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NEWSLETTER

1ST QUARTER ISSUE

20
26



RECRUITAGRI
GROWING WITH GRADUATES

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A Message from the Director

– Jenny More



“

We wish all our partners and stakeholders a successful and resilient year ahead.

”

As we step into 2026, the year has begun with energy, enthusiasm and a strong sense of commitment to the journey ahead. Our new cohort of graduates has come from across all seven provinces, bringing with them curiosity, engagement and a genuine eagerness to learn.

Their questions and participation set a positive tone for the year and for the meaningful interactions they will have with farm managers and processing supervisors. We extend our sincere appreciation to everyone involved in shaping this programme – your time, expertise and dedication are invaluable in preparing the next generation of agricultural professionals.

To our **industry partners** who have already stepped forward in support of the programme, we are deeply grateful and recognize the critical role you play in its success.

As we look ahead, we remain mindful of the challenges within the agricultural sector, from extreme weather conditions to fuel increases, export market prices and the devastation of foot and mouth disease.

2025 Graduate Employment Outcomes

RecruitAgri is proud to report strong employment outcomes for the 2025 cohort.



Employed

78%



Unemployed

20%



Drop-out

2%

Meet the RecruitAgri **Class of 2026**



Farming Graduates

RecruitAgri proudly welcomes the 2026 cohort, marking another important step in developing the next generation of agricultural professionals. This year also introduces a key milestone with the launch of the Dairy Division, expanding the programme beyond its established Farming and Processing divisions.



Processing Graduates

The programme now consists of 45 graduates, divided into three divisions: 27 in Farming, 13 in Processing, and 5 in the newly established Dairy Division. Together, they represent strong gender diversity, with 28 females and 17 males participating in the cohort.

The 2026 group is also geographically diverse, with graduates drawn from seven provinces across South Africa, including Mpumalanga (19), KwaZulu-Natal (7), Limpopo (6), Western Cape (4), Gauteng (4), Eastern Cape (3), and North West (2).



Dairy Graduates

This diverse cohort of 45 young professionals comprising 20 diploma graduates and 25 degree holders, brings a mix of academic backgrounds, perspectives and ambition to the programme. Through structured training and workplace placements across farms, packhouses and dairy operations, they will gain valuable practical experience while contributing to the advancement and sustainability of South Africa's agricultural sector.

Farming & Dairy Induction 2026

The 2026 RecruitAgri programme began with a successful Farming and Dairy Induction, held from 19 to 30 January 2026. The induction provided a strong foundation for graduates, combining orientation, uniform handover, and intensive training to prepare them for placement.

The Farming cohort (27 graduates) received training across key areas such as human resources, basic health & safety, basic safety training and practical skills including tractor driving, motorbike training, quad bikes, herbicide application and bee pollination. Leadership and management development was also included to strengthen workplace readiness.

The Dairy cohort (5 graduates) underwent specialised training focused on dairy production and food safety, including HACCP dairy, food microbiology, GMP/PRP, and milking shed hygiene. They also completed foundational modules in management, safety, and operational skills.

Overall, the induction built both technical competence and professional discipline, preparing graduates to contribute effectively in their respective farming and dairy placements.



Processing Induction 2026

The Processing Induction followed from 23 February to 04 March 2026, welcoming 13 graduates into a structured programme designed for food processing environments.

The induction began with orientation and uniform handover, followed by intensive training focused on food safety, quality assurance, and compliance.

Key areas included PRP workshops (including supervisor-level training), HACCP principles, and BRC standards.

Additional modules in Human Resources, Leadership and Management, and Health & Safety ensured graduates were well-prepared to function effectively in professional processing environments.

The programme equipped graduates with both technical and operational knowledge, enabling them to enter processing facilities with confidence and contribute to maintaining high industry standards.



Introducing the Dairy Division:

Expanding Opportunities in 2026



RecruitAgri has officially launched its new Dairy Division for 2026, expanding our existing Farming and Processing programmes to address the immediate, on-the-ground needs of the dairy sector.



As part of this exciting new chapter, we extend a warm welcome to **Brayhill Farm**, **Excelsior Farm**, **Stubbs Dairy** and **Springmeadow**.

