



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **AGRISETA FUNDED AGRICULTURAL WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING PROGRAMME REAPS SUCCESS**

The KZN agricultural Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programme, a joint initiative between The Future Farmers Foundation, the Agricultural Sector Education Training Authority (AgriSETA) and the KZN Agricultural Union, Kwanalu this year sees over 100 young people in agriculture successfully take part in the now fourth year of this innovative and inspiring project.

The WIL programme, now in its fourth year and referred to as WIL-4, was born out of the highly successful farming education initiative, Future Farmers, which provides 12-month work placements on farms for young unemployed graduates.

“Our core focus, at Future Farmers, has always been on non-graduates, however, in partnership with AgriSETA and Kwanalu, we have extended this opportunity to young unemployed graduates as well,” explains founder of Future Farmers, Judy Stuart.

The WIL programmes have run annually since 2016, affording placements for young graduates with the aim of providing employment and practical experience on farms for a period of one year. Each WIL programme is funded by AgriSETA with the current WIL (WIL 4) programme running for the past 8 months, having started in August, 2020.

CEO of AgriSETA Dr Innocent Sirovha said, “ It is AgriSETA’s mandate is to uplift the agricultural sector and to assess the impact funding can make on youth training programmes. The Future Farmers’ WIL programme is not only about jobs but about these youths going on to create opportunities and about sustainable growth in the sector.”

Howick-based, Future Farmers is a unique social program which aims to cultivate the skills and ignite a passion for farming in young aspiring farmers, between the ages of 18 and 30 years old, by providing them with real job experiences in a field of agriculture of their choice. The programme is designed to give young people the opportunity to “learn as they earn” by finding apprentice positions on local and, then later, international farms.

“Many of these graduates, having proven their value, have been offered permanent positions on the farms where they have been placed. Others have gone on to be selected for, and benefit from, the Future Farmers overseas internship programme,” says Stuart.

“The WIL-4 programme is a great opportunity for young people to grow their expertise and bring their international acquired wisdom back to South Africa” said Sirovha.

The graduates in the current WIL 4 programme are employed across a broad spectrum of commodities in KZN including cheese, beef, pigs, avocados, maize, vegetables, rabbits, hydroponics, flowers, nursery, poultry, dairy, indigenous herbs, macadamias and forestry.

“These programmes have provided excellent results and we are hugely proud of the talented young farmers who are emerging; a number of these have already been identified as suitable for our overseas internship programme,” said Sirovha

CEO of Kwanalu, Sandy La Marque, praised the farmers who play a both a proactive and progressive role in making a positive and practical contribution to ensuring that learners are receiving valuable commercial farming coaching and learnership.

“Their support and commitment to the programme is essential to supplement the education of these young future farmers on top of the theoretical training that they have already completed. Kwanalu commends both AgriSETA and Future Farmers for the immense value they bring to the future of the industry,” said La Marque.

For further information on Kwanalu, visit the website [www.kwanalu.co.za](http://www.kwanalu.co.za) or follow Kwanalu on Facebook @kwanalu, Instagram kwanalu\_kzn and Twitter @Kwanalu1

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