

VOL 3 NO 3 • AUGUST 2023

**agbiz** GRAIN  
QUARTERLY



**SHEQ: Injury on duty**

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**The future of grain trading**

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**Water use licencing amendments**

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**Traceability in the grain storage sector**

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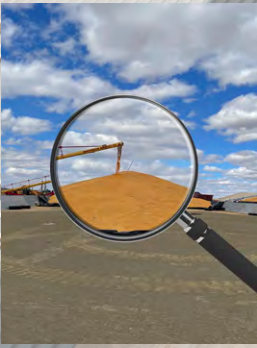
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**On the cover:**  
Traceability in the grain industry is becoming a pressing issue. This issue of *Agbiz Grain Quarterly* focusses on traceability in preparation for the Agbiz Grain Symposium in September. (Photograph: AFGRI)

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# An open invitation to attend the Agbiz Grain Symposium

By Jerry Maritz, chairperson, Agbiz Grain

Agbiz Grain is an association of 12 storage operators that are active in the South African market. Our members handle and store 70% of all grains and oilseeds produced in South Africa and are the owners of 98% of all JSE-registered sites. We play a significant role in the functioning of the market and create an environment in which the storage sector can thrive, expand and compete.

Our mandate is to look after the business of handling and storage, but some of our members' interests are well-diversified in production, milling, feed manufacturing and even baking. The majority of our member boards have producer representatives as directors. The interests of producers and processors are equally important to us.

What is also essential is that the role of organised agriculture (forums, forum steering committees, sub-committees, working groups and trusts) is recognised and respected by government departments, thereby strengthening their role.

## Key concerns addressed

The Agbiz Grain Symposium is held biennially. It is a special event in the sense that we, as storage operators, take the opportunity to acknowledge the concerns of our upstream and downstream clients. The symposium is made possible through the financial support of our value chain stakeholders, and we value their contribution towards improving the business environment for all.

The three-hour panel sessions on each of the four days from 5 to 8 September 2023 are designed to address the industry's key concerns, which also have a significant impact on our clients and set the strategic direction for the next two years.

The symposium will focus on several important aspects. Continued investment in the handling and storage sector is vital for the efficient functioning of the grain and oilseeds market. We need to ensure that the storage sector is sustainable, cost-effective, globally competitive and sufficiently profitable to attract the necessary medium- to long-term

investment. Theo Vorster of Galileo Capital will chair this highly informative session on the sustainability and profitability of the storage sector. Panellists for this session include representatives of the JSE, Senwes, the Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP), Agbiz Grain and the Competition Commission.

## Challenges in the grain industry

Secondly, we will look at the challenges facing the value chain in terms of access to stocks, concentration risk and price convergence. Chris Sturgess, consultant to the JSE, will chair the panel which will include representatives of Grain SA, the South African Cereals and Oilseeds Trade Association (SACOTA), Pioneer Foods, the JSE and Agbiz Grain. It is important to listen to the concerns and suggestions of our clients, their perspectives and how we can find workable solutions to address their concerns.

Food safety is a major concern for consumers around the world. Bulk handling of grains and oilseeds faces significant logistical limitations in terms of traceability and the regulatory compliance demanded by consumers through government intervention. The question remains as to what is practically feasible and whether future technological developments hold the promise of overcoming these limitations. Jannie de Villiers, former CEO of Grain SA and the National Chamber of Milling, will lead this informative session in collaboration with panellists including representatives from Pepsico, EMC2, Iowa State University, Syngenta and Agbiz Grain.

The Agbiz Grain Storage Cost Index highlights the importance of insurance, as insurance costs have increased significantly compared to the other cost



Jerry Maritz.

items in the handling and storage of grains and oilseeds. The insurability of the South African storage sector is a very important case to share with stakeholders globally. Kobus Truter, head of structured commodity finance at Absa CIB, will lead a panel of experts from Santam Insurance, Nedbank, Price Forbes, VKB Group and ASPASA on how to adequately address this aspect and ensure the future insurability of the sector.

Agbiz Grain is hosting the symposium online and free of charge to allow maximum participation by our grain storage and handling staff working for Agbiz Grain members, producers and processors. I hereby invite all stakeholders in the grain and oilseeds value chain to join us in our virtual symposium which will be held daily between 09:00 and 12:00 from 5 to 8 September. We thank our storage members, associate members and especially our stakeholders for their financial support of our symposium. [a](#)

For more information and to register, email [annelien@agbizgrain.co.za](mailto:annelien@agbizgrain.co.za).

## Storage sector has lost millions

The storage sector has lost R267 million over a period of six years. Agbiz Grain has initiated research projects for funding that will focus on genetics on the one hand, and the history of downgrading over the past 15 years on the other. The two projects are complementary.

The storage sector needs to understand the future storage requirements of barley in order to limit risk and improve the sustainability and competitiveness of barley storage. The research will support the ongoing development of the malting barley storage protocol by Agbiz Grain and a review of the current malting barley grading regulations. – *Agbiz Grain*

## Research results for sampling device expected

The dispute protocol was finalised in 2022 and is available on the Agbiz Grain website at [www.agbizgrain.co.za](http://www.agbizgrain.co.za). The sampling section cannot be finalised until the South African Grain Laboratory's (SAGL) research into the three sampling devices has been completed.

Based on the results, Agbiz Grain will make a recommendation as to which device is suitable for dispute resolution and which one complies with the ICC standard. The results of SAGL's research are expected shortly. Agbiz Grain has made a significant investment to facilitate the research in the interest of the entire value chain. – *Agbiz Grain*

## Large global grain supplies expected

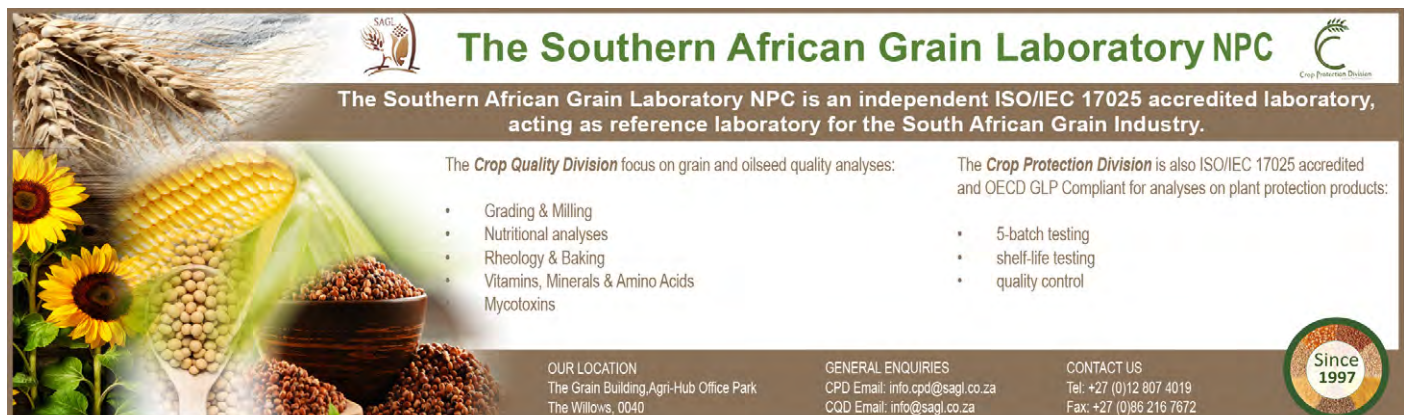
The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently released its monthly flagship report, *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates*. The report's focus has shifted from the 2022/23 season to the 2023/24 season.

The 2023/24 global wheat production is forecast at 797 million tons, up 1% from the previous season. The larger harvest is anticipated in the European Union (EU) region, the US, Canada, China, India and Turkey. As a result of the expected large harvest, the 2023/24 season's global maize stocks could increase by 1% year-on-year to 270 million tons. Moreover, the USDA forecasts 2023/24 global maize production at 1,2 billion tons, up 6% from the previous season.

The countries underpinning this improvement in production are the US, Brazil, Argentina, China and the EU region. Regarding South America, the El Niño weather event will present much-needed change of a prolonged four years of below-average rain during a La Niña event. The ending stocks could also increase by 6% to 314 million tons in the 2023/24 season because of the expected robust harvest. – *Wandile Sihlobo, Agbiz*

## Wheat Indaba in the works

The wheat industry held its last indaba almost ten years ago. The need for a repeat of this event has arisen as the geopolitical and business environment has changed significantly since then. The planned indaba will possibly take place in October and will focus on the current role and structures in the industry, as well as the needs of the sector. Watch the press for more details. – *Agbiz Grain*



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## New technology wheat on the radar

The EU recently introduced a distinction in the EU regulations between GMO (genetically modified organisms) and NBT (new breeding technology) varieties. This is good news for the seed industry. Only South Africa and New Zealand consider GMOs and NBTs to be one and the same.

Following a successful industry appeal in 2022 facilitated by Agbiz, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) has not responded to industry claims that NBT varieties are not the same as GMOs. Recent global developments suggest that the possibility of the commercial release of GMO varieties may soon become a reality. The local industry is keeping a watchful eye in this regard. Also noted is that new technology wheat may demand additional storage space. – *Agbiz Grain*

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## Decision on revised maize grading regulations awaited

Industry stakeholders have until 21 August 2023 to submit their respective comments to the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) regarding the proposed grading regulations. Inputs were also received from the Agbiz Grain Quality Committee and grading experts.

Following final approval by the Agbiz Grain Steering Committee, the organisations' comments were submitted to the DALRRD. Stakeholders are awaiting the department's decision on the proposed revised grading regulations submitted by Grain SA and the South African Grain Farmers' Association (SAGRA). – *Agbiz Grain*

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## Continued push for generic passport system

Stakeholders convened on 28 July to discuss the possible introduction of a generic passport system. They presented their respective systems in operation and explained the information collected in the value chain and how it is captured from production to final delivery to the processor.

Certain stakeholders are increasingly demanding compliance assurances. Providing assurances will add benefits and costs to the chain. The feasibility of a generic passport system that is applicable to every stakeholder in the value chain, depends on the inclusive cooperation of all stakeholders and compliance with the principles of the competition act as part of a voluntary system. A generic passport system should be based on the same principles as an existing passport system where the inclusive cooperation of all stakeholders involved is contracted.

Being part of a generic passport system is not mandatory but voluntary, which increases the risk of failure. Traceability and compliance in the bulk grain value chain will be discussed at the Agbiz Grain Symposium in September. – *Agbiz Grain*

## Senwes announces financial results

The Senwes Group recently announced its financial results for 2022/23. With a turnover of R13 632 million (growth of 25,3%), a profit after tax attributable to shareholders of the company of R907 million (growth of 50,9%), and normalised headline earnings of 558,1 cents per share (growth of 40,2%), all stakeholders should be smiling despite the current challenges within the agricultural sector.

