

Milestone Alert: 37 Years of Unbroken Good Governance!



The Board of Directors and Management team officially presented Casidra's 37th consecutive unqualified audit report for the 2025/26 financial year to the Executive Authority, Dr. Ivan Meyer, Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism, during the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held in Paarl. Since October 1989, Casidra has maintained this flawless record of financial transparency and clean governance, underscoring our deep commitment to driving rural development in the Western Cape. As we look ahead, we do so with a renewed purpose, building on our progress, strengthening partnerships, and making a meaningful contribution to the agricultural sector.

As we reflect on the past financial year, one message stands out: development is measured not only by what we build, but by the lives and communities we help strengthen. Through our work, Casidra continues to create livelihoods, strengthen local economies, improve food security, protect natural resources and build more resilient communities across the Western Cape.

Despite fiscal constraints, climate-related pressures, infrastructure challenges and growing service delivery demands, Casidra remained focused on converting resources and partnerships into tangible development outcomes. Our programmes span agricultural development and food security, infrastructure and employment, enterprise and economic development, and environmental and natural resource management.

Partnerships remain central to achieving sustainable development. Our collaboration with government, communities, municipalities, development agencies, academia and the private sector continue

to open opportunities for innovative solutions. Our proposed ecological infrastructure programme with CapeNature, focused on catchment rehabilitation, invasive alien vegetation clearing and landscape restoration, is one example of how collaboration can support environmental resilience, water security, biodiversity and employment.

While the operating environment remains challenging, Casidra continues to strengthen its governance, financial management and operational resilience. Our record of unqualified audit opinions reflects our commitment to sound governance, while audit findings provide opportunities to further strengthen internal controls, compliance and accountability.

Looking ahead, our focus remains on sustainability, world-class service delivery, a winning culture and meaningful stakeholder engagement. We will continue pursuing partnerships and opportunities that expand our impact and contribute to a more sustainable Western Cape.

Our greatest strength remains our people. I thank every Casidra employee for their professionalism, resilience and commitment, and extend my appreciation to our Board, Shareholder, clients, partners, beneficiaries and stakeholders for their continued support.

Our ambition is simple: to turn opportunities into impact, strengthen communities and help build a more sustainable and resilient future for generations to come.

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New Dairy Facility at Amalienstein Strengthens the Farm's Future

The Amalienstein Farm has reached an exciting milestone with the completion of its new state-of-the-art dairy facility earlier this year, which marks a significant step forward in strengthening sustainable dairy production and improving operational efficiency.

The successful completion of this key project has been made possible through an investment by Lactalis. The new facility is expected to improve milking efficiency, enhance animal handling and strengthen the farm's ability to maintain high standards of milk production, thus creating a stronger foundation for future growth.

According to Casidra's Senior Project Manager: Farm Support and Development, Riaan Strydom, the project represents much more than an infrastructure upgrade.

"The completion of this project marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for Amalienstein Farm. With the right infrastructure now in place, we can focus on expanding the herd, improving productivity and securing the long-term sustainability of the dairy operation, ensuring that the farm remains competitive for years to come," said Strydom.

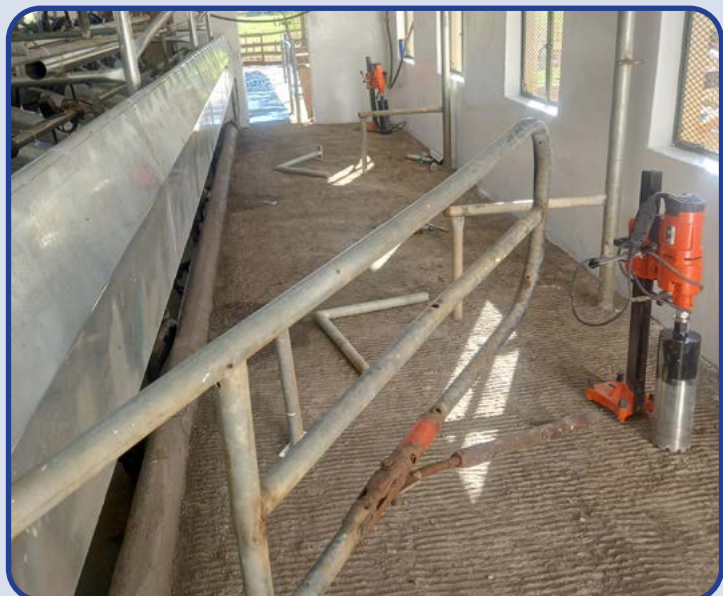
The new dairy facility comes at a promising time for the farm. As the effects of the drought have subsided, improved rainfall has restored water availability, allowing winter planting to resume effectively. Plans are underway to strengthen the herd through the introduction of quality Jersey cattle, while ongoing improvements in feed production and herd development will support healthier livestock and more consistent milk production in the upcoming seasons.

As the farm prepares for this next phase of growth, protecting the health of its livestock remains a top priority. Following the recent Foot-and-Mouth Disease outbreak in the province, Amalienstein Farm strengthened its biosecurity measures and vaccinated its existing herd to minimise risk. These proactive steps provide confidence as the farm prepares to introduce new livestock, whilst maintaining the health and wellbeing of its animals.

