

Zeerust Solar Farm to provide agri entrepreneurs with funding, mentoring

Zeerust Solar Farm's recent business acceleration programme has nominated five principally women-led agriculture SMMEs as its key beneficiaries of its enterprise development initiative. Based in the Ramotshere Moiloa local communities, the five agricultural micro-entrepreneurs are to receive business funding and services support, following a stringent selection process.

Of the five entrepreneurs, four are women and at least three are youth, demonstrating a shift in the perception that agriculture is male dominant.

"Additionally, these beneficiaries will further address our obligation to ensure that women and youth are empowered through our various Economic Development programmes," explains Nomzamo Landingwe, chief community operations officer for Zeerust Solar.

The five overall winners will enter an Agri4Change accelerator programme and will also receive access to income-generating assets through allocation, which extends over 12 months; and an accredited certificate in mixed farming practices aligned with AgriSETA

One of the young beneficiaries, Emily Mmelesi, from the Kruisrivier community, is only 21 years old. She has started a small vegetable trading enterprise, which she plans to expand to include agricultural fodder.

"We are very proud of the five selected entrepreneurs, who together with the other contestants, will be working alongside trainers and business mentors for several months. We wish them good fortune in achieving their business goals," added Landingwe.

Forty-six entrepreneurs initially applied for the enterprise development initiative, however, only fifteen SMMEs across different disciplines, over and above the five agri-SMMEs, will also continue to receive a 12-month business mentorship programme; business development support; as well as formal business planning, which can be used to access more opportunities.

Zeerust Solar's Economic Development programme empowers and strengthens local communities in and around the Ramotshere Moiloa local municipality, namely Ikageleng, Henryville, Olienhout Park, Shalimar Park, Welbedacht (Lehurutshe Town) and Groot Marico, as well as extending to 40 villages located within the Municipal area.



Source: Supplied