fairer proportion of large, large/medium and medium-sized tubers respectively.

pictured during the harvesting and sorting potatoes at Darinboom Farm.

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#### NAB LEADS SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF MARKET SHARE PROMOTION

The MSP stands for Market Share Promotion (MSP) Scheme, a Namibian horticultural scheme that came into effect on the 1st of October 2004. The scheme is a growth at home strategy implemented by the NAB and aims at stimulating horticultural production in Namibia and the promotion of local sales of locally produced fresh fruits and vegetables by encouraging importers such as wholesalers, catering companies and retailers to source locally.

The scheme requires importers of fresh fruits and vegetables to procure Namibian horticultural products equivalent to at least the minimum percentage factor in monetary value per quarter, as determined and approved by the NAB Board, on recommendation from the National Horticulture Advisory Committee (NHAC). The minimum MSP currently stands at 48% and it serves as a prerequisite to obtaining an import permit, which means that only traders/importers who have achieved their minimum MSP are allowed to import horticultural products unrestricted. Traders/Importers that fail to comply with this requirement are restricted to only importing horticultural products equivalent to a predetermined monetary value.

Initially, the MSP started at 5% in 2005. However, the intervention led to an increase in local fruit and vegetable production to the current 48%. The MSP trends over the years also indicate that in 2012 the MSP stood at 37.5%, with 39% for 2013, 41.5% for 2014, 44% for 2016 - 2018, 47% for 2019 and 48% for 2021 respectively. This means that local production contributes 48% to the horticulture (fresh fruits and vegetables) domestic demand and the remaining 52% is imported mainly from South Africa, and this is from a formal trade perspective, excluding informal markets.

In addition, the MSP implementation has led to the protection of Namibian producers from cheap horticultural fresh produce imported from other countries.

Notably, the Namibian annual horticultural demand also increased from 65,113 tons or a monetary value of N\$438,214,219 recorded in 2018/2019 to 110 999.47 tons or N\$ 957 332 846.40 recorded during the 2020/2021 financial year.

In essence, the NAB targets to reach 60% MSP by 2025, to ensure that the country produces more of what we eat whilst importing less as a way to enhance food selfsufficiency and create employment opportunities in Namibia.



Emilie Abraham Manager: Horticulture Market Development

In order to boost the MSP at a faster pace, the NAB introduced the Horticulture Special Control Products (SCP) Scheme in 2012. The scheme allows for the implementation of import restrictions on selected horticultural products during times of sufficient local production, which encourages fresh produce traders to source locally produced horticultural products. The scheme started with only two products (potatoes and onions) in 2012 and currently, there are 16 products under this scheme namely, potatoes, onions, cabbages, butternuts, tomatoes, carrots, sweet peppers, English cucumbers, sweet potatoes, beetroot, gem squash, watermelons, sweet melons, pumpkins, sweetcorn and lettuce (Iceberg).

In conclusion, for the MSP to continue reaping rewards for the horticultural industry, producers are encouraged to take advantage of horticultural crops with shortages in the market such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, sweet pepper, gem squash, amongst others, through a market-led production approach, to ensure that every product that is produced on the farm has a market before it is planted. Furthermore, in order to enhance governance and smoothen the implementation of the MSP by the NAB, all persons involved in the production, processing, storage and marketing of controlled horticultural crops in Namibia are encouraged to register with the NAB, as per the statutory requirement in terms of section 10 (1)(J) of the Agronomic Industry Act, Act 20 of 1992.



The Namibian Agronomic Board (NAB) is a statutory body governed by the Agronomic Industry Act, Act 20 of 1992, and it is mandated to promote the agronomic and horticulture industry and to facilitate the production, processing, storage, and marketing of controlled products in Namibia.

In an effort to effectively promote the sales of locally produced fruits and vegetables in Namibia, the Namibian Agronomic Board in collaboration with the Namibian Association of Traders in Fresh Produce (NATFP) embarked on implementing the eye-catching displays of Namibian fresh produce in all fresh produce shops across the country. This was aimed at guiding our consumers to spot local fresh produce on the shelves when shopping and to subsequently promote the sales of locally produced products in the country.

The eye-catching display initiative is a component of the Namibian Horticulture Market Share Promotion (MSP) Scheme which is being implemented by the NAB with the aim to promote the sale of locally produced horticultural products in Namibia.

The eye-catching display of Namibian fresh produce initiative was introduced in 2012 by the NAB. However, its implementation by traders has been slow and it has lacked uniformity (each storeused its own signage to guide consumers) and as such in some instances, the consumers get confused and they have not been able to locate Namibian fresh produce on the shelves. Therefore, through collective efforts by the NAB and the NATFP, standard signage was developed and approved by the NAB board for implementation by all shops countrywide.