"Every farming season presents its own challenges, but what is important is how we respond. We are grateful for the improved conditions and the work that has gone into strengthening the farm and we are entering the spring season with confidence. The investment in the new dairy facility has positioned us well for the opportunities that lie ahead," Strydom added.

Behind the farm's continued progress is a dedicated team of Casidra employees, supported by two weekend workers, whose commitment and expertise continue to drive the success of the dairy operation every day.

With modern infrastructure now in place and favourable conditions supporting recovery, Amalienstein Farm is entering a new chapter of growth. The new dairy facility not only strengthens the farm's dairy operation but also reflects Casidra's commitment to investing in sustainable agriculture and building resilient farming enterprises across the Western Cape.





Riverbank Stabilisation Project Strengthens Climate Resilience at Kersgat Farm



A major riverbank stabilisation project aimed at protecting valuable agricultural land and strengthening climate resilience has been successfully completed at Kersgat Farm along the Pietersieliekloof River in the Overberg region.

Implemented by Casidra through its Environmental Sustainability Programme and funded by the Western Cape Department of Agriculture (WCDoA), the project reached completion on 18 June 2026, marking an important milestone in the restoration and protection of the river system. All activities were executed according to environmental best-practice standards while balancing ecological protection with the needs of the farming operation.

The intervention was necessitated by severe flood events that altered the river's natural course, resulting in extensive erosion along the riverbanks. As the damage progressed, productive grazing land was lost, farming infrastructure was placed at risk, and the long-term sustainability of agricultural activities on the farm became increasingly vulnerable.

Recognising the urgency of the situation, Casidra worked closely with the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, landowner and beneficiary Mr Louis Oktober, environmental specialists and the appointed contractor to implement a comprehensive stabilisation solution. The project focused on restoring the integrity of the riverbanks, reducing the risk of future erosion and safeguarding agricultural assets against future flood-related impacts.

In addition to its environmental benefits, the project delivered meaningful socio-economic value to the surrounding community.



Approximately 700 person-days of employment were created during implementation, providing income and skills development opportunities for local labourers from Elim and neighbouring areas. This contribution aligns with the Western Cape Government's commitment to promoting economic growth and creating sustainable employment opportunities in rural communities.

For the beneficiary of the project, Mr Louis Oktober, the successful completion of the project brings renewed confidence in the future of his farming operations.

"The flood damage had a significant impact on the farm, and we were concerned about the continued loss of productive land. The completion of this project has restored stability to the affected areas and provides reassurance that the farm is better protected against future flooding. We are grateful to the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, Casidra and all those involved for their support and commitment," said Oktober.

The project demonstrates the importance of proactive environmental interventions in protecting agricultural resources and supporting climate adaptation efforts. By restoring degraded landscapes and strengthening the resilience of farming enterprises, initiatives such as these contribute to the long-term sustainability of the Western Cape's agricultural sector.

Through strategic partnerships and targeted environmental investments, Casidra continues to play a leading role in advancing sustainable land management, protecting natural resources and supporting resilient rural economies across the province.

Dam Rehabilitation Completed at Laasterivier Farm, Montagu

Casidra's Environmental Team has once again delivered exceptional results with the successful rehabilitation of an earth dam embankment at Laasterivier Farm in Montagu.

The upgraded dam, with a capacity of approximately 5,000m³, now features a reinforced embankment standing about 5 metres high, stretching 114 metres in length, and a crest width of roughly 3.5 metres, significantly improving both its stability and functionality.

The scope of work included dewatering the dam to enable safe access for rehabilitation, clearing vegetation within the work area, removing unsuitable silt and compromised material, and stabilising the upstream slope with protective measures. The project also saw the installation of a new water pump, further enhancing the dam's operational efficiency.

This milestone reflects Casidra's ongoing commitment to sustainable infrastructure development and environmental stewardship in support of the agricultural sector.





Heidelberg Farmers Receive Agricultural Implements Worth Over R800 000



Heidelberg, Western Cape: On 28 May 2026, Casidra welcomed the Chief Director of Agriculture at the Western Cape Department of Agriculture (WCDa), Michael Brinkhuis, to officially hand over agricultural implements valued at more than R800 000 to Saambou Voedsel Produsente, a lucerne farming project in Heidelberg. This critical financial support was made possible through the WCDa's Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP), with implementation managed by Casidra.

The handover marked a significant milestone for the Heidelberg beneficiary farmers, many of whom depend on agricultural support initiatives to strengthen and expand their farming operations.

The Chairperson of the Co-operative and beneficiary of the support programme, Mr Johannes Roussouw, delivered the vote of thanks. Overcome with emotion, he expressed heartfelt gratitude for the support received.

"We acknowledge the support we received from the WCDa and Casidra. This assistance will enable us to achieve our dream of running a successful farming operation," said Roussouw.

Addressing attendees, Brinkhuis welcomed the handover initiative and reaffirmed the WCDa's commitment to supporting emerging and new generation farmers across the Western Cape through the Department's various agricultural programmes.

"Our intention is to contribute and establish an enabling environment while collaborating with other stakeholders to providing resources and economic opportunities to our farmers. These resources however come with a responsibility to be productively utilised by the recipients to increase their production outputs while progressively building sustainable farming enterprises," Brinkhuis said.

The event concluded with a networking session over a sponsored lunch, providing farmers, stakeholders, and officials with an opportunity to engage further and strengthen relationships within the agricultural community.