“It is important to note that the figures we are presenting relate to the financial year from 1 May 2022 to 30 April 2023. These figures include the harvest delivered in 2022 and the input costs incurred for the next harvest, which will only reflect in our 2023/24 figures,” said Francois Strydom, CEO of the Senwes Group. “When comparing the latest results to the previous year's, we are grateful for a second consecutive good year.”

Strydom explained that the higher profits can be attributed to several reasons. “The Senwes Group has expanded significantly. Therefore, the higher figures don't only come from the same customer base, but from more customers and more businesses. Although this is the second year that Suidwes' figures have been included for a full year, the actual impact of the operational benefits is now at a much higher level. Falcon and KLK also delivered good results. Another important point is that the figures include ten months of our new John Deere dealerships in Germany. It remains crucial for us to allocate capital effectively.”

Strydom mentioned that maize that is not graded as WM1 usually represents around 6% of the harvest but has increased to approximately 35% in the past financial year. “This is due to the exceptionally high rainfall in the previous season, resulting in waterlogged fields. Despite the lower quality, producers were still able to deliver high volumes, and a beneficial maize price worked in their favour. The significant increase in input costs for all crops during the past financial year is also notable. A good wheat harvest also contributed to these financial results.”

The Senwes Group announced a final dividend of 40 cents per share and a special dividend of 56 cents per share. – *Press release, Senwes*

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## Listen to banks when formulating government policy

The government recently published two controversial regulations in the *Government Gazette* for public comment. One is the *Water Use Licensing Regulations*, which seek to introduce a black shareholding requirement to obtain a licence, and the other is the draft *Equal Employment Targets* proposed for the agricultural sector. (Read articles on both these regulations in this issue of *Agbiz Grain Quarterly*.)

Agbiz is involved in both processes by interacting with the relevant departments. Since the proposals were formally published in the *Government Gazette*, they have received a strong response from many civil society organisations and the media.

Agbiz Grain believes that banking, as it is practised in South Africa, enables the creation of a more just, peaceful and equal world. If banks can gain greater recognition for the role they play in determining where capital and liquidity can best be allocated in the agricultural industry to promote economic growth, then the banking industry should not be treated as a passive participant in the creation of national policy. Our banks have the ability to determine the functioning of our modern agricultural practices and way of life. With the necessary confidence in our banking system, our democracy can stand stronger.

– *Agbiz Grain*

## Rice crisis: Export ban causes panic

India's move to ban certain rice exports has sparked some panic buying in various countries, with videos on social media showing bags of the staple food flying off the shelves and long lines outside grocery stores.

The ban comes after India's government earlier expressed concern over inflation ahead of its upcoming elections. According to Wandile Sihlobo of Agbiz, the problem with this view is that India faces far less inflation pressure than other regions. In June 2023, the country's annual consumer inflation was 4,8%, down significantly from the start of the year when inflation was 6,5% in January 2023. Food inflation has moderated at roughly the same pace, measured at 4,5% in June 2023, down from 5,9% in January.

Importantly, India is a significant global rice producer, accounting for a 26%

share in the expected 2023/24 global rice production of 525 million tons, according to data from the International Grains Council (IGC). Of the 50 million tons of rice for global exports projected for the 2023/24 season, India is expected to account for approximately 40%. Other notable rice exporters are Pakistan, Thailand, the US, Vietnam, China, Cambodia and Myanmar. However, India remains the largest exporter. The ban can there lead to major disruptions in the global rice trade and upside pressure on prices.

At the end of June 2023, global rice prices softened from the surge in May as global production prospects improved. This was a positive decline for an already declining global agricultural commodities basket from the peak levels seen after Russia invaded Ukraine in March 2022. – *Wandile Sihlobo, Agbiz*

## Dr Pieter Taljaard is stepping down

Grain SA recently announced the resignation of Dr Pieter Taljaard as CEO of the organisation. Taljaard is headed for Canada where he will be managing a vertically integrated grain and oilseed farm on the eastern border of Saskatchewan.

"It's been a hard and sad decision, but at this stage of my career it is the last opportunity given my age to go on an adventure like this. Especially also given that we can experience this as a family together with our two teenage children," Taljaard wrote on Grain SA's website.

A committee was appointed by Grain SA's board to search for the best candidate to take over the role of CEO. "Grain SA has talented and exceptionally committed personnel and I'm confident that we will manage this transition and continue to serve our members at the same level of professionalism and care we have all become accustomed to." – *Susan Marais, Plaas Media*



*Dr Pieter Taljaard.*

## Eight killed, 11 injured in Brazil grain silo explosions

At least eight people were killed and 11 others injured in southern Brazil when a grain silo exploded at the C Vale cooperative in Palotina, a city about 600km west of the Parana state capital,

Curitiba. Parana is one of Brazil's top grain-producing states.

C Vale, a major producer of soya beans, wheat and maize that stores grain in 125

units across five Brazilian states and in Paraguay, confirmed in a statement that a "large-scale accident hit our central grain reception unit in Palotina". The company said the cause was "yet to be determined".



# Grain & Oilseeds Value Chain Symposium

5 - 8 September 2023

## the Programme

### Tuesday, 5 September

- Session:** The sustainability of the storage sector and return on investment
- Facilitator:** Theo Voster (Galileo Capital)
- Panel member 1:** Storage cost benchmarking and indexing: Prof Ferdi Meyer (BFAP)
- Panel member 2:** Trends in JSE storage rates and JSE requirements: Vuyo Mpumza (Commodity Derivatives Manager - JSE)
- Panel member 3:** Cost challenges for future sustainable storage: Tom Meintjes (Vice-chairperson - Agbiz Grain)
- Panel member 4:** Quo vadis: Business expansion and investment in the South African storage sector: Francois Strydom (CEO - Senwes Ltd)

### Wednesday, 6 September

- Session:** Future challenges and solutions: access to stock, concentration risk, and price convergence
- Facilitator:** Chris Sturgess (Consultant - JSE)
- Panel member 1:** Trader's perspectives on challenges and expected solutions: Dr André van der Vyver (Executive Director - SACOTA)
- Panel member 2:** Is the market failing the producer?: Derek Mathews (Chairperson - Grain SA)
- Panel member 3:** Ensuring successful procurement through the JSE Futures Market: Willie Dreyer (Grain Procurement Manager - Pioneer Foods)
- Panel member 4:** What is needed to ensure a sustainable Futures Market: Anelisa Matutu (Senior Commodity Derivatives Officer - JSE)
- Panel member 5:** Response of the grain handling and storage sector to the demands of the market: Jerry Maritz (Chairperson - Agbiz Grain)




## Thursday, 7 September

- Session:** The application of traceability and regulatory compliance in grain storage
- Facilitator:** Jannie de Villiers (Former CEO of Grain SA and NCM)
- Panel member 1:** Grain traceability: What is required?: Paul Adams (R&D Senior Manager - Pepsico Global Supplier Quality Assurance, England)
- Panel member 2:** How does the food and feed value chain manage grain traceability in France?: David Meder (Groupe EMC2/Cerest-Céréales de l'Est, France)
- Panel member 3:** Traceability in action in the USA grain and feed Industry: Dr Charles Hurburgh (Biosystems Engineering - Iowa State University)
- Panel member 4:** The reality of tracing and compliance in the South African storage sector: Casper Schmidt (Executive Committee Member - Agbiz Grain)
- Panel member 5:** Traceability in plant breeding and storage. Cui bono? Dr Francois Koekemoer (Cereals Lead for Research and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa- Syngenta)

## Friday, 8 September

- Session:** The insurability of the storage sector
- Facilitator:** Kobus Truter (Head: Structured Commodity Finance - Absa)
- Panel member 1:** Demands from the local insurance sector: Sean Harper (National Survey Manager - Santam Insurance)
- Panel member 2:** Financing the commodities and infrastructure of the storage sector: Zahnn Meyer (Head: Global Commodity Finance - Nedbank)
- Panel member 3:** Risk management and insurance solutions for the storage sector: Ebbe Rabie (Managing Director: Speciality - Price Forbes)
- Panel member 4:** Benchmarking and initiatives taken by the storage sector for the management of risks: Gerard Ramage (SHEQ Manager - VKB Group)
- Panel member 5:** How to promote an insurable and financially secure sector: Letisha van den Berg (Director - ASPASA)



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Supported by:





Willem van der Merwe of RMD Physical.



Heinrich Henning of Senwes.



Cobus van der Merwe of The Match Exchange.

## Unique approaches to the future of physical grain trading

By Koos du Pisanie, Plaas Media

Thirty years ago, South Africa's agricultural sector was plunged into the free-market system, but because producers were not ready to start thinking like economists, the situation made for a lot of uncertainty. Yet South Africans are nothing but resilient and in the long run this free-market system transformed the country's grain trade into a world leader.

This was the opinion of Paul Bloemendal of Paper Trader, a web and mobile commodity price matching and deal facilitation platform, during a Grain Handling Organisation of Southern Africa (GOSA) workshop held in May this year. He said South Africa is a leader in the grain trade and that the technology used is much more advanced than in many other countries.

Several tools can be utilised for trading grain. During the workshop, three speakers discussed the value of their respective products. The purpose of these products is to facilitate trading between producers and buyers and to offer every role-player in the value chain the opportunity to obtain the best price for their product.

### The necessity of a paper trail

Willem van der Merwe of RMD Physical emphasised that every grain transaction

must be accompanied by a paper trail – an aspect that will become a requirement in future. He said that South Africa has the best deliverable futures market in the world, but needs an independent electronic platform on which all commodities can be traded.

In order to avoid risk and ensure compliance, RMD Physical guarantees a complete paper trail of the negotiations and the eventual deal between the buyer and seller. He explained that in the international market, physical traders must comply with a growing list of requirements. To facilitate this, a traceability system is needed.

Another big advantage is that the program has an excellent built-in risk management and market-to-market system that is very effective as a risk management tool for

financial institutions. The system also makes provision for basis and flat prices to be traded separately. Furthermore, any legal product can be listed and traded on this system. The software can be run on desktops, laptops as well as cell phones.

Transport can also be traded on the platform, which will not only save a lot of time but will cut back on administration.

Bloemendal described the program as a digital tool. "We aim to optimise trade execution and risk management for physical commodities through an efficient marketplace. Our solution saves time, boosts profits and helps the client maintain full control. In the process we provide transparent price discovery combined with traceability, pre-match credit control mechanisms, compliance oversight and an embedded counterparty."