In order for the NAB to encourage traders and fast-tract the implementation process of this crucial project, all NATFP

members are subsidised for the purchasing of the standard eye-catching signage. The subsidy entails the NAB paying the full cost of one shop per trader and if such a trader has more shops, the NAB will only pay N\$ 1000.00 per shop.

Namibian fresh produce traders heeded to this request and a total of 59 orders were received and subsidized by the NAB to date, with more orders expected before the end of November 2021.

All shops that are already implementing their eye-catching signage are permitted to continue using such signage for a maximum period of six (6) months, after which they are expected to replace the signage with the approved standard signage by March 2022.

To further enhance governance and ensure compliance to this requirement, the NAB's Standard Compliance Inspectors will commence with the inspection of shops from effective 01 December 2021, and non-compliant shops will be subjected to punitive measures as stipulated in the existing MSP rules and procedures.





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*Eye-catching display spotted at local supermarkets* 



#### WHITE MAIZE BUMPER HARVEST EXPECTED FOR THE 2021 HARVESTING SEASON

White maize is one of the staple grain crops cultivated in Namibia, mainly for human consumption. Production takes place in the Zambezi, Kavango, North Central (Etunda), Karst (Maize Triangle), Central (Summerdown and Hochfeld) and South (Hardap) production zones of Namibia. It is produced both under rainfed and irrigation production, and planted from October to January each year, while harvesting takes place from April to October each year. The marketing of white maize grains officially begins from 01 May until such time when the locally produced grains have been marketed to millers/silos, and no importation of white maize grain is permitted during this period. To effectively and efficiently facilitate the marketing of locally produced white maize grain, the Namibian Agronomic Board (NAB) forecasts production and monitors availability throughout the marketing season. Production forecast reports are published and they are available for download on the NAB website.

## **A BUMPER HARVEST- 2021**

2 876 Farmers registered

26 173 Hectares (Rainfed: 22 119ha & Irrigated 4 055ha)
82 735 tons expected for harvesting
46% Self-sufficiency rate expected
97 103 tons expected imports until 31 March 2022
78 770 tons marketed as at 31 August 2021



Figure 1 shows that Namibia will experience the biggest harvest ever produced in the past 10 years. A total of 82 735 tons is expected to be harvested, representing an increase of 16,093 tons (24%) when compared to the 2020 marketing

season. This increase in production is mainly attributed to the good rainfall received in most parts of the country and the prioritisation of crops by farmers. As at 31 August 2021, a total of 78 770 tons had been marketed to processors in the country.

Figure 2 shows that 45% of the white maize expected to be harvested during the 2021 marketing season will come from the Karst (Maize Triangle) area, followed by Central (28%) and the lowest from the North Central (2%) regions.



Figure 2: Expected tonnage per production zone.

Table 1 indicates that 53% of the expected total production is projected to be harvested from rainfed production and 47% from irrigated production.

Table1: White maize tonnage irrigation vs rainfed - 2021		
		Irrigation
Production Zone	Rainfed (Tons)	(Tons)
Zambezi	7,995	0
Kavango	11	9,435
North Central	103	1,890
Karst	25,693	11,521
Central/ East	10,213	12,610
South	0	3,263
Total	44,015	38,719
Rainfed vs Irrigated Share %	53%	47%

In summary, despite the outbreak of red locusts and late rainfall in some crop-producing zones, Namibia expects a bumper harvest of white maize grain ever recorded in the past 10 years. This will reduce import dependency of white maize grain by at least 46%, based on the estimated annual demand of approximately 180 000 tons, valued at N\$720 million.



Wheat (Triticum aestivum) is a cereal grain crop cultivated during winter in Namibia and it is only produced under irrigation. Wheat is currently produced in five production zones, that is, Kavango, North Central, Karstland (Maize Triangle), Central (Summerdown and Hochfeld) and South (Hardap). The biggest volume of the wheat grain is produced in the Kavango and Hardap production zones and delivered to the milling facilities in Windhoek. Wheat is planted from May to July and harvested during October to January each year.

## A GOOD HARVEST- 2021

23 farmers registered 2 842 hectares 19 817 tons expected harvest 14% self-sufficiency rate expected 120 183 tons expected imports until 31 March 2022

The marketing of wheat grain officially begins from 01 October each year until such a time when the locally produced grains have been marketed to millers.

To effectively and efficiently facilitate the marketing of locally produced wheat grain, the NAB forecasts production and monitors availability throughout the marketing season. Production forecast reports are published and available for download from the NAB website.