Facing Industry Challenges Head-On

The South African dairy industry is currently navigating complex challenges, particularly around strict biosecurity and the ongoing threat of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). Rather than focusing solely on theory, our programme is built entirely around the realities graduates will face in the field.

Equipping Graduates for the Farm

To ensure our graduates do not just arrive on a farm, but arrive ready to contribute safely and effectively our intensive induction process tackles these industry hurdles directly. We equip them with practical tools and hands-on experience before they even step into their placements.

During **induction** and **early training**, graduates are heavily drilled in:

01

Biosecurity & FMD Protocols:

Rigorous training on disease prevention, recognizing early symptoms, and the critical importance of maintaining strict farm boundaries and hygiene.

02

Calf Rearing & Herd Management:

Direct, hands-on experience in daily animal care, nutrition and monitoring overall herd health.

03

Milking Procedures:

Practical immersion in parlor operations, sanitation standards, and proper equipment handling.

04

Food Safety:

Ensuring strict compliance with industry standards from the moment the milk is extracted from the cow.

By directly bridging the gap between their academic qualifications and the demanding realities of a working dairy farm, the new Dairy Division is actively building a resilient, skilled pipeline of professionals ready to support the future of South African agriculture.

Emerging Farmers Training:

Practical and Theoretical Training Across Three Provinces

In partnership with SAMAC, RecruitAgri continued to support emerging macadamia farmers through practical training and mentorship programmes across KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, and Mpumalanga. The initiative focused on improving technical knowledge, orchard productivity, sustainability, and long-term farmer success through a combination of classroom training, field demonstrations, and farm-specific advisory support.

KwaZulu-Natal

Mtubatuba, Upper Tongaat and Ramsgate

Consultant: William Davidson

Training and site visits in KwaZulu-Natal focused on strengthening orchard management and harvesting practices among emerging macadamia growers.

Farmers participated actively despite travelling significant distances, demonstrating a strong commitment to improving their farming operations.

Key focus areas included orchard maintenance, pest and disease management, harvesting methods, post-harvest handling, nut quality, and processor requirements. Farm visits enabled facilitators to assess orchard conditions and provide tailored recommendations specific to each farming operation.

Common challenges identified included irrigation limitations, pest pressure, infrastructure constraints, and access to processing facilities. The programme highlighted the importance of continued technical support, mentorship, and industry engagement to ensure sustainable growth among emerging farmers.



Limpopo

Levubu

Consultant: Dr Elsje Joubert

In Levubu, Limpopo, the programme combined structured technical training with on-farm site visits to strengthen practical production skills and improve orchard performance.

Farmers engaged in discussions and demonstrations covering orchard management, soil health, pest and disease control, crop nutrition, and nut quality improvement aligned with processor standards and industry best practices.

Key challenges identified included water availability, funding limitations, pest management concerns, and access to technical resources. Despite these constraints, Levubu remains a high-potential production area with significant opportunities for growth through continued mentorship, training, and support from industry stakeholders.

Mpumalanga

Alkmaar

Consultant: Roy Porritt

In Alkmaar, Mpumalanga, RecruitAgri delivered practical training supported by farm site visits to reinforce learning and encourage the adoption of best management practices.

Training covered orchard management, soil health, irrigation management, pest monitoring, harvesting practices, and general farm business considerations. Site visits enabled direct engagement with farmers, allowing facilitators to assess orchard performance and provide practical recommendations to address production challenges.

Farmers reported challenges relating to irrigation infrastructure, financial constraints, labour management, and limited access to ongoing technical support. The programme reinforced the value of regular training, peer learning, and on-the-ground advisory services in improving productivity and building resilient farming enterprises.

LOOKING AHEAD

Through the partnership with SAMAC, RecruitAgri remains committed to supporting the development of emerging macadamia farmers by providing practical training, technical mentorship, and industry exposure. These initiatives contribute to strengthening the sustainability, productivity, and transformation of the South African macadamia industry while empowering farmers to build commercially viable agricultural enterprises.



RecruitAgri at the AmberMacs Expo 2026

RecruitAgri was proud to participate in the AmberMacs Macadamia Expo, held from 5 – 6 February 2026, a key industry event bringing together stakeholders across the macadamia value chain.