He emphasised that new requirements for grain traders are being set internationally and that South Africa will have to follow suit in order to have a complete paper trail for every transaction.

### Plan ahead and stay ahead

Heinrich Henning of Senwes also participated in the workshop and highlighted the Basislink platform. This platform has stood the test of time and has been used with great success by many buyers for more than nine years. The advantage that Basislink offers buyers is that the grain is distributed so that buyers can have access to it for a period of one year.

“The purpose of these products is to facilitate trading between producers and buyers and to offer every role-player in the value chain the opportunity to obtain the best price for their product.”

“Senwes also stands by any tonnage that is offered, and tons that have been contracted will be honoured and contracts fulfilled.” Henning also mentioned that pre-season contracts are offered on Basislink the moment there is certainty regarding the crop. That way, buyers can start building their book and enter into supply agreements with off-takers, knowing Senwes will honour the pre-season contract.

There are currently around 170 registered buyers on Basislink who have access to the system. The system not only offers

stock on an ex-silo basis, but traders have the opportunity to buy grain directly from a farm and deliver it to a specific mill (farm loading).

The transportation cost of grain is one of the major expenses in the industry and has a huge impact on a delivered basis. Basislink has added a new option to the platform, namely a basis calculator. Traders can now calculate the basis of the grain at a specific mill as well as the tonnages available at this basis, and place a bid on the tonnages directly on the system.

### A revolutionary industry tool

The third speaker at the workshop was Cobus van der Merwe of The Match Exchange. There are many role-players servicing the requirements – which include transportation, storage, finance, risk management and price discovery – of the grain supply chain between producer and processor.

These needs have stayed the same for decades and will remain the same for years to come – it is only the role-players that will change. The Fourth Industrial Revolution is taking the agricultural sector by storm, and new technologies will redefine the way current role-players do business, he said. Examples of game changers are Uber and Airbnb, which completely altered the way their respective industries operate while the underlying needs – travel and accommodation – of consumers stayed the same.

The Match Exchange is a tool that empowers the market to discover the price of any commodity, anywhere and at any time. The market will therefore discover where the price discovery must occur – at the source of production, at the place

of storage or at the point of processing. Market factors may constantly change these price discovery locations. The Match Exchange accommodates these changes to allow the supply chain to seek more efficiency, putting pressure on current role-players to add value.

### Connecting buyers and sellers

Buyers and sellers start the app process by entering ‘what’ (e.g. soya beans) and ‘where’ (point of need or production). Algorithms then connect buyers and sellers that can add the most value for one another. To ensure that the timing is right, buyers and sellers can follow a straightforward negotiation process to get to a match.

The Match Exchange, he said, is at the forefront of revolutionising South African grain and grain by-products market trade. Their cutting-edge technology unlocks unprecedented optimisation and value creation for all participants along the value chain.

There are ample opportunities in the free-market system. Unfortunately, there are just as many pitfalls that producers aren’t always aware of. The programs discussed during the workshop all attempt to eliminate the pitfalls as far as possible, thus allowing buyers and sellers to enter the free-market system and bargain for the best price by making use of sound information. [a](#)

For more information, contact Willem van der Merwe of RMD Physical on 082 902 7556 or 044 873 5930, Heinrich Henning of Senwes on 082 496 5214 or 018 464 7396, or Cobus van der Merwe of The Match Exchange on 082 771 5626 or 021 204 5827.



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# Malting barley: Research needed to address storage sector losses

By Wessel Lemmer, general manager, Agbiz Grain

**S**AB Miller was acquired by Anheuser-Busch InBev on 10 October 2016 during the 2016/17 malting year, following a preliminary agreement announced on 16 October 2015. The merger created the world's largest beer company, with projected annual sales of US\$55 billion.

Since the 2016/17 (October/September) marketing year, the South African malting barley storage sector has suffered losses of R267 million over six years due to the downgrading of malting barley to feed barley. This does not include potential losses in the current 2022/23 marketing year. As a result of these losses, storage operators have become less inclined to store malting barley. Some have even considered leaving the industry, while others have already done so.

**“We hope that agricultural economic research will analyse the current state of the South African malting barley industry with the necessary precision, and provide advice on how the industry can be reformed to address the risks in the value chain.”**

Storage risk has a direct impact on malting barley production. The issue can be addressed if storage operators are informed of why malting barley cannot meet the high germination quality criteria of buyers.

## Malting barley protocol

The storage of malting barley is complex and less sustainable due to the losses incurred since 2016/17. This is forcing the malting barley value chain to identify the cause of these losses and take

preventive measures to reduce them. A malting barley storage protocol with minimum requirements should improve competitiveness.

## Malting barley grading regulations

The current requirements of buyers are also not comparable to the requirements of the malting barley grading regulations. In some cases, buyers' contractual requirements are much stricter than the minimum requirements of the malting barley grading regulations. In other cases there are requirements in the malting barley grading regulations which storage operators are unable to meet in practice. There is therefore a mismatch between the regulations and the practices followed.

The malting barley grading regulations do not fully contribute to the promotion of the malting barley trade. The *Agricultural Product Standards Act, 1990 (Act 119 of 1990)* does not play the same role in the trade of malting barley as it does in the trade of maize.

## Contribution of research

The contribution of South African research to date on the storage requirements of malting barley cultivars is negligible. The storage requirements of new malting barley varieties that have never been stored are unknown. Storage operators are potentially at high risk when storing new malting barley cultivars where there is no information regarding the storage requirements of those cultivars. There is a need for breeders to consider storability as a requirement for the development of new cultivars.

If storability is not considered, storage operators will be reluctant to store new varieties to avoid potential losses. Malting barley production, storage, seed sales and breeding may therefore be adversely affected.

## What can be done?

We hope that agricultural economic research will analyse the current state of

the South African malting barley industry with the necessary precision, and provide advice on how the industry can be reformed to address the risks in the value chain.

The research should highlight the storage requirements of malting barley varieties and their germination-related characteristics, and be able to explain whether there is a relationship. This will enable storage operators to make informed operational decisions regarding the storage of malting barley varieties.

It is equally important to investigate the reasons why malting barley has been downgraded to feed barley over the past 15 years and whether there is a link between cultivars and downgrading. This is a complex problem, as the cause of downgrading may be due to one or more factors in variety development, production, handling, storage, transport or malting.

The following questions need to be answered: Is there a trend for malting barley varieties to be downgraded in storage? What is the reason for this? Can benchmarks be established to better manage downgrade risks? Do we know the losses recorded and the economic impact? Can research contribute to better storage practices for malting barley varieties? Can the results of good research improve the sustainability of the malting barley value chain for all stakeholders?

Answers to all these questions will highlight the scale of the problem so that resources can be allocated to finding solutions. Well-targeted research is needed to guide the breeding and production of malting barley, establish appropriate grading regulations and introduce measures such as a malting barley storage protocol. [a](#)

For more information, send an email to Wessel Lemmer at [wessel@agbizgrain.co.za](mailto:wessel@agbizgrain.co.za) or visit [www.agbizgrain.co.za](http://www.agbizgrain.co.za).



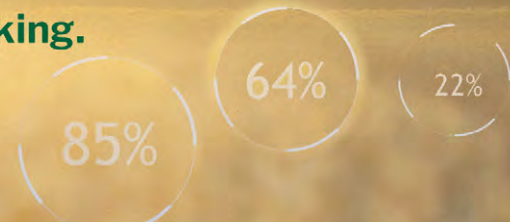
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are underpinned by Nedbank's overarching purpose to do good for individuals, families, businesses and society,' he says. Hudson adds that Nedbank is deeply committed to contributing to a growing, competitive, transformed and climate-resilient agricultural sector, which is why they are among the market leaders in financing sustainable solutions across the entire value chain. 'Incorporating sustainable business practices into growth plans ensures that clients make a meaningful impact on the economy and environment while also remaining competitive and relevant.'

In collaboration with its many sustainable solution partners, Nedbank has developed affordable financing across a spectrum of requirements, including energy security, water efficiency, shade netting, waste and recycling, soil health and sustainability finance. 'Our tailored sustainability funding enables clients to prioritise and implement structures to improve efficiencies in their businesses. Among others, we offer extended terms matched to the payback period of financed equipment, cash flow neutrality where future cash flow improvements are considered, and opportunities to qualify for tax incentives.'

Aside from enabling a growing and resilient agribusiness, Nedbank partners with its clients to ensure that their legacy remains intact for many generations to come.

'We help guide growth by unlocking the right funding to suit each client's requirements and circumstances, whether for diversification, market expansion, investment, or transformation and inclusive growth purposes. And by offering effective ways to sustain their cash flow requirements to strengthen their capacity to respond to seasonal and cyclical changes, we enable our clients to minimise potential adverse effects on their bottom line.'

Hudson says that this holistic approach, together with leveraging technology to its full extent and harnessing the power of the right partnerships, means that Nedbank can cater to the evolving needs of our rapidly changing agricultural sector. 'We believe that, together, we can achieve more. That's why we partner with leading stakeholders in the sector, like WWF-SA, Agrico, SA PALS, neXgro and Hohm Energy to gain insight into on-the-ground challenges and opportunities to unlock the full potential of South Africa's food value chain.'

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# Grain traceability: A tale of two countries

By Susan Marais, Plaas Media

**T**his short article compares recent views in Australia and the United States (US) on the issue of traceability. It sets the table for subsequent articles on traceability as well as the Agbiz Grain Symposium in September this year, during which the issue of traceability in the grain industry will be front and centre.

## Food traceability in Australia

Approximately five years ago, the Australian government started its 'modernising agricultural trade' initiative aimed at benefitting producers. According to the Western Australian Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, this initiative was necessitated by the fact that improved traceability of food products from production to consumption is becoming increasingly important.

As the Australian government's modernisation initiative is still relatively young, there aren't many examples of formal business cases or applied financial or economic analyses to support investment decisions on supply chain traceability options. Currently, data obtained from 20 Western Australian food processors indicate that the reason for implementing traceability is highly individualistic.

Public health and other issues related to foodborne illness, contamination, counterfeiting, and misrepresentation of Australian export products (including wine and red meat) have attracted significant public and media attention, and are some of the key drivers for increased traceability. Governments have also moved to investigate and strengthen supply chains, focussing on transparency, system integrity and resilience.

With regard to grain traceability, this means the implementation of new technology. This is being driven by Grain Trade Australia (GTA), which regulates the country's grain trade. "The conversion

of grain industry data from a paper-based commodity vendor declaration to a digital format will support supply chain traceability, biosecurity and feed/food safety," GTA argues in its formal document on the modernisation of grain trading.