Minister Ivan Meyer Officially Opens and Hands Over the Nuweberg Footbridge



Minister Meyer during the handover of Nuweberg footbridge

The wait is finally over for the Viljoen's Pass community as the Western Cape Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism, Dr Ivan Meyer, officially opened and handed over the newly completed Nuweberg Footbridge during a ribbon-cutting ceremony held on 5 August 2026 in the Hottentots-Holland Nature Reserve between Grabouw and Villiersdorp.

The completion of the Nuweberg Footbridge marks a significant milestone in restoring safe and reliable pedestrian access across the Palmiet River for residents who have endured the loss of this critical crossing since the previous bridge was destroyed during severe flooding. The newly completed 58.2 metre long, six-span bridge features a 1.5 metre width and a durable structural steel superstructure supported by reinforced concrete foundations.

Implemented by Casidra on behalf of CapeNature, construction of the new footbridge commenced in May 2025 under the leadership of Programme Manager, Jacques Swanepoel.

Speaking at the official handover, Swanepoel said the completion of the project demonstrates the value of resilient infrastructure in protecting and serving rural communities.

"We are extremely proud to see this important project reach completion and officially handed over to the community. Safety has remained our highest priority throughout the project. Constructed using modular steel sections and reinforced foundations, the bridge has been designed for long-term durability while minimising environmental impact. More importantly, it restores essential connectivity, improves public safety and enhances the daily lives of residents who rely on this crossing. This is a significant milestone in strengthening rural infrastructure and community resilience," said Swanepoel.

Officially opening the bridge, Minister Dr Ivan Meyer welcomed the completion of the project and highlighted the importance of investing in infrastructure that supports both people and economic development.



"Today we are not simply opening a bridge, we are restoring opportunity, reconnecting communities and investing in a safer future for the people of Viljoen's Pass. Infrastructure such as the Nuweberg Footbridge enables access to education, employment, healthcare and essential services while strengthening the resilience of our rural communities. This project demonstrates what can be achieved through strong partnerships and a shared commitment to sustainable development", Minister alluded.

Casidra's Chief Executive Officer, Dr Keith du Plessis, expressed his sincere appreciation to CapeNature for its confidence in our project management expertise.

"We extend our sincere gratitude to CapeNature for entrusting Casidra with the implementation of this important rehabilitation project. Your confidence in our project management capabilities is deeply appreciated. I also wish to commend our Environmental Sustainability team for their professionalism, commitment and exceptional execution of this project. Their dedication ensured that the bridge was delivered on schedule, demonstrating the expertise and excellence that define our organisation."

Wilfred Williams, Manager: Tourism Development at CapeNature, commended Casidra, the contractor and everyone involved in the project for their collective effort in delivering the new footbridge. He acknowledged that the construction process presented several challenges, but said that through teamwork, commitment and dedication, the project reached its intended outcome.

The successful completion of the Nuweberg Footbridge reflects the strength of collaboration between government and its implementing partners in delivering infrastructure that improves safety, restores connectivity and contributes to sustainable rural development across the Western Cape.



Siyazama Klipland Boerdery Grows from Strength to Strength



Minister Ivan Meyer with the farmworkers



Targeted investment and partnerships are helping a De Doorns table grape farm increase production, create jobs and build a sustainable agricultural enterprise.

Siyazama Klipland Boerdery, an emerging table grape farming enterprise in De Doorns, is demonstrating how targeted investment, practical support and strong partnerships can contribute to agricultural growth and economic opportunity.

Western Cape Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism, Dr Ivan Meyer, visited the farm on 24 August 2026 to see first-hand the progress made by the enterprise and the impact of government support.

Situated in the Hex River Valley, Siyazama Klipland Boerdery covers 43 hectares, with 23.71 hectares currently planted with vineyards. Since 2021, the farm has recorded significant growth as it works towards reaching its full production potential.

Production has increased from 68 443 cartons of table grapes in 2021 to 150 000 cartons in 2025. This year, the farm harvested approximately 164 000 cartons, reflecting continued growth in its production capacity.

For shareholder Alec Abrahams, the progress of the farm represents more than increased production.

Many of the shareholders have deep roots in the De Doorns agricultural community. Some grew up in families whose parents worked on table grape farms, while others have spent years working in the industry themselves. They are now using their experience and knowledge to build an enterprise that creates opportunities and contributes to the local economy.

The farm currently provides employment to 25 permanent workers and approximately 120 seasonal workers during the harvesting season.

“I am happy that our farm has created 25 permanent jobs and approximately 120 seasonal jobs. In essence, this puts food on the table for many families,” said Abrahams.

The growth of Siyazama Klipland Boerdery has been supported through an investment of approximately R2 million from the Western Cape Department of Agriculture’s Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP), with Casidra serving as the project implementer.

The support has focused on addressing practical challenges that affect the farm’s productivity and long-term sustainability. Among the key deliverables is a 6.8-ton truck, which will improve the transportation of farmworkers and support the movement of agricultural inputs and produce.

The farm’s in-field irrigation system has also been upgraded through the installation of a remote management application. The smart irrigation technology will assist the farm to manage water more efficiently while supporting sustainable farming practices and improved productivity.

Dr Meyer said investments in emerging farmers are essential to building a stronger and more inclusive agricultural sector.