Figure 1: Local production trend

Figure 1 shows that Namibia will experience the biggest harvest ever produced in the past 10 years. A total of 19817 tons is expected to be harvested, representing an increase

of 7,619 tons (39%) when compared to the 2020 marketing season.

This increase in production is mainly attributed to good water dam levels in the main producing areas and the shift of farmers from fodder crops to wheat as a winter crop.

The expected wheat production volumes will only cover about 14% of the total annual domestic demand of approximately 140 000 tons or a value of N\$770 million. This means that Namibia will import about 86% (120 183 tons) of the wheat grain to meet the annual domestic demand.



Figure 2 shows that the South expects to harvest the biggest tonnage of 11,876 tons (60%), followed by Kavango with 4,340 tons (22%), and the lowest is North Central with 450 tons (2%). In conclusion, despite the significant increase in local production, Namibia still remains a net importer of wheat grain, which is mainly imported from European countries and South Africa.



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### LOCAL G.A.P. CREATING NEW PATHWAYS FOR THE AGRO-FOOD INDUSTRY

The NAB inline with its strategy and mandate developed a Namibian localg.a.p programme to be integrated within Namibia's Food Control System for Agronomic and Horticultural products. The programme was aimed at implementing a responsive regulatory framework for assuring the quality and food safety of agronomic and horticultural products produced and traded locally and for export markets.

This article presents the localg.a.p. concept as one of the brands forming part of GLOBALG.A.P. family of products and provides generic information to assist emerging and small-scale farmers in recognizing the potential benefits of implementing Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) in accordance with the localg.a.p. standard.

#### What is localg.a.p.?

localg.a.p. has been specifically designed to be used as a capacity-building tool, or to be applied as a local standard for agricultural supply chains especially in developing economies and emerging markets.

localg.a.p. is also a key building block for producers who need GLOBALG.A.P. Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA) certification to access demanding markets. With this tool, buyers will be able to increase their sourcing possibilities by developing a network of reliable producers that are already linked to an internationally recognized standard such as GLOBALG.A.P. IFA.

#### localg.a.p. program

Focuses on the Primary Farm Assurance (PFA) standard requirements for food safety and hygiene, it helps producers gain gradual recognition by providing an entry-level to GLOBALG.A.P. Certification.

It is intended to help producers adopt Good Agricultural Practices that can improve the efficiency of farm management, cut exposure to food safety risks, and comply with legislation on food safety. Through these steps, producers can gain increased access to local and regional markets.

Consumers worldwide are increasingly demanding quality foods, produced safely and sustainably. Retailers around the world are rising to meet the challenge by demanding certification from their producers. Therefore, localg.a.p. offers emerging producers entry-level recognition where GLOBALG.A.P. Certification is not possible. Hence, the introduction of the GLOBALG.A.P. Farm Assurer Program by the NAB as a capacity-building initiative aimed at enhancing and strengthening the knowledge and skills of producers on the concept of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), as compliance with the localg.a.p. standards requirements will become mandatory under the Namibia's Food Control System during the FY2022/23.

Within the GLOBALG.A.P. Farm Assurer Program the NAB aims to train a team of independent, onsite advisors and consultants to help producers navigate the steps necessary to implement Good Agricultural Practices and to obtain and maintain GLOBALG.A.P. Certification. With first-hand knowledge of the GLOBALG.A.P. System and the latest industry developments, Farm Assurers will use their expertise to make the standard easier to understand and to simplify audit preparations for producers. A full list of GLOBALG.A.P. approved Farm Assurer on the NAB website.

## Step-by-step process leading to local g.a.p. registration

- Download the relevant localg.a.p. Primary Farm Assurance (PFA) standard documents and checklist from the GLOBALG.A.P. website. All documents are accessible online, free of charge.
- Ensure that all requirements of the localg.a.p. Primary Farm Assurance (PFA) standard are established, documented, implemented and maintained. Engage our GLOBALG.A.P. Licensed Farm Assurers for guidance and technical support.
- Conduct a self-assessment using the PFA checklist and take corrective actions for control points and compliance criteria you don't comply with. A GLOBAL.G.A.P. Farm Assurer can provide you with valuable assistance during your audit preparations. Find a full list of GLOBALG.A.P. approved Farm Assurer on the NAB website.
- Submit applicable application obtainable from the NAB.
- Sign the sub-licence agreement with the NAB.
- Pay the applicable GLOBALG.A.P. registration and certification license fees
- NAB as the GLOBALG.A.P. approved verification body will conduct an on-site assessment to confirm compliance with the PFA standard requirements.
- Once successfully comply with the standard's requirements, a letter of conformance and localg.a.p. number (LGN) will be issued.



