

DAFF celebrates women in agriculture, awards top female farmers

In honour of women in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors, the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), in celebration of Women's Month, announced the top female farmers during a ceremony held in the Eastern Cape.



DAFF Female Entrepreneur Awards 2018 winners

The DAFF Female Entrepreneur Awards, which are in their 19th year, continue to pay tribute to the efforts and contribution by women, young females and women with disabilities for the roles they play towards ensuring food security, poverty alleviation, job creation and economic growth in the sector. The annual awards are held in partnership with Total South Africa.

In her address at the gala dinner, Tshildzi Ramauedzisi, innovation and corporate affairs Manager at Total South Africa said that one of Total's core values is to have a pioneering spirit, and all the women who had made it to the finalist stage were exemplary of this core value. She further indicated that much like Mama Albertinah Sisulu, the female entrepreneurs were fighting a struggle – this struggle is against unemployment and a weakening economy.

During his keynote address, minister Senzeni Zokwana said that the programme, through the CASP grant fund, is now going to be increasingly oriented towards capacity building, mentorships and hand-holding exercise for women enterprises. "This is more important in the context of the current land reform review process which will result in expropriation of land without compensation for which women must be major beneficiaries."

Award winners included

- **The Best Female Worker:** Bhekisepi Banengiwe Xulu;

- **Best Subsistence Producer:** Esther Irine Nell;
- **Top Entrepreneur:** Smallholder went to Leandre Elise Beatrice Mitchley;
- **Top Entrepreneur:** Processing went to Matshidiso Portia Mngomezulu;
- **Top Entrepreneur:** Commercial went to Maleka Pauline Dorcas;
- **Top Entrepreneur:** Export Markets went to Noluthando Mbilase.

The minister's special awards for young female entrepreneur went to Nosiphiwo Makhapela and the award for the female entrepreneur with disability in the sector went to Selinah Mphedziseni Mulovhedzi.

The overall winner based on the highest scoring points and cross-cutting criteria for entrepreneur went to Matshidiso Portia Mngomezulu.

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