“When we invest in emerging farmers, we are not only investing in vineyards and infrastructure; we are investing in people, livelihoods and the future of agriculture in the Western Cape. Our goal must be to help farmers move from potential to production, and from production to sustainable growth.”

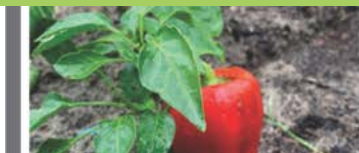
The Minister’s visit highlighted the role that partnerships between government, implementing agencies and farmers can play in creating an enabling environment for agricultural development.

Casidra CEO, Dr Keith du Plessis, said the progress made at Siyazama Klipland Boerdery shows the importance of ensuring that development investment translates into practical support and measurable results.

“Through continued partnerships and targeted investment, Casidra remains committed to empowering emerging farmers and strengthening agricultural development in the Western Cape. Our role is to help turn development investment into practical support that enables farmers to become more productive, sustainable and economically viable.”

As Siyazama Klipland Boerdery continues its turnaround journey, the focus remains on building a sustainable and independent agricultural enterprise that can expand its contribution to employment, food production and economic development in De Doorns.

The farm’s progress is a reminder that when investment is matched with commitment, experience and the right partnerships, emerging farmers can move beyond potential and build businesses that create lasting value for their communities and the agricultural sector.



Empowered Women, Empowered Communities: The Story of Ubumbano LoMama



What began as an unused piece of land in a church yard is taking root as a symbol of unity, resilience and possibility for five women in the Mfuleni community who came together to establish Ubumbano LoMama Garden Project. These women who belongs to the Zion Church have turned a shared vision into an initiative aimed at strengthening food security, supporting vulnerable families and creating opportunities for their community.

The project's name, Ubumbano LoMama, meaning "unity of women", captures the spirit that drives the initiative. Many of the women are unemployed and come from disadvantaged circumstances, yet they have chosen to use the resources available to them to create something that can benefit others.

Their efforts resonate strongly with this year's Women's Month theme, "Empowered Women, Empower the Nation."

Rather than allowing limited opportunities to define their circumstances, the women identified the church grounds as an opportunity to establish a productive food garden. Their vision extends beyond growing vegetables. They hope the garden will become a sustainable source of food and income while creating opportunities for unemployed church members and supporting vulnerable households in the wider Mfuleni community.

The initiative has received funding support from the Western Cape Department of Agriculture (WCDoA) through the Ilima Letsema Funding Programme, with Casidra responsible for implementation. The funding has enabled the establishment of essential infrastructure and resources to strengthen agricultural production and improve the garden's sustainability.

According to the project leader, Nomonde Hinana, the garden represents an opportunity to turn collective effort into tangible support for people in need.

"Every produce will be used to feed the community, while some will be sold, with the profits intended to support the church and the pre-school. We also want to assist our unemployed church members," she said.



The vision is therefore, about more than cultivation. It is about creating a platform through which women can contribute to their community, generate opportunities and help others become more self-reliant.

The Casidra's Project Implementer, Bevon Anthony, alluded that this project also demonstrates why agricultural development must be approached as an integrated system.

"Farming is a collective. You cannot just fund one element and not fund the other. When starting a project, you need land, water and other essential resources. Without these, there can be no sustainable farming project," said Anthony.

As part of the Casidra support provided, "We supplied and installed the irrigation infrastructure, as well as a rainwater-harvesting tank, which will enable these women to look after their food garden and strengthen production," Anthony added.

The completion of the Ubumbano LoMama project is not an ending but a beginning. The women now have the infrastructure and resources to build on what they have started and pursue their broader vision of food production, income generation and community support.

The story of Ubumbano LoMama is a reminder that meaningful development does not always begin with large-scale interventions. Sometimes, it starts with five women, a piece of land and a shared determination to make a difference.

When women are empowered, the benefits extend beyond the individual. Families, organisations and communities can grow alongside them.

With every seed planted, every harvest produced and every person supported, Ubumbano LoMama is demonstrating that empowered women can become catalysts for stronger, more resilient and self-reliant communities.





Vukuhambe's Garden Cultivates Independence for People with Disabilities



The Vukuhambe Disabled Centre in Gugulethu is using agriculture to create opportunities for people with disabilities to develop practical skills, strengthen their independence and work towards sustainable livelihoods.

Established in 1987, the centre was founded to empower people with disabilities by providing skills and opportunities that can help them earn an income and participate meaningfully in their communities. Members receive skills development support and are referred to employment opportunities where possible.

Through a partnership between Casidra and the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, the centre has established a 15m x 9m food garden. Members are receiving specialist gardening training and adaptive tools designed to enable people with disabilities, including wheelchair users, to participate actively in food production.

Casidra Project Implementer Mongami Maqaqa said the initiative aims to increase food production while developing practical skills and creating opportunities for income generation.

“The garden is fostering independence and ensuring that people living with disabilities have a seat at the table in the agricultural economy. More than vegetables, this garden is growing independence, inclusion and economic participation. It is dignity and food security in action,” said Maqaqa.

Members are involved in the full gardening cycle, from planting and maintaining crops to harvesting and preparing produce for sale. Vegetables will be sold to residents in Gugulethu and surrounding communities, while some of the produce will support the centre's soup kitchen.

The centre also plans to expand its gardening activities and establish a soup kitchen that can serve the wider community, strengthening its contribution to local food security.