The organisation hopes the technology will improve the industry's ability to establish and track grain pathways, improve quality assurance in the supply train, and improve the industry's ability to transfer digital data from one point in the value chain to the next and mitigate industry risk.

However, the literature shows that despite significant public investment in traceability technologies and solutions, there are still significant knowledge gaps.

There is a lack of information on the financial and economic benefits of improved supply chain traceability. There is never enough information to support heightened awareness of the needs of businesses and the industry in Western Australia and elsewhere. There is a clear need for more comprehensive and objective insight into the business benefits and costs of improved traceability.

## US grain traceability systems

In the US, grain storage operators were introduced to federally mandated grain traceability systems, which track the flow of grain and grain product attributes through the supply chain, as required by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) under the *Bioterrorism Act, 2002*.

In recent years, the regulatory focus of the US government has shifted back to food traceability and safety – specifically through the *Food Safety Modernization Act*, which was signed into law by president Barack Obama on 4 January 2011. This law is regulated by the FDA.

However, in 2020 *Feedandgrain.com* reported that over the long term, the grain handling industry feared that the

*Food Safety Modernization Act* would not only add cost to the agricultural system, but could seriously disrupt the system of handling, transporting and storing commingled commodities. In particular, the law may impose strict requirements when it is implemented.

As is the nature of bulk materials, grain moves through the system as a series of 'small sublots' with little identity. Once in the system, it is continually mixed into larger and larger batches. However, the level of traceability required by the Act is complicated and could be a very expensive proposition.

While the researchers believe they will be able to trace grain as accurately as the Act requires, this will only happen some time in future – the current system does not yet operate at such a high level of traceability.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) is working with extension programmes, universities, grain companies and private industry to develop systems to address grain quality by observing quality management systems in action. They have found that grain traceability (at any level) goes hand in hand with the implementation of quality management systems (QMS) to effectively track grain once it has entered a handling facility.

While a silo will never achieve a 1:1 correspondence of bulk products regarding what is coming in and exactly where it is going on the outbound side, a few recording processes that are put in place (basic record-keeping) can limit the universe of possibilities to approximately 70% accuracy. For Americans, the primary incentive for implementing quality management systems is that it entails good business and effective management.<sup>a</sup>

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# Let's win the traceability game together

By Susan Marais, Plaas Media

It might not be as exciting as the space race, but globally there is a race afoot. Which country's grain value chain will be the first to truly crack the code to grain value chain traceability and fully implement it? As a valuable link between producers and grain storage operators, *Agbiz Grain Quarterly* asked Grain SA about their thoughts on traceability. This issue will be discussed and debated in depth during the September 2023 Agbiz Grain Symposium.

"The food value chain is a team sport where each chain link needs to pull up its socks and work interactively with the rest of the team (other links in the value chain). That's how South Africa can become champions," says Dr Pieter Taljaard, outgoing CEO of Grain SA.

Not only should all links focus on keeping their own game sharp, but they should also work interactively as a team towards continuous improvement in traceability. "Food security and safety are of paramount importance," Taljaard adds. "The food value chain and today's

food consumers are becoming increasingly more sophisticated and therefore they will require more information regarding food production."

## The cost of food safety

Grain SA is also aware of the fact that traceability is becoming more important in other agricultural commodities (such as meat and wool), and that this will have a direct impact on traceability within the grain value chain. The two chains are linked as grain is used in animal feed.

"In contrast to other parts of the world, white maize is directly consumed by South Africans, making food safety even more important to grain producers," he says. "However, it is vital that no additional costs or levies should be forced onto the agricultural sector - especially when it comes to South African staples such as grain and oilseeds. This will lead to higher consumer prices.

"It is also important that the value chain regulates itself. Self-regulation is the only way in which all the links in the chain will be able to fully benefit from a traceability system."

Benefits include competitiveness and greater data availability. "The adage 'to measure is to know' still rings true. The information pool should benefit all chains within the value chain and enable everybody to optimise their performance due to greater system monitoring."

Taljaard points out that many other value chains have been able to capitalise on the

greater collaboration brought about once a traceability system was implemented.

## Good practices vs traceability

Dr Dirk Strydom, the marketing, Nampo and research co-ordination lead at Grain SA, explains that it is important to note the difference between the standard of good practice and that of traceability. "In cereals and oilseeds, establishing worldwide traceability is still a challenge. Many countries have tried but not yet succeeded, largely due to the nature of the product."

Countries can, however, achieve good standard practices. The most recent example is the Canadian Grain Commission's science strategy, although this has not yet been finalised, Taljaard says. "Most of the system that is already in place is, however, voluntary in nature or directly linked to a buyer. Those that are regulated or statutory are linked to subsidy systems."

## Value chain traceability

It is vital to include the full production system in a traceability system. The Responsible Wool Standard (RWS) is a good example of this. This is an international, voluntary standard that addresses animal welfare on sheep farms and the chain of custody of wool from certified farms to the final product. "This certification aims to improve animal welfare and sustainable grazing practices," Taljaard explains.

All production information relating to cultivated pastures or crops used as feed in the wool production system is also



Dr Pieter Taljaard, outgoing CEO of Grain SA.

required. "In short, different value chains within a particular commodity group are differentiating themselves by documenting the information in systems, thus keeping the records available for when they are needed."

Traceability in the grain and oilseed value chains is more challenging. "It is difficult to track or isolate a single kernel or grain due to its bulky nature, unlike a case of fruit or a carcass or a bale of wool. But the fact remains that we are becoming increasingly aware of local and export opportunities that set certain requirements in terms of maximum residue levels (MRLs), which are usually accompanied by premiums."

**The only prerequisite for teamwork within the grain value chain is that we must have sensible and cost-effective systems in place to ensure food safety without unnecessarily duplicating work.**

Although a traceability system will not guarantee specific MRL levels, it can be a very good predictor of which products will comply in instances where good practice and compliance are documented. "Therefore we are not concerned. We simply see an opportunity for producers who are willing to document and thus adapt their production practices to differentiate themselves from others."

Most of the grain value chain's information is available and already documented in one way or another, Taljaard points out. "All that is required is a system that producers can use to easily capture it, eliminate duplication and make it available to other relevant links in the value chain – within a reliable and secure system."

### Expectations for storage operators

Taljaard says that Grain SA's focus remains at farm level, but they hope to continue working closely with Agbiz Grain's members to ensure the seamless integration of traceability processes. "Food value chain management truly is a team sport. The food value chain is nothing other than a team and therefore teamwork is the

key to winning. As a sport nation, South Africans know that good local competition is a requirement for improvement and becoming more competitive.

"Grain SA's entire focus is on the free-market system, and we constantly encourage greater transparency, which will automatically lead to greater efficiency." However, free and unorganised are two different things. Within the free-market system, the grain value chain must pay attention to the signals food processors send to the market.

"Processors do research among consumers and therefore we all need to work together to address these needs. The only prerequisite for teamwork within the grain value chain is that we must have sensible and cost-effective systems in place to ensure food safety without unnecessarily duplicating work."

### The loose measure toffee

Taljaard says that South Africa's grain storage operators face a massive challenge when it comes to traceability. "The 'loose' nature of measurement in the grain and oilseeds industry makes it difficult to implement traceability, but we are well aware of the efforts that Agbiz Grain and its members are making in this regard."

Storing grain on a farm is easier when it comes to determining traceability, he added. "The smaller the storage unit, the easier it is to establish traceability, and isolation is a given." As a significant portion of South Africa's grain is already stored on farms, Grain SA has decided to accept this as part of its responsibility. "While this is a massive challenge, it also presents an opportunity." Several discussions have already taken place within the value chain to better understand how the different systems work and to see how they could be integrated.

"Modern computers bring with them the advantage of application programming interface (API) systems, which could be connected more frequently than in the past," Taljaard says. "This is exactly where the opportunity lies – in the integration of systems that the owner of the information can consent to." A producer will therefore be able to choose which part of the



Dr Dirk Strydom, marketing, Nampo and research co-ordination lead at Grain SA.

information he or she wants to share and which to keep private.

Strydom remarks that these talks are an ongoing discussion within the Maize Forum's trade working group, currently chaired Dr André van der Vyver, executive director of the South African Cereals and Oilseeds Trade Association (Sacota).

### Principles agreed upon

Although it is still early days, Grain SA has discussed the matter with its members and thus far producers agree on the following traceability points in principle:

- Producers can only sign off or take responsibility for processes and uses within their control.
- In most instances legislation is already in place in respect of certain practices and uses. Therefore, a document of compliance will be more valuable than a signature on a guarantee. The simple fact that agriculture has to do with biological processes means that guarantees are difficult to honour. Climate and weather conditions have a direct impact which is outside the scope of the management of a producer.
- The cost of a traceability system must be limited to a minimum because consumers will ultimately pay for it.
- Self-regulation will be the most beneficial option for the value chain. [a](#)

For more information, send an email to Dr Dirk Strydom at [dirks@grainsa.co.za](mailto:dirks@grainsa.co.za).

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# The importance of food traceability in the food value chain

By Susan Marais, Plaas Media

Food traceability. How does one take this concept from being a buzzword to being practically implemented? And what expectations do the industry's clients have in this regard? *Agbiz Grain Quarterly* spoke to Boikanyo Mokgatle, executive director of the National Chamber of Milling (NCM), to ask this important value chain stakeholder's opinion on the matter.

The agricultural sector is central to job creation and rural economic development. Export expansion is even more important and seeing as growth within South Africa's agricultural sector is export-led, traceability is crucial to accessing export markets. In fact, international trading partners could view the absence of a co-ordinated and nationally approved identification and traceability system of grains as a deterrent, according to Mokgatle.

"Traceability is gaining ground. Maintaining expected safety and quality is crucial for local consumption and exports. Compromising food safety and quality at any point in the value chain puts strain on the downstream users, which could have huge health implications," said Mokgatle. "Not to mention the pressure on South Africa's already strained health services. It is a national regulatory imperative to ensure safe and nutritious foodstuffs."

He added that safety and quality standards must be internationally acceptable and need to be maintained if South Africans want to continue to operate in the global trading space. "The rest of the world has safety and quality specifications to safeguard their local interests. Traceability is therefore key to fostering trade."

## Regulations already in place

"Commodities and products handled through the grain value chain are already regulated," said Mokgatle. This is because all players need to comply with existing legislative and/or regulatory frameworks, not only at the mill but across the value chain. "Every segment in the value chain must therefore make sure that food safety and quality standards are not compromised

to the detriment of the downstream value chain users, especially the end consumer."

