



agriculture & rural development

Department:
Agriculture and Rural Development
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

ADVANCING FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

As part of the on-going Women's Month celebrations and in honour of the centenary for former president Nelson Mandela and struggle activist Albertina Sisulu, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development celebrated their annual Provincial Female Entrepreneur Awards. The Awards ceremony was hosted at the naturally beautiful and tranquil commercial strawberry farm called Cappeny Estates in Ballito on the 14th of August 2018. This year's theme was, "Women economic empowerment: a priority in the Agricultural, forestry and fisheries sectors."

The Female Entrepreneur Awards programme is an initiative by the National Department of Agriculture, Forestry and fisheries (DAFF), to honour the efforts and contribution of women, young females and women with disabilities for the role they play in food security, poverty alleviation, job creation and economic growth in the sector. The programme aims to acknowledge, encourage and increase the participation of women in Agriculture by ensuring they graduate from operating at the subsistence level to small-holder, commercial and even export level.

MEC for KZN Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr Themba Mthembu dedicated this year's awards to the struggle activist Albertina Sisulu, reiterating that she was one of the most dedicated women who fought a good fight in the economic and social struggle. He pleaded with the women of today to learn from her contribution to the struggle.

Following a comprehensive adjudication process, the entrants were selected by a very proficient panel made up of sector stakeholders nominated by MEC Mr Themba Mthembu.

The awardees are as follows:

1. **The Best Female Worker in the Sector:** 60-year-old Ms. Bhekisepi Banengwe Xulu from King Cetshwayo District who received an amount of R50 000.
2. **The Best Subsistence Producer in the Sector:** 40-year-old Ms Sizakele Zuma from Richmond in UMgungundlovu, who received an amount of R75 000.
3. **The Top Entrepreneur in the Sector: Small holder:** Magama Vegetable and Fruit Primary Cooperative Ltd which is a cooperative of women aged 33 – 72 years from UMkhanyakude in the Jozini area, who received an amount of R120 000.
4. **The Top Entrepreneur in the Sector: Processing:** Lisalona t/a Fruitee Belliez, owned by two sisters from Durban aged 31 & 33, who received an amount of R125 000.
5. **The Top Entrepreneur in the Sector: Commercial:** Mampontshi Farming and Fencing cc, which was established by the 30-year-old Ms Thobile Mpontshane from Jozini. She was awarded as the overall winner walking away with an amount of more than R350 000. She was also selected as the representative for KZN at the DAFF National Awards later on in August.

Over and above the awards presented, MEC Mthembu had included an additional three special Categories, which are as follows:

- Ms Bhekisepi Banengiwe Xulu was awarded for the **participation of a Senior Citizen**
- Ms Khulumile Thokozile Msezane received the **Disability Award**
- Mampontshi Farming and Fencing cc received a **Youth Award**, which were all accompanied by an amount of R50 000 each.

Congratulations to all winners.



Yoliswa Gumede, the owner of Cappeny Strawberry Farm where the event was held, sharing a message of support with the attendees of the KZN leg of the FEA 18'



The Overall Winner, Ms Thobile Mpontshane of Mampontshi Farming cc sharing words of appreciation with the attendees of the FEA 18' after she received a total prize of over R425 000.00



The Overall Winner, Ms Thobile Mpontshane of Mampontshi Farming cc receiving her Overall Winner Award from KZN Agriculture and Rural Development MEC Themba Mthembu at the event



Mbaliyethu and Masibonge Mthethwa of Lisalona (PTY) Ltd T/A Fruitee Belliez receiving their award from KZN Agriculture and Rural Development MEC Themba Mthembu for Top Entrepreneur Processing in the sector



Magema Cooperative could not contain their elation after receiving the Top Entrepreneur Smallholder Award in the sector, with MEC Themba Mthembu



Mrs Sizakele Zuma receiving an award for Best Subsistence Producer in the sector from MEC Themba Mthembu



Mrs Bhekisepi Xulu, receiving an award for Best Female Farmworker in the sector from MEC Themba Mthembu



Programme Director Ms Vick Masuku with Women in Agriculture and Rural Development President, Maureen Magubane sharing a light moment and enjoying the festivities at the FEA 18' event



KZN Agriculture and Rural Development MEC Themba Mthembu unpacking his speech at the FEA 18' event in Durban