Centre leader Nomntu Mqandzi said the garden also provides an opportunity to introduce children and young people to agriculture and demonstrate how productive activities can contribute positively to their communities.

“The work at Vukuhambe extends beyond gardening. Members are involved in various activities, including recycling and collecting cans, reflecting the centre's hands-on approach to keeping people active, engaged and equipped with practical skills,” said Mqandzi. Maqaqa said the commitment and teamwork demonstrated by members were among the aspects that stood out during the project.

“The willingness to work and the teamwork at Vukuhambe is notable. The centre is always hands-on, with members involved in various activities, including gardening, recycling and collecting cans. Looking at the number of people involved, I would love to see the centre have access to a bigger plot in the next few years, allowing them to expand production and create an even more sustainable impact,” he said.

For Vukuhambe, the garden represents more than food production. It is a practical platform for skills development, economic participation and greater independence, while creating opportunities for people with disabilities to contribute to their community and build sustainable livelihoods.





Seeds for Life



Casidra always welcomes the founding members of Seeds for Life, to showcase their innovative range of seedling products to our CEO, Dr Keith du Plessis, and Project Manager, Clint Frazenburg.

From humble beginnings as a small urban organic farm to becoming an innovative agricultural enterprise, Seeds for Life's journey is a testament to the power of resilience, innovation, and the impact of strategic support.

A key highlight of the presentation was the organisation's farmer aggregation model, which sources fresh produce from urban, backyard, and smallholder farmers across the Western Cape. This innovative approach enables farmers to access reliable markets while ensuring product quality, food safety, and traceability throughout the value chain.

Casidra remains committed to empowering farmers and agri-entrepreneurs who are creating economic opportunities, strengthening food security, and building a more resilient and sustainable agricultural sector across the Western Cape.

"We support farmers by strengthening food safety systems, promoting regulatory compliance, and creating opportunities that add value to their produce. We welcome this engagement and look forward to exploring future collaboration opportunities that will enable more farmers to grow their businesses and access formal markets," said Dr Keith du Plessis.

The seeds have been planted, and this is only the beginning. Stay tuned as we share more exciting milestones and developments from this inspiring partnership.

Meet the Woman Entrepreneur Growing Opportunities at Tri-Toad Nursery



Philippi, Western Cape – Sheena Paulus, the entrepreneur behind Tri-Toad Nursery, is using her business to create opportunities for women while contributing to the growth of agriculture in her community.

Through Tri-Toad Nursery, Sheena provides women with practical skills in plant production and nursery management. Her team is mainly made up of women who are trained to select seeds and soil, care for seedlings and nurture plants as they grow.

Sheena's work in agriculture has earned her several awards and recognition in the sector. She attributes her success to the team that supports her vision for the growth of Tri-Toad Nursery.

"My success as a woman entrepreneur is driven by my team, who support my vision and mission to take Tri-Toad to greater heights. Every day, I ensure that my team, most of whom are women, is equipped with the skills they need because their knowledge and dedication are what make this business possible," says Sheena.



Skills development is an important part of the nursery's work. Through workshops and training, women working at Tri-Toad are gaining practical knowledge that can help them participate in the agricultural value chain and contribute to sustainable food production.

The nursery produces seedlings for commercial growers while providing women with opportunities to gain experience and develop their skills in agriculture. Tri-Toad Nursery's partnership with Casidra supports the growth of the business and its contribution to women's economic participation in agriculture and entrepreneurship.

For Sheena, running a successful business is also about creating opportunities for others.

Her journey as a woman entrepreneur demonstrates how skills development, determination and access to opportunities can help women build sustainable businesses and contribute to their communities.

A Garden of Courage Cultivating Hope in Blue Downs



In a community where crime, unemployment and economic hardship are part of everyday life for many residents, a flourishing vegetable garden in Blue Downs is offering something far more valuable than fresh produce, hope.

The Ubuntu Circle of Courage Garden, established by passionate community member Jantjie Booysen, is transforming a once-simple food garden into a platform for empowerment, skills development and community resilience.

The initiative demonstrates what can be achieved when determination, community spirit and the right support come together. Recognising the garden's potential, the Western Cape Department of Agriculture (WCDoA), through its project implementer, Casidra, provided agricultural infrastructure and technical support to strengthen the project and contribute to improved food security in the community.

According to the Casidra's Food Security Project Implementer, Bevon Anthony, the garden has helped change the way people see their circumstances.

"What I look forward to most is seeing the project continue to grow after the funding has ended. It speaks volumes about the beneficiary's commitment and their ability to turn something as small as a food garden into the next big thing in the Blue Downs community," says Anthony.

The Project beneficiary, Booysen, alluded that the support received from Casidra has provided a strong foundation for the garden's success. She says the assistance went well beyond the provision of physical resources, highlighting the value of the guidance and continued engagement provided throughout the project.

"We are very impressed by the Project Implementer, Bevon Anthony, who consistently went the extra mile for us, offering guidance, practical advice and ongoing follow-up long after implementation. We can confidently say that without the support and continued engagement, this project would not have achieved the success it enjoys today," says Booysen.



