

Best Agricultural Development Organisation 2024 - South Africa

The agriculture sector is always changing, and thus it needs an expert that can keep up with both its technological demands and those of its related disciplines. With a name like Optimal Agricultural Business Systems, or OABS Development for short, it is no surprise that this South African company does just that. A specialist in sustainable agricultural development models, this organisation has offered its diverse range of professional services in this dynamic market since its founding back in 1997.

At the heart of OABS' operation is its unwavering commitment to clients, the agricultural environment, and the green agenda, three areas that it serves with the highest levels of integrity, dedication, and passion. Managing Director Dr Hamman Oosthuizen elaborates further, stating, "we strive to serve the agricultural sector through diligent broadening and updating our own knowledge in every field of expertise that we offer, sharing that knowledge and contributing to a sustainable agricultural environment."

Boasting such prestigious clients as The World Bank, National Treasury, Department of Agriculture, and an array of mega farmers situated both locally and abroad, OABS is an unabashed expert when it comes to sustainable agricultural development. Specialising in everything from integrated farmer development through to market and value chain analysis, primary and applied research, agricultural information and economics, and green economy studies, this to name just a few, the work of this team is permanently disrupting this sector.

One such example of this can be seen in an ongoing project that is being carried out in collaboration with The World Bank financed Competitiveness and Financial Inclusion (CAFI) Project. The aim of this collaboration is to develop the horticulture industry in South Africa's neighbour to the north, Lesotho, something that is being achieved through an incubator programme for farmers. Essentially, the incubator will address gaps in the value chain, access to suitable land, infrastructure, extension services, skills, finance, and markets while promoting climate smart agricultural practices. The areas of support include a technical assistance and training program that is rolled out to competitively selected groups of eligible farmers. These farmers are provided with training and technical expertise to develop and implement business plans that meet the requirements of commercial financing partners, which are partners for the implementation of this project.

This is not the only project in the works over at OABS, as the team here are currently in the process of a designing a mega high-value crop farm for an international mining house, an initiative that could change the mining sector's approach to post mining initiatives that



could contribute to not only sustainable green development, but also improved livelihoods and sustainable job opportunities. Additional undertakings include emerging farmer development programmes, with these spanning both private and government-led initiatives. Each of these projects reflect the organisation's aims of achieving sustainable economic growth, food security, and job creation, encouraging the long-term improvements in livelihoods that such knowledge brings.

Across this almost 30-strong team, the internal culture that is strived for revolves around creating a happy, trusting, and close environment. With such a culture in tow, this team that is comprised of some of the best and brightest minds in the sector can work together to achieve their common goal of ensuring that the company remains a leader in this sphere. Only through collaboration can standardisation, innovation, and maximum efficiency be achieved, three areas that are vital in nurturing lasting success and making a real difference.

"Work hard, play hard" is OABS' guiding principle in many ways, a motivator that extends not only to the current team, but any prospective employees as well. When it comes to recruitment, it is essential for individuals to slot seamlessly into the company's culture and possess a willingness to wholeheartedly embrace the high standards that it works so hard to uphold. This setting of a new normal across this space is something that starts with Chairman Dr Daan Louw and the rest of the



senior management, all of whom strive to lead by example.

Rigorously adhering to this ethos across every element of its operation, OABS has subsequent access to a diverse range of skills from a multitalented team, making it the one-stop shop for all of its customers' needs. Primarily, these needs revolve around sustainability, not just in an environmental sense, but also regarding economic and social factors. It is for this reason that sustainability is at the core of OABS' agricultural value chain development and addressed in its sustainable agricultural development models and projects across the continent.

Ultimately, OABS' demonstrable contribution to furthering sustainable agricultural development in Africa is clear to see, this through its range of cutting-edge projects and technologies that ensure lasting success for the continent and its people. As the team here continue to make their mark on this space by executing as many agricultural development related projects as possible, we celebrate their work by naming OABS Development as the Best Agricultural Development Organisation 2024 - South Africa.



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