



ARTICLE 2

Graduate Intern Thrives in Citrus Farming Internship

In a bid to gain hands-on experience and bridge the gap between academia and the agricultural industry, Sizakele Mkhize, a graduate from Mthashane Tvet, has embarked on a transformative internship at Ntathakusa Citrus Farm, a developing citrus production farm in Nkwalini Under the King Cetshwayo District. The program aims to nurture young talent and introduce them to the intricate world of citrus farming, from cultivation to marketing.

A Journey into Agriculture

Sizakele expressed a desire to delve deeper into the practical aspects of farming, specifically citrus production. The internship has provided an opportunity to learn about advanced agricultural techniques, irrigation systems, pest management, and the post-harvest processes crucial to maintaining fruit quality.

"I have always been passionate about sustainable farming. This internship is an eye-opener, offering me the chance to work with seasoned professionals and understand the challenges and rewards of citrus farming," the intern shared enthusiastically.



Nelisiwe in the USA, South Dakota state working at Pipestone piggery.

ARTICLE 3

IPHUPHO, is a true story of passion fueled by resilience; let us take you on a journey of a young lady, aspiring farmer, and Cedara College of Agriculture graduate Nelisiwe Dlongolo.

Nelisiwe is one of the Unemployed Graduate Program Participants, a programme that serves as an agent for the transformation and development of the youth in the agricultural sector.

One of our key objectives is to provide a platform for the active participation of youth in the agriculture value chain with the view to create a conducive environment for the formation of youth-owned enterprises.

WHO IS NELISIWE

A young aspiring farmer who hails from a small town called Dundee then raised at Sleeve Donald farm. Nelisiwe developed a passion for agriculture at a very tender age, being surrounded by animals and a part of a rural community that values agricultural practices. Cedara College is home to a number of resources making learning a fruitful experience. A practical approach to learning is applied, giving students the best value for their efforts.

It is during this time that Nelisiwe found motivation to pursue her passion for agriculture. Agriculture goes beyond academics: it is about shaping the individual into being part of the bigger mandate to create food security and improve the lives of ordinary people. Graduating from Cedara college marked the beginning of something great for Nelisiwe, a world full of possibilities!

After acceptance into the Departments unemployed graduate programme made an effort into applying abroad for Agriculture related opportunities;

"I knew the program will come to an end, so early this year it occurred to me to start researching and applying abroad, fortunately, I qualified and got a placement."

"after searching for an agency which was Awesome travel, they assisted me with every steps and- documents to prepare. They then found a sponsor for me and the process continued, one of the challenges faced is the money to cover fees such as visa, flights and program fees. Maybe if we can get support in that aspect travelling abroad would be much easier."

When Nelisiwe returns, her plan is to return to her previous host employer (Qalani piggery) to share experience and knowledge gained abroad, help agricultural graduates and then start her own operation with a few enterprises namely: rabbit farming, poultry and piggery.

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KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



UNEMPLOYED AGRICULTURAL GRADUATES FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT

#LET'S MAKE AGRICULTURE FASHIONABLE

Unemployed Agricultural Graduates for Entrepreneurial Development

The high rate of youth unemployment, rural migration and the aging farmer population prompted the KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to implement the Unemployed Agricultural Graduates Youth Programme with the aim to:-

- 1) Provide unemployed agricultural graduates with opportunities to gain on-the-job entrepreneurial and business skills;
- 2) Contribute to increased food production through the development of a pool of competent young producers;
- 3) Bridge the gap between aging producers, create a pool of future farmers/entrepreneurs among young people, and reduce unemployment;
- 4) Provide a platform for the active participation of youth in the agriculture value chain; and
- 5) Create an enabling environment to support the establishment of youth-owned and/or managed enterprises and youth entrepreneurs by linking participants with potential entities that support the development of entrepreneurs.

Unemployed graduates are recruited and placed across the KZN Province in relevant smallholder/commercial (medium-scale, large-scale, and mega/corporate) producers/enterprises to undergo on-the-job training in the areas of production, agro-processing, farm management, governance, business, and entrepreneurship (value chain) under the tutelage of experienced mentors.

This program is aimed at providing unemployed graduates with opportunities to gain on-the-job entrepreneurial skills and business skills. The graduates are appointed on a fixed-term contract for a period of twenty-four months (24) and KZNDARD has been implementing the Unemployed Agricultural Graduates Youth Programme for 5 years.

KZN Department of Agriculture believes that active participation of youth in the sector will go a long way in the efforts to advance socioeconomic transformation in the country, particularly given the high unemployment rate, growing inequalities, and poverty.

As much as youth should take their rightful place in the mainstream of the economy, it is imperative for them to be provided with the necessary support in the endeavour to nurture their entrepreneurial potential.

ARTICLE 1

A Journey of Growth: Siyabonga Ngema and his Impact as a Graduate Intern at Mondi under the Unemployed Graduate Youth Programme

Introduction

The transition from academic life to a professional environment can be both challenging and rewarding. For Siyabonga Ngema, a graduate from Tshwane University of Technology, this transition was marked by an enriching internship experience at Mondi. Over the past 24 months, Siyabonga has made significant contributions to his team, demonstrating a blend of academic knowledge and practical skills that have proven invaluable.

Experience and Learning

From day one, Siyabonga immersed himself at Mondi, taking on tasks that ranged from intercropping and food security projects. With a background in Crop Science, he brought fresh perspectives and innovative ideas to the table. His ability to interact well with people has been particularly noteworthy, setting a positive standard for future interns.

Working closely with mentors and team members, Siyabonga quickly adapted to the fast-paced environment of Mondi. His proactive approach to problem-solving and willingness to learn made him a valuable asset to the host employers projects. With the food security projects, Siyabonga consistently delivered high-quality work, often going above and beyond what was expected.

Contributions and Impact

One of the most impressive aspects of Siyabonga's internship was their contribution to food security projects, he played a crucial role in the outcome of the projects. His efforts not only contributed to the success of the project but also helped Mondi achieve its programme objectives.



Siyabonga Ngema from Mondi

Personal Growth and Future Aspirations

Beyond their professional achievements, Siyabonga also experienced significant personal growth throughout the internship. Reflecting on their journey, he noted that the experience helped them refine their skills in project planning, develop greater confidence in communication, and gain a deeper understanding of Agriculture-specific knowledge and company culture.

After being given an opportunity to work at Mondi as a Community Development Facilitator, Siyabonga is excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. With aspirations to bring innovative strategies, he is well-equipped with the knowledge, skills, and experience gained during his internship at Mondi. We have no doubt that he will continue to excel in his career and make significant contributions to the industry.

Siyabonga's internship at Mondi has been a testament to the value of experiential learning. His hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm have not only enriched his own professional journey, but has also stood as evidence of the Unemployed Graduate Programme. We wish Siyabonga all the best in their future endeavours and are confident that they will achieve great things.