Booyesen emphasised that, his philosophy is centred on empowerment rather than dependency. "The garden is not simply about producing vegetables; it is about equipping people with knowledge, skills and opportunities that can help them build more sustainable livelihoods. Our approach is not a hand-out, but a hand-up. Through the garden, we are able to feed vulnerable families while equipping people with skills, restoring dignity and creating opportunities for a better future," Booysen adds.

The garden's impact is also reaching the younger generation. The organisation has partnered with two local high schools, Malibu High School and Blackheath High School with the aim of encouraging learners to participate in maintaining the garden.

Their involvement is helping to strengthen a sense of community ownership while exposing young people to the possibilities of agriculture. Through hands-on participation, learners are gaining practical experience while developing an appreciation for responsibility, teamwork and environmental stewardship.

More importantly, the garden is creating a space where young people can see themselves as contributors to positive change in their own neighbourhood.

The Ubuntu Circle of Courage Garden is, therefore, about much more than vegetables growing in the soil. It is a story of resilience, dignity and collective action, a reminder that, even in communities facing significant challenges, small seeds of opportunity can grow into something much bigger.

With continued commitment from the community and support from partners such as WCDoA and Casidra, the garden is cultivating not only food, but also confidence, skills and hope for a more sustainable future in Blue Downs.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & QUATERLY HIGHLIGHTS



Casidra Strengthens Agricultural Partnerships at Inaugural South Africa–Italy Agriculture Business Forum



Dr Mogale Sebopetsa with the former Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Mr John Steenhuisen and other delegates during the SA - Italy Agri Business Forum



On 09 June 2026, Casidra joined agricultural leaders, policymakers and industry stakeholders at the inaugural South Africa–Italy Agriculture Business Forum, held in Cape Town.

Hosted by South Africa's Minister of Agriculture, Honourable John Steenhuisen, and Italy's Minister of Agriculture, Francesco Lollobrigida, the forum marked a significant step towards strengthening bilateral cooperation in agriculture and agri-business development.

Held under the theme, "South Africa and Italy Building Resilient, Value-Added Agri-Business Partnerships: From the Soil to the Shelf," the event brought together representatives from government, industry, research institutions and development organisations to explore opportunities for collaboration, innovation and sustainable growth across the agricultural value chain.

Casidra's participation highlighted its commitment to supporting initiatives that contribute to agricultural advancement, rural development and inclusive economic growth. The event also offered an opportunity to strengthen strategic partnerships that can help unlock new opportunities for farmers, agri-businesses and rural communities.

By taking part in the forum, Casidra reaffirmed its dedication to fostering sustainable agricultural development and building resilient rural economies that create lasting benefits for communities across the Western Cape.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & QUATERLY HIGHLIGHTS



Engaging Farmers on Finance and Growth at African Farming Workshop in Worcester



On the 16 July 2026 Casidra shared some insightful information to spotlight its mandate to drive sustainable agricultural development across the Western Cape to the local farmers during the African Farming Finance for Farmers Workshop in Worcester.

The workshop provided a platform for financial institutions, government agencies and farmers to connect on funding, risk management and enterprise growth.

Representing Casidra, Experience Matshediso the PR/Marketing and Communications Manager, delivered key messages on how the entity assists, develops and supports emerging farmers. "We encourage emerging farmers to actively access farmer support information, programmes and development opportunities available online and at our offices. These tools are critical to strengthen and grow sustainable farming enterprises," said Matshediso.



He emphasised that access alone is not enough without guidance and collaboration. "Through collaboration and knowledge sharing, Casidra remains committed to empowering farmers, strengthening rural communities, and contributing to a resilient and sustainable agricultural sector," Matshediso added.

The session drew strong participation from farmers who engaged with presenters, asked practical questions, and explored solutions to scale their operations.

"It was encouraging to engage with farmers who participated actively and sought practical ways to strengthen their enterprises. That is the kind of ownership we need in agriculture," he concluded. Casidra continues to work with partners to ensure farmers and rural communities have the financial resources such as CASP. Grant, Financial Record Keeping, Disaster Funds, training and market access needed for long-term viability.

Connecting with Langeberg Youth to Build Brighter Futures



Casidra team recently engaged the young people by sharing information on skills development, career pathways, and opportunities for growth in agriculture and economic development during the Langeberg Youth Expo in Robertson.

Delivering the welcome remarks, Deputy Mayor of Langeberg Municipality, Hon. Cllr Alderman Christopher Grootboom, urged youth to take the expo seriously. "This Youth Expo is all about you and your future. Make sure you get enough information today to shape your future. Don't allow your circumstances to determine your future. Your attitude matters," said Cllr Grootboom. Drawing on his own journey from humble beginnings, he reminded attendees that circumstances should never be a barrier. "Be positive, ask questions, and grab this opportunity with both hands," he added.



One of the learners in attendance, 24-year-old Mivuyo Xanywa from Zolani, described the expo as both educational and empowering. "The Youth Expo is very educational and fruitful. It's giving us real opportunities to pursue our careers. In my community, there is a farming group, and I am grateful to learn about institutions like Casidra that empower farmers. Platforms like this have opened doors for me. We have an outreach programme, and I will be sharing this information with others," said Xanywa.

Casidra remains committed to equipping young people with the knowledge and tools to become tomorrow's leaders. "We are committed to helping young people turn ambition into action and potential into progress through agricultural and economic development," said Casidra Project Implementer, Mongami Maqaqa, who recently obtained his Master of Science in Agriculture from the University of Fort Hare.