Our focus at this year's exhibition was geared toward active connection and relationship-building. A major highlight at our stand was the RecruitAgri golf drive, a fun interactive activation that drew a great crowd and proved to be a fantastic icebreaker.

Equally important was our strategic drive to create awareness and recruit new partners. The expo served as an invaluable platform to connect with prospective growers and processors who are looking to strengthen their teams and support youth development within the agricultural sector.

Ultimately, the AmberMacs Expo sparked meaningful discussions around the future of macadamia production and highlighted the essential role that strong, collaborative industry partnerships play in ensuring its long-term sustainability.



WELCOMING OUR NEW PARTNERS FOR 2026

RecruitAgri is thrilled to announce the expansion of our network with new industry partners joining us this year.

By bringing these forward-thinking operations on board, we are directly increasing the geographical footprint and hands-on opportunities available to our current cohort.

We extend a warm welcome to:

- Green Farms – Levubu (Limpopo)
- Levubu Centre for Excellence (Limpopo)
- Nelsrif Boerdery (Mpumalanga)
- Jindilli (Mpumalanga)
- Joramus Boerdery (Mpumalanga)

Site Visits:

January – March 2026

During the first quarter of 2026, RecruitAgri conducted a series of site visits across Limpopo and Mpumalanga as part of its ongoing commitment to supporting both graduates and host partners.

Visits were carried out at Springfield Farm, Red Sun and Centre for Excellence in Limpopo, as well as Jindili, Roodewal, and Langbult in Mpumalanga. These engagements form a critical part of the programme, allowing the team to monitor graduate progress, provide on-site support and strengthen relationships with partner farms.

RecruitAgri remains committed to maintaining strong partnerships and delivering continuous support to both graduates and host sites throughout the programme.



Graduate Activities

Farming



Collected avocado leaf samples to support nutrient analysis and monitor overall tree health within the orchard.



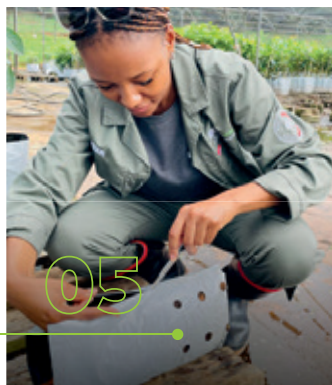
Repaired irrigation pipe leakages and carried out flushing procedures to maintain efficient water distribution systems.

Led and assisted a team of five in weed control operations through herbicide application in the macadamia orchard.



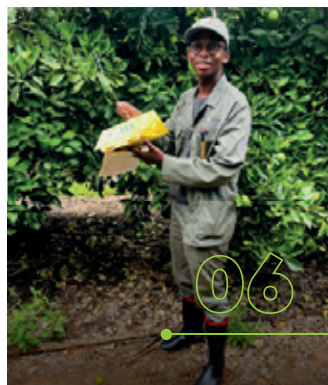
Treated a dry avocado tree by applying micro-fertilizer injections and soil-enhancing treatments to improve soil health and support tree recovery.

Conducted root inspections on plants before dispatch to ensure healthy root development and quality planting material.



05

Conducted scouting activities and maintained insect traps for monitoring pests such as FCM and FMS within the orchard.



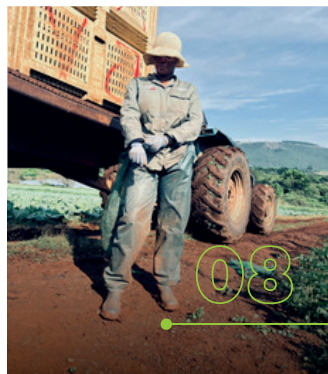
06

Performed soil auguring to assess moisture levels and support informed irrigation planning and management.



07

Participated in harvesting sweet corn, supporting crop collection and preparation activities on the farm.



08

Graduate Activities Dairy

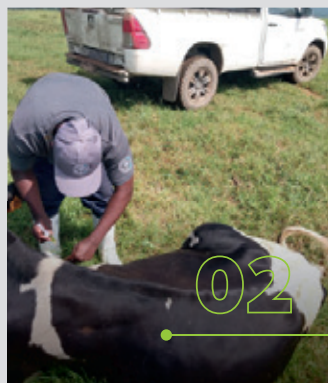


Assisted with feeding heifers, ensuring the animals received the necessary nutrition for healthy growth and development.



