



Media Advisory

02 August 2016

For Immediate Release

RE: THE FREE STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT HOSTS THE PROVINCIAL FEMALE ENTREPRENEUR AWARDS

This year marks the 17th year since the existence of the Provincial Female Entrepreneur Awards which will be hosted in Welkom on the 05th of August 2016.

The awards aim to acknowledge to encourage the participation of women, young women and women with disabilities in the sector. It's also to underline the fact that women play a significant role in food security, job creation, economic growth and poverty alleviation.

This year's awards will held under the theme "***Reaffirming the commitment towards women empowerment in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries sector***".

The awards ceremony at provincial and national levels take place during Women's Month in August to accentuate the sector's input towards the broader gender transformation agenda.

The entries for the Provincial competition opened in February this year and closed in the month of May. Hundreds of entries were received at district level, followed by an adjudication process undertaken by a team consisting of Agriculturalists, farmers' unions, officials and farmers. The nominees will compete in the following categories.

- **Best Female Worker in the Sector**
Acknowledges women who do basic work in agriculture, forestry and fisheries have minimum levels of education (if at all), that the nature of the job they do is physically demanding, subjects them to extreme conditions at times and offers very limited exposure to development opportunities.
- **Best Subsistence Producer in the Sector**
The category refers to self-sufficiency production in which the producer focuses on producing enough to feed themselves and their families. The output is solely for own consumption with little or no surplus for trade.
- **Top Entrepreneur in the Sector: Smallholder**
The category refers to producers who operate according to commercial norms but who have not reached the threshold at which they are obliged to register for VAT or personal income taxes.

- **Top Entrepreneur in Sector: Processing**
They must demonstrate the actual processing activities which have been in progress for at least a period of two years.
- **Top Entrepreneur: Commercial**
The enterprise must demonstrate the actual activities which have been in progress for at least a period of two years. The group or individuals should have defined membership and roles within a properly constituted and registered entity.
- **Top Entrepreneur in the Sector: Export Markets**
Must produce for export markets
- **MEC's Special Award**
This category offers an opportunity for the MEC to acknowledge the contribution made by young women and women with disabilities who are entrepreneurs or employed in operational activities of the sector. Young women to be considered for nomination should be between the ages of 18 and 35.
- **Overall Winner**
Look at the journey that has been undertaken to achieve goals despite the challenges experienced. (Aspects such as challenges overcome, perseverance, endurance, resilience, self-starter attributes, initiatives taken to mobilise resources, including funding and acquiring knowledge to set up and or develop the enterprise/entity, will be considered.)
Demonstration of the extent of contribution to the empowerment of others and sharing of knowledge (e.g. giving motivational talks, etc.).

Winners of provincial competitions will compete at national level at a Gala Dinner, which is hosted by the National Department in partnership with provinces, sponsors and sector stakeholders.

The programme initially had four award categories (viz. Top Producer for Export Markets, Top Producer for National Markets, Top Producer for Informal Markets and Top Producer for Household Use) and these were gradually increased to respond to the increasing participation of women in different aspects of the sector. The programme now has nine categories.

Details of the event are as follows:

Venue: Ferdi Meyer Hall, Welkom
Date: 05 August 2016
Time: 18:00
RSVP: senate@fs.agric.za
Tel: 051 861 8311/ 073 615 2023