Casidra and Garden Route District Municipality Fuel Entrepreneurial Success of 15 Small Businesses



Fifteen small businesses in the Garden Route are on a sustainable growth path after receiving equipment and machinery donations through the annual Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Support Programme of the Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM), implemented in collaboration with the Cape Agency for Sustainable Integrated Development in Rural Areas (Casidra) and the Small Enterprise Development Finance Agency (SEDFA).

The programme identifies emerging businesses across the Garden Route that face challenges in expanding their operations or acquiring the equipment and machinery needed to grow sustainably.

GRDM leadership, together with partners from Casidra and SEDFA, joined local entrepreneurs at the official handover event, where beneficiaries received machinery and equipment support to strengthen and expand their businesses.

According to Natalie Botha, District Economic Development Officer, "Applications for this round of beneficiaries closed on 29 August 2025, after which a rigorous selection process was undertaken." "We anticipate that the next application period will open around July 2027. Information will be communicated through mainstream media, the Garden Route Local Government Job Opportunities WhatsApp Channel, as well as the GRDM website and Facebook page," she added.

The programme attracted close to 100 applications, highlighting the increasing demand for development support among small businesses in the region. All selected businesses are registered with the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) and have been operational for at least one year. Classification as an MSME in terms of the National Small Enterprise Amendment Act (Act 21 of 2024) was also among the criteria considered during the selection process.

Beneficiaries represent a diverse range of sectors, including property services, beauty, poultry farming, dentistry, driving schools, construction, and more. GRDM provided non-financial support to each business in the form of equipment and materials tailored to their operational requirements.

Since 2019, GRDM has invested nearly R3.5 million in small business development, supporting a total of 139 beneficiaries to date.

Speaking at the handover event, MMC for Planning and Economic Development, Ald. Rosina Ruiters, said: "This initiative reflects our commitment to inclusivity by ensuring that opportunities remain accessible to all entrepreneurs who are ready to grow and contribute to the local economy."



"This programme is one of GRDM's flagship initiatives. The support provided to these businesses will contribute significantly to their growth and development, while also strengthening the broader Garden Route economy," she added.

Executive Mayor Ald. Marais Kruger said the MSME Programme remains one of the ways in which GRDM contributes to alleviating poverty and unemployment, as small businesses play a critical role in creating much-needed jobs and stimulating local economic growth. "Through this programme, we are equipping small businesses with the support they need to grow and make a meaningful difference in their families and communities," he said.

GRDM's partners, Casidra and SEDFA, continue to provide technical expertise and mentorship to participating businesses as part of their annual commitment to enterprise development.

Offering a message of encouragement, SEDFA Acting Head of Department for Pre-Investment, Mr Alex Qunta, said the organisation was proud to support and empower small businesses to grow and thrive.

The continued collaboration and visionary leadership of all stakeholders involved ensure that small businesses are able to make a tangible impact within their communities.

Casidra CEO, Dr Keith Du Plessis, emphasised the important role small businesses play in the economy. "Small businesses are the backbone of the economy. We commend entrepreneurs for taking the risk, especially in an environment where access to markets, financial support, and compliance requirements can be extremely challenging," he said.

Municipal Manager Monde Stratu encouraged beneficiaries to remain resilient in the face of challenges and assured them of ongoing support from the Garden Route District Municipality.

"Support should not only come in the form of materials, but also through guidance, encouragement, and standing alongside entrepreneurs during difficult times," he said.

The programme remains inclusive, with no restrictions based on gender, age, or race, thereby ensuring equal opportunities for all qualifying businesses.

GRDM remains committed to expanding the programme's impact and footprint year-on-year as additional funding streams become available.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & QUATERLY HIGHLIGHTS



Entrepreneurs Empowered during Economic Wellness Bootcamp



More than 100 aspiring young women entrepreneurs gathered on Youth Day at the Rylands Civic Centre in Athlone for the Umanyano SA Economic Wellness Bootcamp, an inspiring initiative focused on building financial confidence, entrepreneurship, and personal growth.

Casidra was honoured to participate in the event, which brought together young women from across the City of Cape Town to engage in meaningful discussions, gain practical insights, and connect with organisations committed to youth and enterprise development. Participants had the opportunity to interact with representatives from Casidra and the Western Cape Government's Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT).

Opening the programme, Umanyano SA Founder and Chairperson, Justin Petersen, underscored the importance of economic empowerment for women and the need to create opportunities that foster growth, independence, and long-term financial wellbeing.

Casidra was represented by its Public Relations, Marketing and Communications team, including Experience Matshediso and PR/Comms Administrator Atembele Zembe, who served as a panellist during the discussions.

Addressing attendees, Zembe encouraged the young women to overcome fear and pursue their ambitions with confidence and determination.

"Many people do not pursue their dreams because they are afraid to take the first step. Success lies on the other side of fear," said Zembe. "Entrepreneurship is a journey of continuous learning and adaptation. My advice is simple: start. Confidence often comes after taking action."

The panel also featured keynote speakers Dr Marietta Hopley, an independent consultant, and Namhla Malgas from DEDAT. Together, the speakers delivered powerful messages on entrepreneurship, financial literacy, resilience, and personal development.

Throughout the engagement, participants were encouraged to actively seek opportunities, build meaningful professional networks, develop sound financial habits, and take advantage of the various development programmes and support mechanisms available to emerging entrepreneurs.