Mokgatle emphasised that to a certain extent there are already uniform traceability systems in place within the milling industry. "The most commonly used system in this industry is certification of food safety and quality management through the Food Safety System Certification (FSSC) 22000, which demonstrates a commitment to food safety, quality and compliance."

**Compromising food safety and quality at any point in the value chain puts strain on the downstream users, which could have huge health implications.**

FSSC 22000 is an internationally accepted certification scheme that ensures a robust food safety management system to control food safety hazards, minimise risks and ensure safe food production.

"Reliability in delivering safe, high-quality foodstuffs contributes to consumers' wellbeing and trust. FSSC 22000 is an internationally recognised standard against which a food safety management system can be audited and certified," Mokgatle added, adding that this covers all food safety aspects, including traceability up to the point of intake at the mills.

"What essentially needs to be put in place are the necessary controls to trace

the commodity back from the point of production, which is inevitably the responsibility of milling industry suppliers."

## Commitment to greater traceability

However, the milling industry believes even more could be done to enhance traceability. "The grain industry has been discussing the introduction of a customised passport system across the value chain since 2015. The principle is based on a declaration to have systems in place that will ensure compliance with existing regulatory frameworks."

However, this remains a point of discussion. "To the best of the NCM's knowledge, there is no standardised system currently administered or applied by millers," Mokgatle continued. There is also no difference between the expectations millers have for grain obtained from grain storage operators versus that which is procured directly from producers. "Procuring directly from the farmer would essentially simplify the traceability process in the sense that the farmer is a producer."

However, the regulatory framework applies to all grains delivered to the mill irrespective of direct delivery or procurement through the silo. "It would therefore be expected that grain storage operators should have systems in place that can ensure traceability," Mokgatle concluded. [2](#)

For more information, send an email to Boikanyo Mokgatle at [boikanyo@grainmilling.org.za](mailto:boikanyo@grainmilling.org.za).

NWK's engineering team developed and built this entire bunker system from scratch and doubled the storage capacity at the Nooitgedacht silo.

# NWK's gantry-bunker solution to storage capacity challenges

By Susan Marais, Plaas Media

While modern agricultural practices have enabled producers to expand their operations and harvest much quicker, silo technology seems to have been left behind. However, NWK's grain storage operators found a creative and practical way to marry modern bunker technology with the cement silo gantry system.

One could rightly argue that cement silos are one of the most impressive structures decorating South Africa's rural landscape. However, these towering giants are reminiscent of a bygone era – an era dominated by agricultural boards, fixed grain prices and limited yields.

"The majority of NWK's cement silos are at least 50 years old," says Ian Britt, manager of NWK's 39 grain storage facilities. The last NWK silo – Lottie Halte in Lichtenburg – was built in the early 1980s.

Many zinc silos, bunkers and silo bags have been constructed since then. However, the technology utilised for these structures hasn't improved over time, in contrast to improved farming technology, increased yields, faster harvesting tempos and exploding food demand.

## Speed and capacity demand

In NWK's traditional service area, the average yield of dryland maize stood at around 2t/ha when the silos were erected; these days up to 9t/ha of maize is harvested under dryland conditions.

Not only has agricultural input technology such as seeds and chemicals improved, but mechanisation has also reached impressive new heights. "Where combine harvesters were able to harvest at a rate of 10t/hour a few decades ago, the average modern combine can work at a tempo of 250t/hour," Britt points out.

This tempo is constantly increasing. According to Johan Jansen van Rensburg, operational manager of NWK Mechanisation, one of the country's current top-of-the-range combines – the New Holland CR7 – can harvest 345 tons of maize per hour.

"Bigger yields and larger combines have led to the use of larger trucks to transport maize to storage operators," Britt comments. "In the past, grain would be hauled to silos in ten-ton trailers. Nowadays, however, most grain is transported in trucks with a carrying capacity of as much as 35 tons.

"While agricultural technology has moved forward, our cement silo equipment has remained relatively small." Today's

hoppers, grain elevator buckets and towers are proportionally small when compared to the grain volume it currently needs to transport.

## Managing bottlenecks

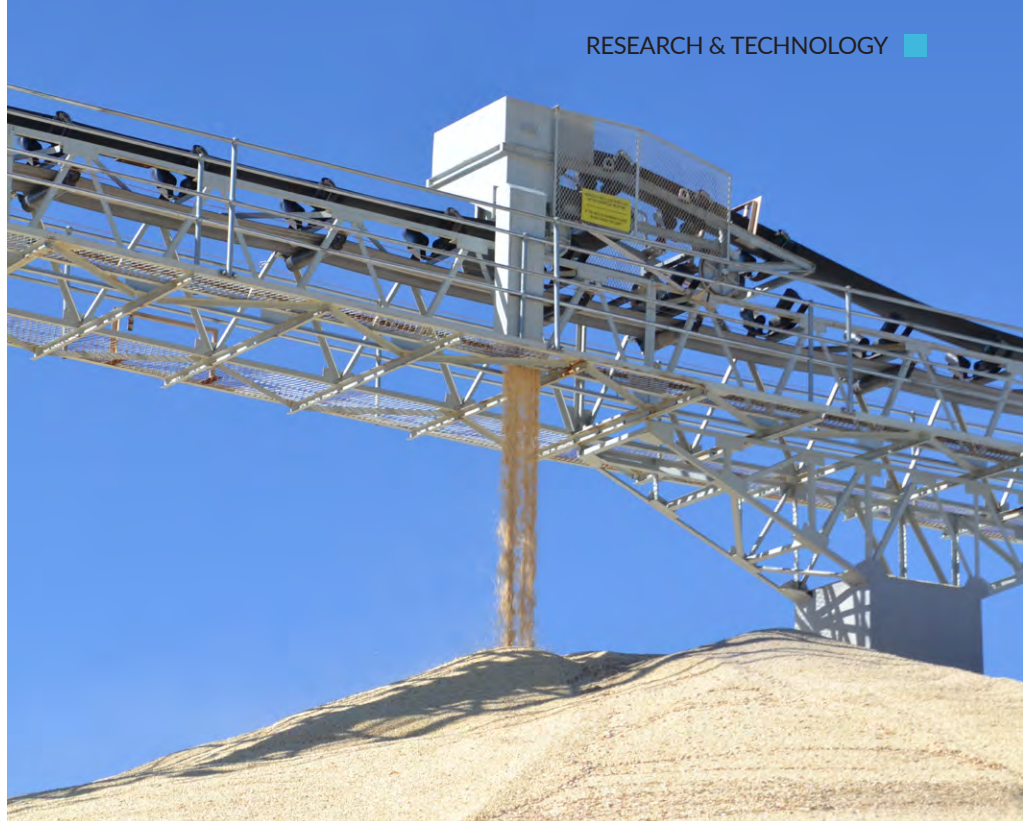
NWK's management realised that they were facing a massive challenge. "As producers started harvesting double or triple the volumes compared to a decade ago, we started running out of storage capacity and we knew we needed to up our game," Britt remarks. "The offloading tempos slowed and NWK's storage capacity became insufficient."

As individual truckloads increased, the time it took to offload also increased. This meant that a driver had to wait in line for an average of 45 minutes. Silo workers frequently needed to work overtime, which led to higher overhead costs for the silo. "In the past, producers could offload during office hours (08:00 and 17:00), but things became so hectic that operating hours were extended to between 08:00 and 23:00. This made for very unhappy producers, who could easily





Ian Britt, NWK's manager of Silo Services.



Grain is dumped onto the bunker with the use of the gantry system, which is a replica of the system used in NWK's silos.

have decided to take their grain elsewhere," Britt continues.

As a temporary measure, NWK opted to transport grain between silos. "A producer could offload at one silo and then we'd immediately upload the grain onto one of our trucks and transport it to another NWK silo." This came with a hefty price tag. "It cost us approximately R150/ton to move grain between silos and it also meant double occupation at our hoppers (where grain is offloaded at the silo) because grain needed to be loaded into the silos twice. Grain offloading was therefore even slower than before."

NWK decided to find a permanent solution to the problem by widening its hoppers and increasing the speed of its grain elevators. However, they still needed to increase their physical storage capacity. "We calculated that we needed additional storage capacity of 30 000 tons at Grootpan, 30 000 tons at Boschpoort, 15 000 tons at Biesiesvlei, 22 000 tons at Nootgedacht and 7 000 tons at Rostrataville." The only solution was to build additional storage.

### Cost to increase capacity

Grain storage operators have several options when it comes to grain storage: cement silos, zinc silos, bunkers or silo bags. "Concrete silos are still the first choice because they're not susceptible

to thermic fluctuations, making them the easiest and best storage option," states Britt, but adds that it currently costs around R5 000/ton to erect these silos. This means that a storage operator would never be able to recover its costs.

Another solution that NWK's team considered was zinc silos, which can be erected at a cost of around R1 500/ton. However, this type of silo is susceptible to temperature fluctuations. "It is usually colder in the morning and warmer in the afternoon, which leads to condensation inside the silo. This, in turn, causes moisture migration within the tube which can damage the grain."

The high risk of zinc silos and the high construction cost of concrete silos made this unfeasible. The team briefly considered silo bags, but this is not a long-term solution. "It is very labour intensive and the machinery and diesel used to operate the bags are expensive. This is a service that's delivered and, in the end, you just break even."