#### letter of conformance

• Validity period of 12 months, with annual renewal.

#### Benefits for local producers

- Benefit from a stepwise improvement plan toward GLOBALG.A.P. Certification.
- Improve your traceability and reassure your buyers using your LGN (your unique 13-digit localg.a.p. that identifies you in the GLOBALG.A.P. database).
- Cut your exposure to food safety risks.
- Improve the efficiency of your farm management.
- Comply with legislation on food safety and proper hygiene.
- Access local and regional markets with your localg.a.p. letter of conformance.

- Benefits for retailers & buyers
- Source local and regional products that meet the minimum requirements for food safety and hygiene.
- Ensure your sourcing by developing a network of reliable producers.
- Benefit from GLOBALG.A.P.'s traceability system. All localg.a.p producers are identified in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database with a unique 13-digit localg.a.p number (LGN), which allows you to monitor your producers.
- Access our GLOBALG.A.P. Database to review the localg.a.p. audit checklists of your producers.
- Work with your producers on a stepwise improvement plan for food safety and sustainability to improve the quality of your food supply.

#### **Contact details**

For more information and technical enquiries, please contact: Namibian Agronomic Board, Regulatory Services, **Tel:**+264 (0) 61 379500, **Email:** regulatory@nab.com.na



NAB Inspectors pictured after attending training on Localg.a.p and Export Product Inspection training recently.

NAB QMS internal auditors team recently underwent training in Eswatini. The training is aimed to equipt participants with the necessary competence in conducting the audit process for quality management systems based on ISO 9001: 2015 standard.





#### THE IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE & QUALITY CONTROL IN THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

Quality control entails the evaluation of a product before it is marketed. This is done by performing quality checks at the end of production and subsequently assigning the product to a quality grade, class or category, or by simply passing or rejecting a product. However, this process will not be able to correct production failures or upgrade the quality of the product to be marketed. The grade or class of the product will therefore affect the price at which the product is sold, whereby low-quality products are sold at a lower price and vice versa, or at times products that are not fit for the market have to be discarded or destroyed despite the product on cost of the low-quality and high-quality product being identical. Hence, quality control has a limited potential to increase the quality and efficiency of a production process.

Quality assurance, on the other hand, is the implementation of quality checks and procedures to immediately correct any failure and mistakes that can reduce the quality of the final product at any stage of production. Standards in the agricultural value chain are designed to demonstrate that on-farm practices allow farmers to produce safe food products that meet food quality and safety standards. Thus, the desired high quality of the final product is planned and obtained by employing Quality Management Systems that guarantee the desired quality of the final products at every production step.

Should a production system have a well-documented Quality Management System (QMS) based on a local or international standards, market access may be guaranteed because there is a system with records of good quality and safety practices. Consumers and stakeholders need assurance that the process and system objectives include customer satisfaction, continual improvement of processes, products, services and the working culture of an organisation.

The Namibian Agronomic Board (NAB) keeps track of producers and trends of expected harvests of all controlled horticultural and agronomic products in the country. This intelligence is intended to benefit traders in forecasting the fresh produce availability in the country. This information also encourages traders and agents to sign contracts with producers as a way to trigger a more competitive environment within the agronomy and horticulture value chain. This means that the marketed fresh produce need to meet the quality standards and specifications of the consumers. This is evident through the increase in Celestino Ferreira
Total Quality Management Officer

consumer demand for high quality fresh produce globally. Consumers expect their food to be handled, packaged and transported with the highest standards of quality and hygiene, in a clean and environmentally friendly manner. Consumer confidence is crucial for maintaining demand. Therefore, systematic quality monitoring at the farm level is necessary for ensuring food quality and safety.

Through Quality Assurance and Quality Control measures, systems are implemented to ensure that quality standards are met at all times. At times, quality standards are set as deliberate barriers of trade in order to create a biased preference for certain producers or markets. The UK for example has one of the strictest food safety and quality standards in the world and these high-quality standards are perceived as deliberate market barriers to trade. However, in Namibia, table grapes and dates producers have been able to penetrate such markets due to adequate management systems which are set in place and these include international accreditation and certification. In the agriculture fraternity, some important standards include GlobalGAP, ISO 22000, HACCP, ISO 17025, ISO17020, GMP and ISO 9001 just to mention a few. Thus, it is important to maintain a high level of Quality Assurance and Quality Control at all times.