01

Assisted in treating an injured heifer by administering antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medication to manage infection, pain, and inflammation.



02

Applied Roundup herbicide and prepared calf housing areas by removing accumulated cow dung to maintain a clean environment for incoming calves.



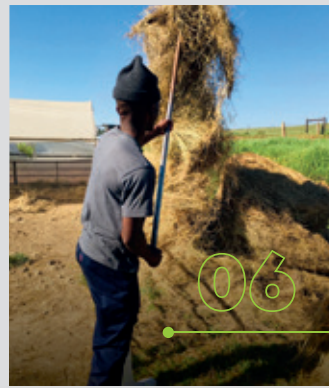
03

Performed microbiological laboratory testing on products, including coliforms, E. coli, total bacterial count, yeast, and mould analysis.



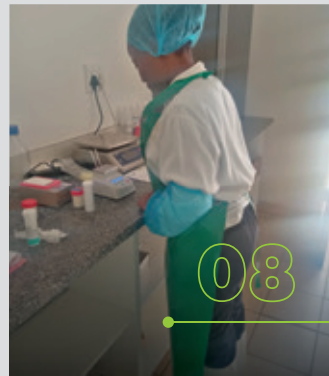
04

Administered Flukazole C oral drench to dairy cows during the dry period to support effective liver fluke prevention and herd health management.



Prepared and placed bedding for calves to ensure a clean, comfortable, and healthy environment.

Assisted with packing and preparing feed for cows as part of daily feeding operations on the farm.



Conducted antibiotic testing as part of quality control and food safety procedures within the dairy environment.





Graduate Activities

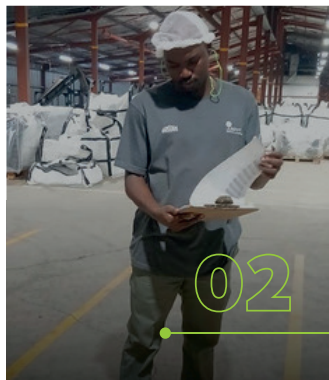
Processing

Conducted moisture content testing on dried macadamia nuts to ensure product quality and compliance with processing standards.



01

Participated in morning side walks and captured laboratory reports for customers, supporting communication and quality reporting processes.



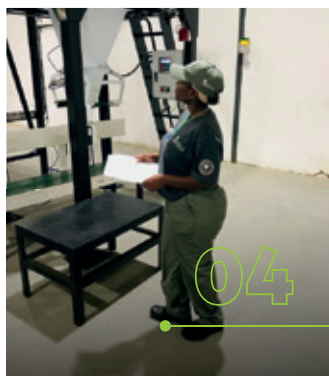
02

Assisted with sizing macadamia nuts as part of the pre-crack analysis process to support quality assessment and processing efficiency.



03

Completed a process flow tour covering the journey of macadamia nuts from receiving to dispatch, while also participating in Basic Safety, HACCP, and BRCGS training.



04

Worked on packing SNAP macadamias, ensuring products were properly sealed and stored in cold rooms to maintain freshness and product quality before distribution.



05

Worked on grower packing analysis and maintained consignment note records to support accurate fruit traceability within the packhouse process.



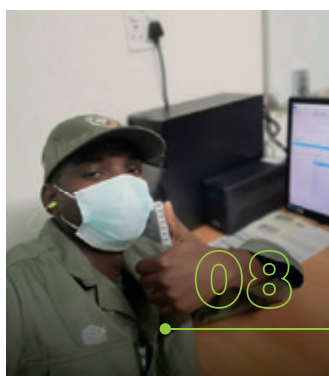
06

Conducted laboratory quality checks including micro sampling, aflatoxin testing, PV & FFA analysis, and kernel cheesebox inspections to identify unsounds, impacted shells, and skin marks.



07

Handled packhouse administrative paperwork, supporting the smooth flow of operational records and documentation.



08

4th Annual RecruitAgri Golf Day

We are looking forward to welcoming you to the **4th Annual RecruitAgri Golf Day**, taking place on Wednesday, 24 June 2026 at White River Country Club.