The event concluded with a wellness and fitness bootcamp session aimed at promoting confidence, resilience, mental wellbeing, and self-care. The activity provided a fitting and impactful conclusion to the Youth Day commemoration, reinforcing the importance of holistic development in empowering the next generation of women leaders and entrepreneurs.

By supporting initiatives such as the Economic Wellness Bootcamp, Casidra continues to contribute to the empowerment of young people and the creation of sustainable opportunities that enable them to realise their full potential.



Casidra Invests in Dignity, Hope and Sustainable Community Development



In honour of Nelson Mandela's enduring legacy of service and compassion, Casidra dedicated its 67 Minutes for Mandela Day to making a meaningful difference in the lives of vulnerable members of the Dysselsdorp community through a series of impactful donations aimed at restoring dignity and promoting sustainable development.

Working in partnership with its generous sponsors, Casidra donated blankets to elderly residents at the ACVV Centre, school shoes and toiletry packs to children, rainwater harvesting tanks, gardening tools, and agricultural production inputs to strengthen local food production initiatives.

The initiative reflects Casidra's ongoing commitment to supporting rural communities and creating sustainable opportunities that improve livelihoods across the Western Cape.

Dysselsdorp is one of the Western Cape's rural communities that continues to face significant socio-economic challenges, including high levels of unemployment, poverty and food insecurity. Many households rely on social grants and community support to meet their daily needs. By directing its Mandela Day initiative to Dysselsdorp, Casidra sought to provide immediate relief while also contributing to sustainable solutions that strengthen household resilience, promote food security and restore dignity to vulnerable residents.

Speaking during the handover, Casidra's PR, Marketing and Communications Manager, Experience Matshediso, represented the Chief Executive Officer, Dr Keith du Plessis, who was unable to attend due to prior commitments. Matshediso said Mandela Day is a reminder that every individual and organisation has a responsibility to contribute towards building stronger and more caring communities.

"Today we are not merely handing over donations; we are investing in dignity, hope and opportunity. Every blanket offers warmth, every pair of school shoes restores confidence, every toiletry pack promotes dignity, and every garden tool represents an opportunity for families and communities to grow food and build resilience. This is how we honour Madiba's legacy, through meaningful action that creates lasting impact."

Matshediso further expressed his appreciation to Casidra's partners, whose generosity made the initiative possible.



"We sincerely thank AgriMark, Klein Karoo Agri, Dynotech, Nel Tanks, Umanyano NPO, and the Oudtshoorn Municipality for partnering with us to make this Mandela Day initiative a reality. Their support demonstrates the power of collaboration in changing lives and creating sustainable impact."

Casidra believes that sustainable development goes beyond infrastructure and economic growth; it is about empowering people, strengthening communities, and ensuring that no one is left behind.

Matshediso said Mandela Day serves as a powerful reminder that meaningful change begins with acts of kindness. For Casidra, every day is Madiba's Day because of the work it does in rural communities across the Western Cape, where poverty remains a significant challenge.

"Madiba taught us that each of us has the power to make a difference. Through these donations, we are not only responding to immediate needs but also investing in the long-term wellbeing of our communities. At Casidra, we believe that creating opportunities and restoring dignity are at the heart of sustainable development," Matshediso concluded.

As South Africans dedicate 67 minutes in honour of Nelson Mandela's 67 years of selfless service, Casidra reaffirmed its commitment to serving communities throughout the year by partnering with stakeholders to improve lives, strengthen food security, and promote inclusive rural development.

Casidra extends its sincere appreciation to the following partners for their generous support:

- AgriMark
- Klein Karoo Agri
- Dynotech
- Nel Tanks
- Umanyano NPO
- Oudtshoorn Municipality

Together, these partnerships continue to demonstrate that lasting impact is achieved when organisations unite in service of communities.

CELEBRATING OUR TEAM

Meet the Additional Members of Casidra's Board of Directors for 2026



Ms Emmaculate Malashe



Mr Nazeem Sterras



Mr Abdul Moutie Abrahams



Professor Amiena Bayat

A Warm Welcome To Our New Employees



Bronwyn Govender
Chief Financial Officer



Marshia Batayi
Supply Chain Manager



Kauthar Awaldien
Project Manager:
Technical



Atembele Zembe
PR, Marketing and
Communications Admin



Mpho Gift Malatji
Project Implementer



Luhle Mgyai
Operational Support



Abusisiwe-Liwani
Admin-Clerk-FRK



Chante-Cleophas
Administrator



Danelle Keown
Accountant Trainee



Ellrico-Pietersen
Asset & Maintenance
Coordinator



Esethu Gwada
Accountant- FRK



Asemahle Sokutapa
Agriculturist



Rubinette Joon
Admin Clerk
Amalienstein



Tammy-Dene September
Mechanisation Student



Thomas-Mondlane
Bookkeeper Farms



Zintle Jantjies
Frontline Assistant
RO

THE EDITOR

As we strive to make a difference through effective and efficient project management at Casidra, follow us on our Social Media Platforms. We also would like to hear from you, kindly send us your thoughts and suggestions to: Experience Matshediso



www.casidra.co.za

+27 (0)21 863 5000

info@casidra.co.za

FOLLOW US ON: CasidrasocLtd