The decision was made to conform to the staple international trend of building bunkers. "Grain bunkers originated in Australia and today they can be found across the globe." A bunker is far less expensive at R500/ton. "Our accountants did the math and they calculated that we

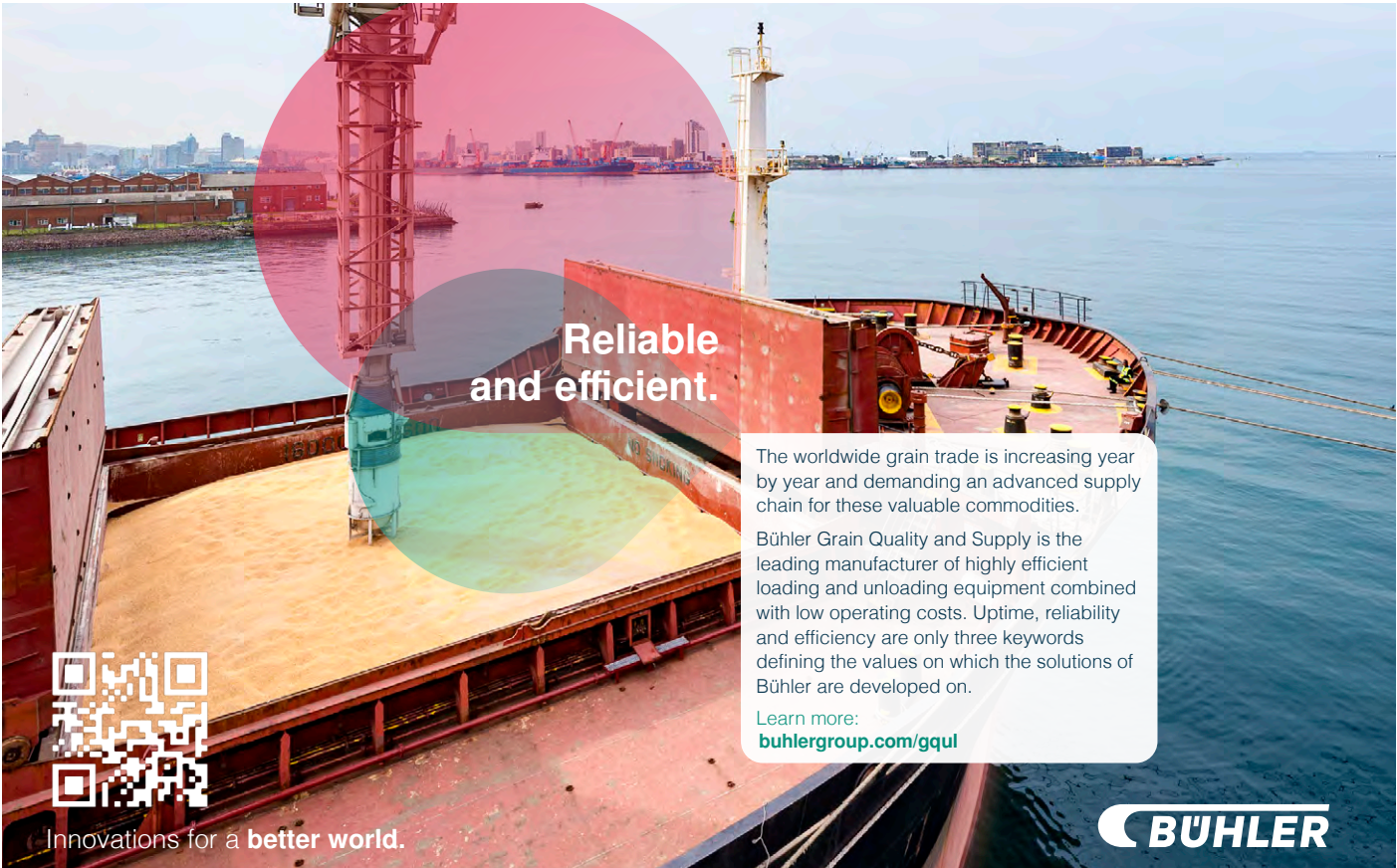
would start to see a return on investment within ten years," Britt comments.

### Bunker basics

In layman's terms, a grain bunker is grain that is stored on the ground with plastic sheeting over it. An average bunker is 32m wide and 100m long and able to store 7 500 tons of grain. The first step in building a bunker is a 1:100 soil preparation. "You need an incline of 1m for every 100m the bunker goes forward," Britt recommends, adding that they imported a special type of easy-draining soil to ensure that water and moisture never became an issue in the bunker. "When it rains it is important that water should flow away from the grain."

Once the soil is prepared, the area is ring-fenced with a corrugated iron wall and a plastic liner is put in place on the ground. The grain is then deposited on top of the plastic. In a traditional bunker, a generator will be utilised to power a hopper and stacker, which then feed the grain into the bunker.

A producer transports the grain with his tractor or truck to the bunker where it is offloaded into the hopper and moves into the stacker (a steel conveyor that dumps the grain onto the plastic liner or existing heap). Once all the grain is in place, another plastic sheet is pulled over the entire heap to keep moisture out.



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To access the grain, the plastic is simply lifted and the grain uploaded into a truck or trailer with the help of a front-end loader. It takes roughly three months to fill a bunker and it can be unloaded within a month. "This is extremely cost-effective because it doesn't require constant labour. Grain can be uploaded and unloaded at around 150t/hour, which is another plus," Britt says. "It is advantageous that the bunker can be moved quickly. The entire bunker can be erected and broken down in a matter of weeks."

As with everything, there are some drawbacks:

- A higher risk for grain degradation.
- Grain is at the mercy of weather conditions. If it rains, you cannot up- or offload grain.
- Fumigation becomes more difficult and is not as effective as it would have been in a silo or a silo bag.
- Grain spills are an issue.
- Grain cannot be kept in a bunker for more than a year. While the grain is treated with insecticide when it enters the bunker, this wears off with time.
- The sheeting is very heavy and requires several people to put in place.

### The NWK gantry twist

After visiting a few of these grain bunkers, Britt admits that he broke out in a sweat. "Previously I was a maintenance engineer, and I immediately spotted a few issues in the traditional design that would be challenging."



One of the major challenges NWK faced was the fact that producers often offload 35 tons of grain at a time, whereas ten-ton trailers were the norm a few decades ago when cement silos were first introduced.



Trailers tip the grain into the hopper and from there the gantry system's conveyor belt transports the grain either to the silo or the bunker.

He was not in favour of the complex hydraulic equipment used in bunkers. "It is probably easy for a hydraulics expert to work on the equipment. My team doesn't work with hydraulics daily. We handle grain elevator buckets and conveyor belts. That is what we work with daily. And a repairman needs to know exactly what he's working with if he is sent out to a site."

After some thought, Britt decided to build a gantry system, which resembles the system used in a cement silo, for their bunkers. A gantry system refers to a motion-centric system designed for multi-axis operation with an overhead bridge. It includes a little car, or gantry robot and a gantry crane, which moves the grain to a certain point. "The equipment we use at the bunker is also used at the NWK silos. That makes it easy to repair because every component of the gantry system is visible," Britt says.

A typical NWK gantry bunker will be equipped with a grain elevator and a hopper. The grain heap will essentially be 12m high, 100m long and 80m broad. "We also found that it takes extreme precision to fill up a bunker. To fill it to its 7 500-ton capacity you need to place the grain perfectly. We couldn't do this and was only able to fit in 6 500 tons at a time," Britt admits. However, the gantry bunker

can be filled with more grain because it can be stacked higher (due to the gantry being higher). "We've been able to fill our bunkers to 112% capacity."

Dust might not be an explosive hazard in a bunker system; however, it is a massive problem when it gets into the machinery. "It is especially difficult – and expensive – to maintain the generator. Apart from the fact that diesel is very expensive, we've calculated that it is ten times more expensive for NWK to operate on generators – mainly due to the maintenance costs." NWK's gantry system, however, can function on traditional energy or solar power, making it less expensive to operate.

Not only are all NWK's bunkers registered at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), but they have significantly decreased producers' offloading tempo. "Previously it could have easily taken up to 45 minutes to offload grain during peak times. Now this period has been shortened to between 15 and 20 minutes. This is double the previous speed!"<sup>a</sup>

For more information, send an email to Ian Britt at [ianb@nwk.co.za](mailto:ianb@nwk.co.za).



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# Tackle work-related injuries or diseases head-on

By Christal-Lize Muller, Plaas Media

The processing of injuries on duty and the completion of relevant documentation remain a challenge. The aim of the fifth Agbiz Grain SHEQ forum (safety, health, environment and quality) virtual workshop was to simplify the process for the industry in terms of compliance, obtaining a letter of good standing (LOGS) and registering claims successfully.

The presenter of the workshop, Beth Pretorius, is the director of WCA Solutions (PTY) Ltd and has 17 years of experience in the field. She focussed on employer services relating to the *Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Amendment Act, 1997 (Act 61 of 1997)* and compliance in terms of registration and good standing. She elaborated on claims reporting, administration and the role of medical service providers (MSPs).

Pretorius explained that work-related injuries or diseases are governed by the *Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, 1993 (Act 130 of 1993)*, or *COIDA*, as amended by the *Amendment Act*, which ensures the right of an employee to be compensated if the person qualifies in terms of the Act. It also protects an employer from civil claims.

She reiterated that an employer is obligated to register with the Compensation Fund (CF) within seven days of appointing an employee and added that if an employer has not been registered it would be wise to do so as soon as possible to become compliant. Pretorius emphasised that it remains imperative that employees are covered in terms of *COIDA* and that an employer can be held liable if subcontractors are not registered.

## Nature of the business

According to her, an employer declares the main nature of the business when registering with the CF. This determines the assessment tariff that will apply to the business. The nature of the business, however, needs to be declared accurately.

If it does not align, a company can get in trouble with the fund when an injury occurs at the workplace. "You cannot declare for example that the nature of the business is administration when in fact the employee was busy harvesting maize when the injury occurred."

The nature of business applies to the LOGS itself and the onus rests on an employer to ensure that the allocations and information on the letter are accurate and align with the actual operations. This is especially applicable to manual registrations.

## Registration with the CF

Although an employer is legally obligated to register with the fund and pay for annual assessments, registration is mutually beneficial as it can also serve as social insurance to the business. "That means people who are not self-insured can have some assurance that in the event of an injury, they will have access to medical cover and assistance. Neither the employee nor the employer is then severely affected by the loss of income."

Pretorius explained that registration can be done via the fund's website, and it is mostly a simple process. However, any entity without a pay as you earn (PAYE) number, sole proprietors and partnerships, trusts, non-profit organisations (NPOs), schools and churches cannot register online and have to submit a manual registration form. This can be time consuming.

The fund's return on earnings (ROE) season in which employers are obligated to submit their earnings and prevent penalties, opens



Beth Pretorius, director of WCA Solutions.

annually on 1 April and closes on 30 April. This date can be extended, and this year saw two extensions of the due date.

## Registered employers

She explained that once employers are registered with the CF, their ROE, which serves as a declaration of what

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the provisional wages will be for the first year of business, needs to be submitted. Employers often get confused with the fund's ROE season. It is different to a South African Revenue Service (SARS) assessment year. For example, the fund's assessment year for 2022 earnings were from 1 March 2022 to 28 February 2023, which is not the same as a tax year.

Hereafter an employer needs to do the following:

- Declare annually what the actual wages were for the previous year as well as the provisional wages for the year ahead.
- Pay the generated assessment invoice within 30 days.
- Use the correct reference number and only this number to avoid administrative battles in getting money allocated.

According to Pretorius, an assessment tariff is provided according to the nature of the business, and will comprise a certain percentage. The amount will be calculated by multiplying the applicable tariff by the total declared amount (actual as well as provisional). "Employers need to bear in mind that an amount for your provisional earnings was already paid in the previous year."