Systems in food safety monitoring include the testing of produce or meat for residues as a quality control measure, while the implementation of residue avoiding production procedures at farm level is quality assurance. The testing of products for salmonella prior to their marketing and consumption is quality control, and the implementation of on- and off-farm salmonella-reducing measures as standard operating procedures is quality assurance. In the absence of quality control and quality assurance systems, treatment and/or quarantine regimes may be used to get rid of critical quarantine pests and monitor the presence of communicable zoonotic diseases. For example, fruits may undergo cold treatment before they exit the Northern Communal Areas in Namibia and animals are guarantined before exiting the Northern Communal Areas to allow access into markets South of the Veterinary Cordon Fence. A holistic approach of quality control, quality assurance and corrective action measures will assist in securing both national and international markets.



### **ROAD TO THE 2020 DUBAI EXPO**



Gerson Kampungu, NAB's Manager for Research and Policy Development handing over the sponsorship to the NIPDB Representative

The Namibian Agronomic Board is a proud sponsor towards Namibia's Expo 2020 Dubai. The NAB's sponsorship of N\$100 000 was officially handed over on 29 September 2021 at a ceremony in Windhoek.



NAB CEO, Dr Fidelis Mwazi and Gilbert Mulonda, NAB GM: Agronomy and Horticulture Development pictured during the Namibian Pavilion official opening ceremony at 2020 Dubai Expo

The sponsorship commitment towards the EXPO was heeded by the NAB after the call for sponsorship by the Namibia Investment Promotion Development Board (NIPDB) was made for the Namibian corporate and private community to support the expo initiatives. The Expo is expected to attract over 25 million visitors in the next 6 months and the NAB is positive that the opportunities presented by this platform will yield endless investment opportunities within the agronomic and horticultural value chain.

In addition to the sponsorship, the NAB also participated in the Expo's activities at the Namibian pavilion. The NAB team celebrated the official opening of the Namibian pavilion which was officiated by the Minister of Mines and Energy, Hon. Tom Alweendo.

The NAB remains committed to establishing itself as a worldclass regulator of a vibrant, diversified and sustainable crop industry in line with its mandate of promoting the agronomic industry and facilitating the production, processing, storage and marketing of controlled products in Namibia as outlined in the Agronomic Industry Act, Act 20 of 1992.



Networking session: NAB and NIPDB executives pictured during a networking session at EXPO 2020 Dubai



Visitors pictured at the Namibian Pavilion at the EXPO

## WHY INVESTMENT IN NAMIBIA'S CROP INDUSTRY

### OUR KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Horticulture production increased from 5% in 2004 to 47% in 2019
- Grain production increased from 38% in 1990 to 62% in 2019
- Table grape production increased from 510,666 cartons in 1995 to 8.7 million cartons in 2020
- Seed variety assessments on white maize, pearl millet and potato, valued at N\$737 0000 were undertaken during the 2020/2021 financial year
- Sponsorship of 14 school gardens (greenhouses), one school per region as part of our Social Corporate Responsibility (CSR), valued at N\$1.1 million in 2020/2021
- Developed 12 crop-specific marketing and product quality standards for horticultural products
- Capacity building of staff members in areas of total quality management, performance management, product inspections, and ICT to improve competencies
- Introduction of the Agronomy and Horticulture Award scheme to encourage local production and marketing
- Implemention of an online permit system to reduce the turn-around period from 72 hours to 24 hours
- New website with updated content to provide comprehensive information on agronomy and horticulture to all our stakeholders





### **INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

- Agronomy and horticulture value chain (Fruits, Potato, Maize, Wheat, etc.)
- Agro-processing and storage
- Manufacturing of agro chemicals and fertilisers
- Establishment of nurseries for the production of fruit seedlings
- Agricultural technology









The NAB was a proud sponsor of the Nam Farmers Information Day event held in Okakarara on 4 September 2021. The event is aimed at supporting local farmers by familiarizing them directly with various industry service providers, such as the NAB. The event was hosted under the theme "Supporting Local Farmers to grow a sustainable Agri-Sector"





NAB team pictured with table grape producers at a stakeholder engagement meeting held in September 2021 at Aussenkehr. The meeting aimed at discusing the 2020/21 table grapes quality inspection, the gazetted marketing and commercial quality control of table grapes standard, NAMS 0002:2018 and the introduction of the imminent technical administrative regulations for table grapes amongst others.

NAB ladies pictured during the celebration of Women's Month at the NAB head office.





#### OUR MANDATE

To promote the agronomic industry and to facilitate the production, processing, storage and marketing of controlled products in Namibia.

#### VISION

"a world-class regulator of a vibrant, diversified and sustainable crop industry"

#### MISSION

To promote the agronomic and horticulture industry through market regulations and facilitation.

#### CORE VALUES

Integrity, Accountability, Pro-activeness and Inclusivity.

## **CONTACT US**

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