

Future Farmers expands to Paarl

The Future Farmers Foundation, founded in 2006 by Judy Stuart, has made a tremendous impact on the lives of aspiring young farmers.

The foundation is to extend its influence by opening a second office in Paarl in the Western Cape. The current office in Howick, KwaZulu-Natal, has been the base from which the foundation has provided a service to young people country-wide. "It is often difficult to work over long distances and we've wanted to expand for quite a while now," says Stuart. The challenge was to find the right place and the right people.



Image via [Future Farmers Foundation](#)

Noku Ndimba joined the foundation as a future farmer and later became Judy's understudy. She has a degree in agriculture from the Earth University in Costa Rica and extensive agricultural knowledge. "When Noku had to move to the Western Cape, we didn't want to lose her from the team and saw it as the perfect opportunity to expand. Noku will run the Paarl office alongside John Scrimgeour. John has been in the agricultural industry for many years and has been involved with many transformation projects."

The office will officially open on 1 February and will look at opening up opportunities for future farmers in typically Western Cape industries, such as wine and deciduous fruit. "The work will not be limited to these industries, just as the KwaZulu-Natal office's work is not limited. The proximity to these industries will just make the work easier," says Stuart.

"Our process is to talk to the youngster and find out where he or she wants to be, what industry they want to be in. Passion is very important in agriculture and it is important to place young farmers in industries in which they have an interest. Our work must also be our love and passion; there is no sense in placing a chicken farmer on a fruit farm, for example."

Farming passion among the youth

The Future Farmers Foundation interviews young people every week and tries to help as many as these youngsters as possible. "We then recommend the future farmers to farmers and arrange interviews. We also bring in a few candidates for each interview, in order to make sure that it is the right fit for both the farmer and the future farmer."

The future farmer goes to work on the farm and is constantly mentored by the team at the Future Farmers Foundation. "Our mentoring focuses on the very important soft skills that are required in today's workplace."

After the future farmer has a minimum of two years on-farm experience, he, or she, is placed into an overseas internship for further experience.

"We are looking forward to seeing how the Paarl office can expand our impact; I believe it will be a great success," says Stuart,

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