

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Food security should be declared a national asset**

The export of agricultural products such as wine, maize and citrus is one of the few resources that still contributes positively to growth in the South African economy – and the grain value chain plays an integral role in this.

"South African agricultural producers' record exports during last year exceeded the import value of agricultural products and food. Food and beverages worth R177,8 billion were exported in 2021. This is 5,2% more than in 2020, which means that goods worth R75,4 billion more was exported than imported," said Mr Hein Rehr, president of the Grain Handling Organisation of Southern Africa (GOSA), at the organisation's recent symposium in Mossel Bay.

According to Rehr, GOSA's members had a share somewhere in the exports, whether in the grading of maize, its storage, trading, financing or transport. The estimated current maize crop of 14,6 million tonnes – and the annual consumption of 11,8 million tonnes – indicate that exports will take place again this year. Given the war between Russia and Ukraine, South Africa may not experience any shortages in the short term, but the crisis is sure to have an impact on food price inflation as prices are already rising worldwide.

"Agriculture is still keeping South Africa's doors open. With about 30 million people receiving their income from the state, 36 000 farmers and workers feed South Africa's 58 million residents every day. The government of the day should classify food security – just like Eskom – as a national asset," Rehr added.

#### ***37th symposium***

GOSA's 37th symposium was held on 17 and 18 March at Diaz Strand Hotel in Mossel Bay. The speakers at the symposium were Dr Roelof Botha (economist), Mr Theo Venter (independent political and policy specialist), Mr Wessel Lemmer (AGBIZ Grain) and Mr Benoit Le Roy (SA Water Chamber). Grain-specific breakaway sessions were facilitated by Messrs Pieter Fourie (Eko Design), Japie Snyman (Olam SA), Wayne Rosewall (Premier Milling) and Ms Alta Swanepoel (Alta Swanepoel and Associates). A GOSA business breakfast was addressed by Prof Jannie Rossouw (Wits Business School).

#### ***New season begins***

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the GOSA symposium and annual general meeting – which has been held annually since 1980 – could not take place, but need-driven workshops were successfully presented online. In addition to the symposium, GOSA plans four workshops per year, two of which will be virtual and two in person. The annual event of GOSA Cape will also continue to take place.

"GOSA is proud of its name, its management, its members, honorary members and what has been achieved since 1980. "Therefore, it can rightly claim certain reservations to protect its identity and integrity in the form of laid down rules," Rehr said.

In line with GOSA's future focus, a brand new GOSA emblem was introduced during the symposium. A modern depiction of the GOSA lettering is rounded off with a green leaf that symbolizes growth as well as the slogan: "Connecting the grain value chain."

#### GOSA 1:

*GOSA president, Hein Rehr (second from the right), with some of the speakers at the Grain Handling Organisation's 2022-symposium (from left): Prof Jannie Rossouw (Wits Business School), Dr Roelof Botha (economist) and Theo Venter (independent political and policy specialist).*

#### GOSA 2:

*The GOSA board was unanimously re-elected at the annual general meeting. Front (from the left): Willem Strauss, Anzel Oosthuizen (Secretary), Hein Rehr (president), Marco Pretorius (treasurer) and George du Plessis (GOSA Cape president). Back: Lukas Swarts, Stefan van Staden, Ferdinand Meyer, Johan van Rensburg (vice-president), Dries Dannhauser and Tom Terblanche.*

#### **ENDS**

**ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE GRAIN HANDLING ORGANISATION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA (GOSA)  
BY INFOWORKS ON 28 MARCH 2022.**

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