

Lesego Motsemme's agricultural journey

By Lebo Tlomatsana, Potatoes SA

Lesego Motsemme, a young man from Orkney, was raised in the Klerksdorp district of North West. The area is well-known for mining, but he chose to pursue a career in agriculture.

His passion for agriculture ignited during a high school excursion to an aquaponic farm run by a remarkable 17-year-old female entrepreneur. Inspired by her dedication and innovative approach, he actively pursued research and educational programmes that fuelled his interest and commitment to this vital field.

He enrolled at the Potchefstroom College of Agriculture, where he completed a comprehensive programme in mixed farming. This covered crop and animal production, and agricultural engineering and management.

Beyond his professional pursuits, Lesego is an avid sports enthusiast, being particularly passionate about rugby. His love for this sport keeps him active and instils values of teamwork and discipline, which he applies to all aspects of his life.



Lesego Motsemme, a Potatoes SA bursary recipient, has a bright future in the agricultural industry.

Guided by the quote, "You reap what you sow," Lesego is constantly reminded that every action, whether good or bad, has consequences.

A bursary blessing

In 2022, he was thrilled to receive the Potatoes SA bursary during his second-year studies. The bursary not only covered his tuition but also provided accommodation and meals, significantly easing his parents' financial burden and allowing him to focus on his education.

In his third year, Potatoes SA arranged a work-integrated learning experience at one of South Africa's leading potato seed production farms. The hands-on experience he gained there proved invaluable. He learned the fundamentals of crop cultivation and discovered the importance of labour-intensive practices in challenging environments. Working in the greenhouse to produce generation 0 tubers deepened his understanding of seed production techniques and the science behind agricultural practices.

Career development

He currently works at the Klerksdorp Fresh Produce Market under Prokon SA, inspecting fruit and vegetables in Klerksdorp and Bloemfontein. Here, his skills in quality assurance and regulatory compliance are being developed. His daily responsibilities include inspecting and assessing fresh produce, grading and sorting, record-keeping, and collaborating with producers and suppliers. He ensures that the fresh produce delivered to the market is safe, high-quality, and ready for consumption.

The Potatoes SA bursary programme played a crucial role in enabling Lesego to experience the positive impact of education.



Lesego enjoys giving back to the community by teaching high school learners plant science and the importance of the agricultural sector.

Beyond his professional achievements, he is actively involved in his community teaching plant science at Hoërskool Orkney, demonstrating the effects of different fertilisers on spinach growth, and providing students with both practical knowledge and fresh produce to take home.

He also organised an agricultural debate competition in collaboration with Potchefstroom College of Agriculture, inviting four local schools to participate. The event aimed to raise awareness of the agricultural sector in the mining town, encouraging young minds to explore career opportunities in agriculture. Through these efforts, Lesego hopes to inspire future generations to contribute to the growth of this vital industry.

What the future holds

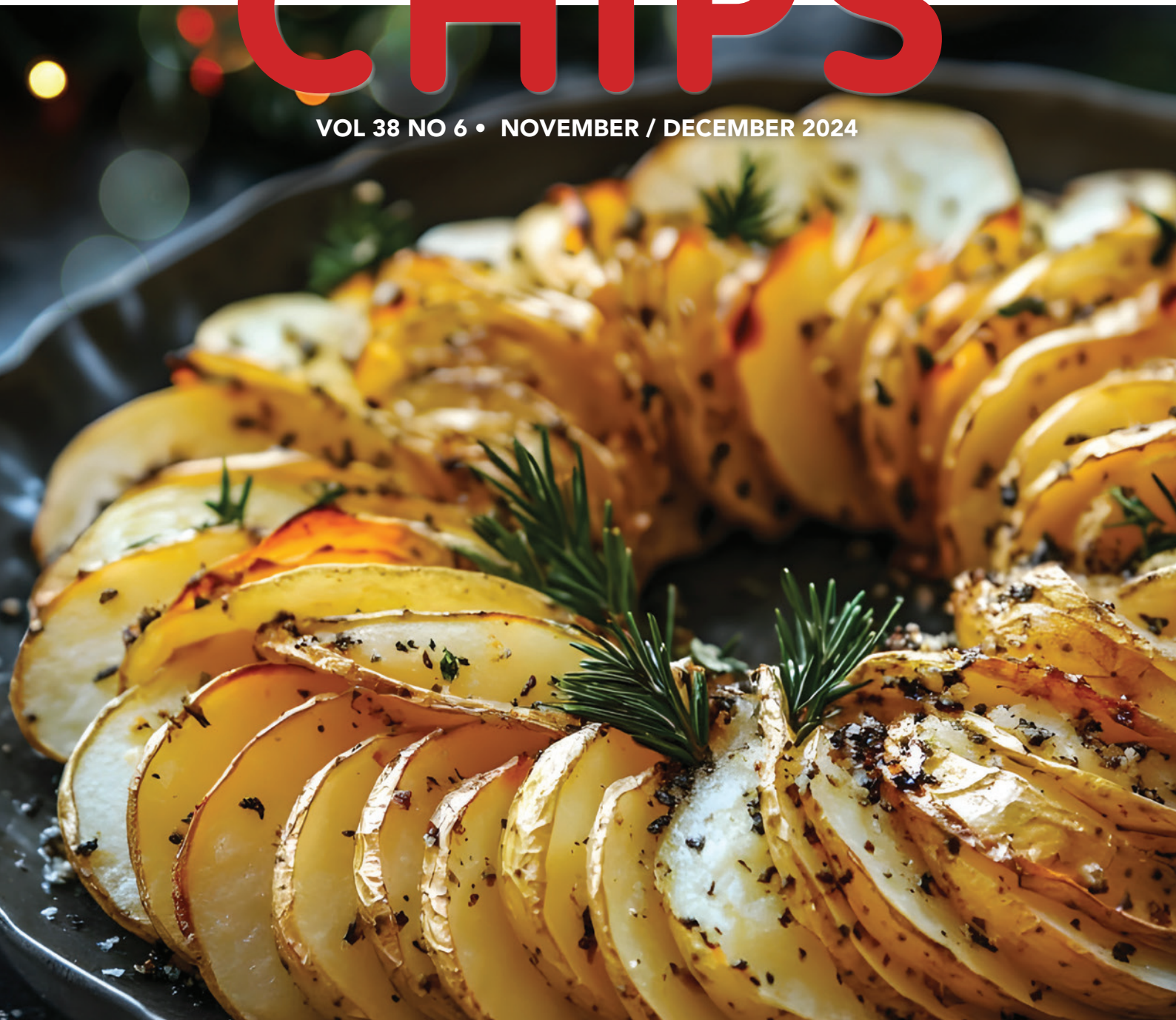
Lesego's ambition is fuelled by a profound love for the sciences, which inspires him to seek deeper understanding and knowledge. He aspires to become a doctor in the plant science sector, ultimately hoping to play a key role in improving agricultural practices and promoting food security. 🌱

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