### What earnings must be included?

She explained that the CF sets an annual limit (R506 473 per employee for 2023). This means an employer will only pay the percentage to the maximum of this set amount per employee. Any recurring earnings such as regular overtime, annual bonuses and travel allowances need to be included in the employer's declaration, whereas contributions to pension funds are excluded.

Penalties for late ROE submissions or payments will automatically be added by the fund. "If you do not submit your earnings or declare in the period allowed, you will automatically receive a 10% penalty on your assessment invoice. If earnings were submitted on time, you have 30 days to pay." Failure to do so will result in a 10% penalty including interest.

However, it is possible to make a payment arrangement with the fund if the entire invoice can't be paid, but an employer

needs to stick to the arrangement to avoid penalties and charged interest. An LOGS will only be generated once the assessment invoice is paid and allocated by the fund. Employers need to produce their valid LOGS at any time if requested by the Department of Labour.

### An injury on duty

Pretorius said according to the COIDA, an injury or any disease that is a result of an employee performing a duty in the workplace would be deemed an occupational injury or disease. The most common scenarios include an injury at the workplace, a motor vehicle accident and assault.

Exclusion examples include the following:

- An employee falls in the parking area on the way from his/her car to clock in.
- Fainting while having lunch outside.
- Having pre-existing conditions such as an epileptic fit at work.
- Having a heart attack while at work.

She advised employers who are in doubt whether an injury will qualify as an injury on duty to rather go ahead and register the claim. The CF will make the final decision. Pretorius explained that in the case of a motor vehicle accident an employee is covered for injuries while performing duties, but is for the most part not covered for travelling from home to work and from work back home.

An employee is also covered for assault, such as armed robbery, while he/she is performing his/her duties, but is not covered for assault arising from personal conflict with another person at work.

After an injury occurred, the following steps need to be taken to ensure that a claim is accepted:

- Complete all three pages of an employer's report of an injury (W.Cl.2).
- Ensure all questions are completed even if it is not applicable. Provide enough relevant detail.
- An employer's report, a certified copy of the employee's ID/passport, a payslip and a completed travel/assault questionnaire are required by MSPs. Complete these documents thoroughly as the CF will refuse to adjudicate on claims with blank spaces.
- A full travel report needs to be attached

if an employee was travelling. Complete the questionnaire fully. For example, if there is no police case number yet, indicate that you are awaiting a case number.

- Complete an assault questionnaire if an assault occurred.

### Registering claims

A claim needs to be registered online on the CF's CompEasy system within seven days of the injury. Pretorius said emailed or manual claims will not be registered without a valid reason, while MSPs are persistent in requesting documentation and claim numbers due to historical non-payment. "Make sure you submit everything that these providers require to ensure that they will continue to treat injured employees in future."

**An LOGS will only be generated once the assessment invoice is paid and allocated by the fund. Employers need to produce their valid LOGS at any time if requested by the Department of Labour.**

In terms of wages, an employer is required to pay at least 75% of the injured employee's wages for the first three months after an injury if the employee cannot return to work. Thereafter, the employee can claim directly from the CF which is meant to refund the employer. This can take a long time. That is why the CF requires proof of earnings to establish what an employee's earnings were at the time of the injury. In case of a fatality, the employee's exact earnings will determine the pension payable to dependents.

The resumption report (W.Cl.6) is used for this purpose and needs to be uploaded onto the CompEasy system every month with supporting documentation, for example a sick note from a doctor. Pretorius said it would be sensible for employers to have a checklist handy with all the requirements and documentation needed in case of an injury on duty. [a](#)

# Proposed amendments to water use licencing

By Annelize Crosby, head of legal intelligence, Agbiz

On 19 May 2023 the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) published a notice titled *Revision of Regulations Regarding the Procedural Requirements for Water Use Licence Applications and Amendments*. The due date for comments was 19 July 2023.

The draft regulations provide, among other things, that applicants for water licences will first have to initiate a pre-application engagement with the department. During this engagement, the applicant will be advised on the need for and type of authorisation, as well as the requirement and information needed to apply. It will also be indicated whether a site visit is required. Thereafter an application for a water use licence can be submitted. The so-called responsible authority will then assess the application – note that a non-refundable application fee will also be required.

There will be an opportunity for interested and affected parties to object to a licence application. If the property is subject to a land claim, both the Land Claims Commissioner and the land claimants will have to indicate that they do not object to the licence application. There are also

clauses dealing with transformation as envisaged in Section 27 of the *National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998)*.

### Controversial provisions

Chapter five of these draft regulations deals with the promotion of equity and redressing past racial and gender discrimination as contemplated in Section 27(1)(b) of the *National Water Act*. Section 27 reads as follows:

“In issuing a general authorisation or licence a responsible authority must take into account all relevant factors, including:

- Existing lawful water use.
- The need to redress the results of past racial and gender discrimination.
- Efficient and beneficial use of water in the public interest.
- The socio-economic impact of the water use or uses if authorised; the failure to authorise the water use or uses.
- Any catchment management strategy applicable to the relevant water resource.
- The likely effect of the water use, to be authorised on the water resource and other water users.
- The class and the resource quality objectives of the water resource.
- Investments already made and to be made by the water user in respect of the water use in question.
- The strategic importance of the water use to be authorised.
- The quality of water in the water resource which may be required for the reserve and for meeting international obligations.

- The probable duration of any undertaking and which water use is to be authorised.

The regulations propose that preference should be given to applications from firstly black people and then women. Secondly all applications for consumptive water use in terms of Sections 21 (a), (b) and (d) are expected to satisfactorily address Section 27(1)(b) of the Act. Specifically, shares in the enterprise must be allocated to black people in accordance with the allocations set out in *Table 1*.

Section 21(a) deals with the collection of water from a water resource, Section 21(b) with the storing of water and 21(d) with engaging in a streamflow reduction activity. The regulations also provide for compulsory licencing in clause 13 thereof, within a period of 60 days, which is very short notice.

### Agbiz's response

Agbiz prepared and submitted a response in which the following points are made:

- Agbiz fully supports transformation. Agbiz is a signatory to the Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan (AAMP). Agbiz is also an active participant in the AgriBEE Charter Council.
- Whilst it is acknowledged that transformation must play a role in ensuring equitable access, the means provided for in these regulations should be reconsidered.
- Redress should be done in a way that does not scare off investors or hold risks for continued production, food security and exports, which form the basis of employment generation opportunities in the South African agricultural value chains in the AAMP.
- This approach to redress is overly simplistic, and that could lead to arbitrary decision-making and litigation.
- Black shareholding cannot be the only or overriding criteria in the awarding of water licences. This approach

**Table 1: Shares allocation to black people.**

Section 21(a) and (b)	Section 21(d)	% shares allocated to black people
Up to 250 000m <sup>3</sup>	Up to 100ha	Exempted
250 000 to 500 000m <sup>3</sup>	100 to 500ha	25%
500 000 to 1 000 000m <sup>3</sup>	500 to 1 000ha	50%
More than 1 000 000m <sup>3</sup>	More than 1 000ha	75%



version of the regulations will then be sent to legal services. The department says it hopes to publish the final regulations by December this year.

In the meantime, the department issued a media statement on 15 June 2023 indicating that existing lawful use will not be affected and that the transformation requirements in the regulations are only applicable to applications for new water use licences. It stated that existing lawful use can be changed only through compulsory licencing. When compulsory licencing happens, the entire resource is reallocated.

While this is welcomed, the wording of the draft regulations will need to be amended to reflect that only new water use licences will be subject to the transformation requirements in the regulations.<sup>a</sup>

For more information, send an email to Annelize Crosby at [annelize@agbiz.co.za](mailto:annelize@agbiz.co.za).

runs contrary to the decision of the Supreme Court of Appeal in the *Goede Wellington* case. The court confirmed that the transformation imperative must be applied within the context of all requirements contained in Section 27 of the Act.

- Equating the percentage of black shareholding to a juristic entity's transformation status undermines the *Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment Act, 2003 (Act 53 of 2003)* as it only focusses on one element namely ownership.
- The transformation provisions are *ultra vires*, in the sense that they

go beyond what is envisaged in the *National Water Act*.

- The requirement to get input from both the Land Claims Commissioner and land claimants is onerous. Notice to the Land Claims Commissioner, as provided for in Section 11(7) of the *Restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994 (Act 22 of 1994)* where a claim has already been gazetted, should suffice.

#### The way forward

The DWS has indicated that all comments are being captured as they are received. The next phase will be to consider and incorporate the comments. A revised

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# Employment equity: Developments on the regulatory front

By Annelize Crosby, head of legal intelligence, Agbiz

The *Employment Equity Amendment Act, 2022 (Act 4 of 2022)* was signed and passed into law in April 2023. The original *Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55 of 1998)* or EEA was passed in 1998. The amended EEA has lowered the turnover requirement stipulated by the original Act which required businesses with certain turnovers as well as employers employing more than 50 workers to comply with employment equity requirements. The amended Act only requires employers employing 50 or more workers to adhere to those requirements. The turnover requirement has thus been dropped.

This is positive, as smaller employers will automatically qualify for a certificate of compliance. Whereas legislation used to require that employers draw up an employment equity plan in consultation with the workforce, those targets will now be prescribed by the Minister of

Employment and Labour. This will have an impact on many of Agbiz and Agbiz Grain’s members, as they employ more than 50 people.

### Employment equity targets

On 12 May 2023, the draft employment equity targets were published for comment. The comment period closed on 12 June. Agbiz submitted comments on the proposed targets for the agricultural sector.

Targets will apply to the four upper occupational levels: top management, senior management, professionally qualified staff, and skilled staff. Each target will be prescribed according to population group and gender and should be reached within five years. Proposed targets for the agricultural sector can be seen in *Table 1*.

### Unrealistic targets

In its submission, Agbiz pointed out that agriculture is a large and diverse sector consisting of everything from small, family-

owned farming businesses to large, public companies with regional footprints. The designation as a single sector therefore poses some challenges. The primary agricultural sector consists of several thousands of small businesses and a few larger ones.

Agbiz also alludes to the fact that employment equity is only one of five different elements on the AgriBEE scorecard. Management control (and hence employment equity) does not enjoy the same priority status as other elements of transformation under the code. This means that the other elements on the scorecard can earn more points for companies.

