



# Perspektief | Perspective

Nuusbrief | Newsletter

27/01/2017 WEEK 4 - 2017

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## **TRIBUTE TO MANNY DA COSTA**

*Jannie de Villiers, CEO, Grain SA*

» Grain SA will always treasure the memories of Manny da Costa - a loyal member and excellent ambassador, not only for Grain SA, but also for agriculture in South Africa. Manny served on the Grain SA Executive for a number of years until March 2012 and was Grain Producer of the Year in 2003. He was our go-to man when international guests want to visit a farm in Gauteng, a diplomat of note.

We will remember him in the VIP lounge at NAMPO, in the corner behind the service counter - all four days. He served everyone with the greatest of humility - a characteristic which we all admired. It did not matter whether it was the king or a minister or just a normal guest of Grain SA - everybody was treated with the greatest respect. From this corner he was a teacher to the interested "students" that listened to his wisdom and advice. He modelled a new type of farming leading the way with conservation agriculture and adding value to his grain business. He was also excellent to model how succession works and his sons were pushed forward to answer when farmers asked how things are done on Manjoh Ranch.

His colleagues described him as a great friend of Grain SA, ambassador for agriculture, gentleman, a giant - a big tree has fallen. Manny da Costa we salute you for making South Africa and agriculture a better place for all.

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## **GMO MAIZE IMPORTS - STATEMENT**

» Grain SA noted media reports that permits for US GMO maize imports were issued.

Grain SA remains of the position that the imports do not promote local producers' competitiveness if the same GMO events are not available to local producers as well. Such exceptions should only be made at times when food security is at risk. Excessive imports of maize will put prices under further pressure which is very detrimental to the profitability of grain producers.

This is not good news for grain farmers following such a dry and difficult season. Currently there is no mechanism to report import and export contracts. This is totally one-sided and only the traders have access to this information and not the producers. This causes great uncertainty and allow market players to force the market in a particular direction. Grain SA feels strongly that a free market system can only function optimally if the market information is available to all role players all the time. The declaration of import and export contracts, as well as changes to it, remains crucial to the market.

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## **REGIONAL MEETINGS OFF TO A POSITIVE START**

*Dirk Kotzé, Officer: Communication and Marketing, Grain SA*

The 2017 regional meetings kicked off on 24 January on a positive note with meetings held in Delmas and Frankfort. This past week also saw the conclusion of the Middelburg, Reitz, Ladybrand, Ermelo, Piet Retief, Bultfontein and Winterton regional meetings. The positive tone of the first meetings continued throughout the regions with members showing great interest in the new Grain SA App.

Meetings in the remaining regions will be conducted weekly up until 24 February 2017. A schedule detailing the various regions' meetings can be viewed on the Grain SA website. Click [here](#) to download the schedule. SMS messages are also sent out to members as a reminder.

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## OTTOSDAL NO-TILL CONFERENCE

The Ottosdal No-Till conference is being presented during the Ottosdal Show on 6-7 March 2017 in collaboration with Grain SA, the ARC and various other companies, with skilled speakers and farmers on the programme and farm trails to be viewed.

With the ever present questions regarding sustainability in conservation agriculture, the conference promises to be of great value to all participants. With the widespread interest, space is however unfortunately limited and should you wish to attend, be sure to book your space as soon as possible. Rates are R500 pp, including an informal networking event on Monday 6 March. Closing dates for entries are 24 February 2017.

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## STAY INSPIRED...

The New Year greeted the majority of our producers with much needed rain, for which young and old was very grateful. We look forward to the season, the possibility of good harvests ahead and a positive year for the agricultural industry.

'As we express our gratitude,  
we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words,  
but to live by them '

~John F. Kennedy

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