This much-anticipated event brings together partners, stakeholders, and industry leaders for a day of networking, collaboration, and supporting the next generation of agricultural professionals. Through your participation and sponsorship, you play a direct role in creating opportunities for young people entering the agricultural sector through the RecruitAgri program.

We look forward to sharing a memorable day on the course with you while contributing to the future of agriculture in South Africa.



Online Classroom: Enhancing Agricultural Skills through RecruitAgri

The RecruitAgri Online Classroom offers a flexible and accessible opportunity for individuals in agriculture to strengthen both technical and leadership skills through a 12-month e-learning programme.

For a once-off investment of R3000, participants gain full access to a wide range of modules covering key areas such as macadamia and avocado production, soil management, pruning, disease identification and essential leadership development skills.



Enrol today
for only
R3000
and take the
next step in
your agricultural
journey.

In 2026, RecruitAgri also supported access to the programme through two bursaries awarded to deserving individuals, as well as learning vouchers provided to all our partners and we proudly welcomed an independent external student, further expanding skills development across the sector.

Participants who successfully complete the programme receive a Certificate of Competency, recognising their achievement and newly acquired skills.

With its practical focus and flexible learning structure, the Online Classroom is an ideal opportunity for individuals looking to advance their agricultural knowledge, improve workplace performance and grow their careers.

RecruitAgri proudly awarded two deserving graduates bursaries for the 2026 Online Curriculum Programme, ensuring continued development opportunities for candidates who were not selected for the internship intake.

Behind the Scenes: Office Update

We are proud to confirm the permanent appointment of Lulama Skosana as Administrative Assistant.

Her journey from intern to full-time team member reflects RecruitAgri's commitment to developing talent beyond the agricultural field.

Lulama's ability to provide support in administration, to all team members, will prove to add huge value in streamlining processes and efficiency of tasks.



Inside the Classroom

Macadamia Growing

This lecture introduces the fundamentals of macadamia production, covering the crop lifecycle, orchard establishment, and key growing practices.



Macadamia Harvesting

The lecture explores best practices for macadamia harvesting, with emphasis on quality management, harvest timing, and postharvest handling.

Avocado Growing

This session focuses on the principles of avocado production, including orchard management, sustainability, and key growth requirements.



Avocado Harvesting

This session covers avocado harvesting techniques, fruit maturity testing, and best practices for maintaining produce quality.

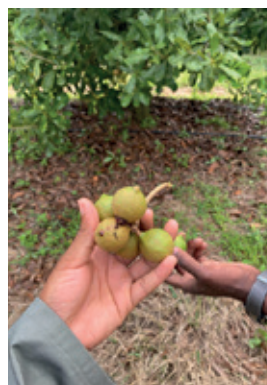
HR:

Managing Poor Work Performance

This lecture equips graduates with practical workplace management skills, focusing on communication, performance management, and corrective processes.

Dairy Lecture: Introduction to Dairy Farming

This lecture introduces key dairy farming principles, including ruminant digestion, feed processing, and basic herd management.



What Lies Ahead

As RecruitAgri continues to grow and expand its impact, the second quarter of 2026 promises a dynamic period of engagement, learning and collaboration across the agricultural sector.

Building on the successful launch of the Dairy Division, ongoing training programmes and active workplace placements, RecruitAgri remains committed to developing skilled, future-ready agricultural professionals across farming, processing and dairy divisions.



Key Events in Q2 2026

The upcoming quarter will feature several important activities, including:

01

RecruitAgri Golf Day 2026, bringing together partners and stakeholders in support of youth development

02

Emerging Farmers Training programmes, continuing practical skills development across regions

03

Site visits, providing ongoing support and monitoring for graduates in the field

04

University engagements, strengthening academic and industry collaboration

05

Participation in the Young Farmers Indaba, connecting with emerging agricultural leaders and industry players

These engagements will play a vital role in strengthening partnerships, enhancing practical learning opportunities, and supporting graduate development across the sector. RecruitAgri looks forward to another impactful quarter of growth, collaboration, and empowerment as it continues building the next generation of agricultural leaders in South Africa.



INDUSTRY PARTNERS



GROWER PARTNERS



PROCESSING PARTNERS



PROCESSING INDUSTRY PARTNER



DAIRY PARTNERS



COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