Talent recruitment and retention was highlighted as a challenge by most rural-based agribusinesses to meeting targets for higher job positions in their employment equity plans. Factors such as a lack of suitable schooling facilities for children, medical

**Table 1: The proposed *Employment Equity Amendment Act* targets for the agricultural sector.**

1. AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY & FISHING													
A. TOP MANAGEMENT							B. SENIOR MANAGEMENT						
NATIONAL & PROVINCE	GENDER	POPULATION GROUP					NATIONAL & PROVINCE	GENDER	POPULATION GROUP				
		A	C	I	W	BLACK			A	C	I	W	BLACK
National	Male	17.4%	2.0%	0.6%	4.5%	20.0%	National	Male	21.7%	2.5%	0.7%	4.5%	25.0%
	Female	13.0%	1.5%	0.4%	3.5%	15.0%		Female	13.0%	1.5%	0.4%	3.5%	15.0%
	Total	30.4%	3.5%	1.0%	8.0%	35.0%		Total	34.8%	4.0%	1.2%	8.0%	40.0%
SECTOR TARGETS FOR PROVINCES							SECTOR TARGETS FOR PROVINCES						
Eastern Cape	Male	17.3%	2.5%	0.2%	2.8%	20.0%	Eastern Cape	Male	21.6%	3.2%	0.2%	2.8%	25.0%
	Female	13.0%	1.9%	0.1%	2.2%	15.0%		Female	13.0%	1.9%	0.1%	2.2%	15.0%
	Total	30.2%	4.4%	0.3%	5.0%	35.0%		Total	34.6%	5.1%	0.4%	5.0%	40.0%
Free State	Male	19.1%	0.6%	0.4%	3.7%	20.0%	Free State	Male	23.8%	0.7%	0.5%	3.7%	25.0%
	Female	14.3%	0.4%	0.3%	3.6%	15.0%		Female	14.3%	0.4%	0.3%	3.6%	15.0%
	Total	33.3%	1.0%	0.6%	7.3%	35.0%		Total	38.1%	1.2%	0.7%	7.3%	40.0%
Gauteng	Male	18.7%	0.5%	0.8%	6.4%	20.0%	Gauteng	Male	23.3%	0.7%	1.0%	6.4%	25.0%
	Female	14.0%	0.4%	0.6%	4.6%	15.0%		Female	14.0%	0.4%	0.6%	4.6%	15.0%
	Total	32.6%	0.9%	1.4%	11.0%	35.0%		Total	37.3%	1.1%	1.6%	11.0%	40.0%
KwaZulu-Natal	Male	18.2%	0.2%	1.5%	2.2%	20.0%	KwaZulu-Natal	Male	22.8%	0.3%	1.9%	2.2%	25.0%
	Female	13.7%	0.2%	1.1%	1.9%	15.0%		Female	13.7%	0.2%	1.1%	1.9%	15.0%
	Total	31.9%	0.4%	2.7%	4.1%	35.0%		Total	36.5%	0.5%	3.0%	4.1%	40.0%
Limpopo	Male	19.9%	0.0%	0.1%	1.2%	20.0%	Limpopo	Male	24.9%	0.0%	0.1%	1.2%	25.0%
	Female	14.9%	0.0%	0.1%	1.2%	15.0%		Female	14.9%	0.0%	0.1%	1.2%	15.0%
	Total	34.8%	0.0%	0.1%	2.4%	35.0%		Total	39.8%	0.0%	0.2%	2.4%	40.0%
Mpumalanga	Male	19.9%	0.1%	0.1%	4.0%	20.0%	Mpumalanga	Male	24.8%	0.1%	0.1%	4.0%	25.0%
	Female	14.9%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%	15.0%		Female	14.9%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%	15.0%
	Total	34.8%	0.1%	0.1%	7.2%	35.0%		Total	39.7%	0.1%	0.1%	7.2%	40.0%
North West	Male	19.6%	0.3%	0.2%	2.8%	20.0%	North West	Male	24.5%	0.3%	0.2%	2.8%	25.0%
	Female	14.7%	0.2%	0.1%	1.6%	15.0%		Female	14.7%	0.2%	0.1%	1.6%	15.0%
	Total	34.2%	0.4%	0.3%	4.4%	35.0%		Total	39.1%	0.5%	0.4%	4.4%	40.0%
Northern Cape	Male	12.7%	7.3%	0.1%	6.4%	20.0%	Northern Cape	Male	15.8%	9.1%	0.1%	6.4%	25.0%
	Female	9.5%	5.4%	0.1%	4.5%	15.0%		Female	9.5%	5.4%	0.1%	4.5%	15.0%
	Total	22.2%	12.7%	0.2%	10.9%	35.0%		Total	25.3%	14.5%	0.2%	10.9%	40.0%
Western Cape	Male	9.1%	10.7%	0.2%	7.2%	20.0%	Western Cape	Male	11.4%	13.4%	0.2%	7.2%	25.0%
	Female	6.8%	8.0%	0.1%	6.1%	15.0%		Female	6.8%	8.0%	0.1%	6.1%	15.0%
	Total	15.9%	18.7%	0.3%	13.3%	35.0%		Total	18.2%	21.4%	0.4%	13.3%	40.0%
Workforce Profile 2022 (All employers)	Male	5.7%	3.3%	0.9%	68.6%	9.9%	Workforce Profile 2022 (All employers)	Male	10.3%	4.1%	1.5%	54.6%	15.9%
	Female	3.4%	2.5%	0.3%	14.5%	6.2%		Female	5.2%	2.2%	0.8%	20.3%	8.2%
	Total	9.1%	5.8%	1.2%	83.1%	16.1%		Total	15.5%	6.3%	2.3%	74.9%	24.1%

Population group abbreviations: A: African, C: Coloured, I: Indian, W: White Black includes Africans, Coloureds and Indians.

facilities, entertainment and shopping facilities and poor infrastructure and services contributed to this being a challenge.

Agbiz provided some actual employment figures by population group and gender in the four job categories which show that the proposed targets are unrealistic.

### Solidarity and the government

Solidarity filed a complaint with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) against the government for the rigid application of affirmative action in South Africa. In its complaint, Solidarity argued that South Africa was violating *ILO Convention 111* which stipulates that affirmative action measures must be flexible.

A mediation process followed. The ILO recommended that the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) should facilitate the dispute. The outcome of the process took the shape of a settlement in the form of an agreement between Solidarity and the government.

The agreement will be made an order of the court and is likely to

be gazetted as part of the employment equity regulations.

The agreement also lists the specific conditions that employers can use as reasons for not complying with legislation. The criteria that must be considered when applying for employment equity include:

- Inherent requirements of the job.
- The pool of suitably qualified people.
- The qualifications, skills, experience and capacity to acquire within a reasonable timeframe.
- The ability to do the job.
- The rate of turnover and natural attrition in the workplace.
- Recruitment and promotional trends within a workplace.

Justifiable and reasonable grounds for not complying with the targets include:

- Insufficient recruitment opportunities.
- Insufficient promotion opportunities.
- Insufficient target individuals from designated groups with the relevant skills, qualifications and experience.
- CCMA awards or court orders.
- Transfer of business.
- Mergers/acquisitions.
- Impact on business economic circumstances.

The basic outcome of the settlement seems to be that no penalties will be applied to employers and businesses that have a valid reason not to comply. Also, no business will be forced to dismiss workers based on race in trying to achieve the targets. The agreement contains no new justifiable reasons for non-compliance with employment equity targets, but it records a further provision that no penalties or disadvantages will be imposed on employers who can demonstrate reasonable grounds for non-compliance.

### The way forward

The targets are set to be implemented from 1 September 2023. Hopefully, there will be further engagements on the submissions and targets prior to implementation. Many organisations, including Agbiz, raised concerns regarding insufficient consultation on the targets. In the meantime, businesses should start preparing for compliance. [a](#)

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# Points to ponder

By Jannie de Villiers



## Don't you remember?

“Don't you remember?” is a kind of confrontational question. Sometimes it is intended as an element of surprise by the one asking such a question. It could even be sarcastic. I can imagine that my mother or one of my teachers at school probably asked me this question when I was a child. We often use this question in a meeting when people suggest something that we have tried before, but without success. I was recently confronted with this question that Jesus also asked his disciples in Matthew 16:9.

The disciples were arguing and probably blaming each other because they forgot to take some more bread for their journey. They were at sea and discovered that they were short on supplies. The confrontation, however, was not because they were forgetful. Jesus was confronting them about their faith.

In the background, while meditating on the confrontation, I could hear South Africans complaining of not having a job, not earning enough money to pay their bonds or car instalments, or even having sufficient pension money to retire with. A lot of our focus nowadays is on worldly things because the circumstances in our country are turbulent. The threat of a drier season adds to the overload of concerns we already struggle with.

### Faith based on history

Today, Jesus wants to challenge you and me with the question: Don't you remember? What point was He trying to make to His disciples? Well, He reminded them of the two miracles that preceded this trip. He fed 5 000 men, women and children with five loaves and thereafter 4 000 people with seven loaves and some fish. The disciples were concerned because they only had one loaf among the 13 of them. They were worried they might starve!

So, the question to you is: What concerns do you have today that He cannot provide

for or has not provided thus far in your life? Maybe it is time you and your family or team make your list of the things He would remind you of today, as He did with His disciples.

I went through my list and realised how tough it is because, at the end of the day, the rand is still weak, corruption is ongoing and my electricity supply remains unstable. The thing that changed inside of me was a stronger belief that God can and will provide. He will not forget me; He will remember me. He promised that in his Word.

Just consider for a moment the massive impact on the life of the criminal on the cross next to Jesus: “Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom”. It changed his life forever! If you have not done that yet, it will be the most important statement impacting your future.

### Face your giants

The ‘remember’ that challenged me the most was the story of David and Goliath. When the king and the soldiers around him thought he was crazy to fight the giant they were all so scared of, he remembered the lion and he remembered the bear that attacked him. God helped him kill those beasts and ended the threat they brought to his life and the sheep he was looking after.

In remembering those triumphs, he was filled with courage and faith in God to fight the giant. He won! The God he remembered came through for him under those difficult circumstances. I am not sure what your giants are today, but I am sure that the God we trust will come through for you if you call on His name.

My thoughts went back to 1994 and all the emotions, predictions and dreams regarding South Africa. I attended the world food price summit in Rome in 2008 to find solutions on how to double production by 2050 to avoid starvation, and thought of the panic among the world leaders at that specific time. I also remembered the many land reform meetings I attended and the fear surrounding it. Also, the 2016/17 drought we went through came to mind. I remembered all these things and yet we are still standing and feeding nations from South African soil.

Today “Don't you remember?” is a challenge to you to remind you that God is concerned about your faith because He's got the bread situation under control. [@](#)

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