

# Cultivating success: The inspiring journey of Rendani Murovhi

By Rotondwa Raligidima, Potatoes SA

**R**endani Murovhi's journey from being a recipient of a Potatoes SA bursary to becoming a pivotal figure in the potato industry, spans a mere decade.

Rendani was born in Chiawelo, Soweto, and raised in the rural parts of Venda, in a village called Muraleni, some 18 km from Louis Trichardt in Limpopo. Her love of agriculture developed during her childhood, growing up surrounded by small-scale producers. In high school she excelled in agriculture, which inspired her to pursue a diploma and later a B-Tech degree in the field. Her story is one of resilience, dedication, and passion for agriculture.

## A new door opens

Rendani came across the Potatoes SA bursary programme by chance. She and a fellow classmate, the now Dr Tlangelani Nghondweni, were postgraduate students from the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) conducting research trials on potatoes at the Agricultural Research Council's Vegetable and Ornamental Plant Institute (ARC-VOPI). While searching for certified seed suppliers, she was browsing through *CHIPS* and came across an article on the bursary opportunity. This marked the start of her very fruitful involvement with Potatoes SA.

Between 2013 and 2014, Rendani received support by way of the bursary, which provided her with financial assistance during a crucial phase of her academic journey. Despite having to overcome unforeseen circumstances that prevented her from completing her qualification at the time, she persevered and went on to attain a post-graduate diploma in Developmental Studies from the University of the Western Cape

in 2020. She still plans to pursue a master's degree focussing on the commercialisation of black potato producers in South Africa.

Rendani conducted postgraduate research on integrated disease management to reduce common scab in potatoes. Her research highlighted the effectiveness of rotating crops and using green manure to mitigate soilborne diseases and improve soil health.

## More than just a bursary

The Potatoes SA bursary had a significant impact on her career in crop science, extending beyond mere financial support. It served as a catalyst for her future, exposing her to the complexities of the potato industry, an experience that guided her decision to pursue a career as a scientist dedicated to improving producer support and development systems.

Rendani has worked in various roles in the public and private sectors. She started out as a research technician at the ARC, and served at the Limpopo and Western Cape Departments of Agriculture as an agent for producer support and development. During her tenure in the public sector, in 2018, she received the award for Best Agricultural Advisor. She is currently the transformation manager at Potatoes SA, where she continues to uphold the organisation's mandate to help develop viable emerging and commercial black producers.

Rendani highly recommends the Potatoes SA bursary programme, emphasising its role in fostering industry connections and providing a springboard for young graduates. Motivated by her desire to make a positive impact on people's lives, particularly in rural communities, Rendani's vision is to lead developmental initiatives for black



Rendani Murovhi.

producers, empowering them within the agricultural landscape.

Her guiding principle is "God first and the rest will follow", a reflection of her faith-driven approach to effecting change. Her most rewarding moments at work is receiving calls from producers celebrating their accomplishments or who were able to secure funding, thus reaffirming the tangible impact her efforts have on them.

## Keep learning and believing

Rendani's story is testament to the transformative power of education, perseverance, and dedication. Her journey with Potatoes SA not only carved a path for personal success, but also made her an advocate for agricultural development. She is leaving an indelible mark in the industry and the communities she serves across South Africa. As she embarks on the next chapter of her career, her commitment to uplifting others remains unwavering. She will continue to inspire generations to come. 🌱

For more information on the Potatoes SA bursary programme, email [rotondwa@potatoes.co.za](mailto:rotondwa@potatoes.co.za).

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