



# The potato hive is buzzing

By Willie Jacobs, CEO, Potatoes SA

In the previous issue of *CHIPS* I tried to emphasise the need to slow down and celebrate life a little more. I am a little disappointed (tongue in cheek) to say that we at Potatoes SA did not manage to adhere to the first suggestion at all. However, we have certainly achieved the second goal and we are going for it with all that we have!

To kick off this year, we held an extremely well attended transformation symposium, with attendees and speakers contributing constructive inputs that will take the industry to new heights. Read more about it in this issue of *CHIPS*.

Not only did we crown our latest transformation farmer of the year, but we also managed to acknowledge those role-players who have contributed significantly to the development and growth of the potato industry.

## Hold on to your hat!

If the first two months of 2024 are anything to go by, then the rest of this year is certainly going to be a busy one. We look forward to a hive of activity, and as we speak are preparing for yet another amazing event, our biennial congress to be held on 16 and 17 July this year in the good old Cape.

But, before we get there, we are first going to represent South Africa at the World Potato Congress which takes place in Adelaide, Australia.

In doing so, we will be able to bring back information to enhance our own congress including the latest trends and shared knowledge picked up in the land down under.

As can be expected, and given our experience of the previous Potatoes SA congress, this year's instalment will significantly enrich the lives and activities of all participants. We look forward to digging deep into the potato value chain and squeezing out the essence of solutions and opportunities that will not only enhance the longevity of the industry, but reduce risk for all stakeholders.

We truly hope that the content and knowledge shared at this auspicious event will offer solutions for stimulating investment and growing prosperity as we are in dire need of increased profitability all round.

The congress will be characterised by critical conversations between all the links in the value chain, with specific insight into consumers and the stakeholders representing them. Our expectation is that we will find

alignment, not only in what matters in terms of the value of a potato, but also how we interpret it from different angles.

As usual, the congress will provide new insights into the use of current technology, new technology and a general understanding of how quickly technology not only changes, but is adopted. Dreams and aspirations regarding 2050 space age technology are swiftly becoming current, and the unfortunate truth is that those who insist on sticking to the old ways are going to miss out.

## And then ...

This year's congress will be presented in a completely new setting, and will be introducing the country to South Africa's 2024 top seed grower as well as commercial potato producer. This will be done in the form of a combined event that promises to move horizons, break down walls, and build strong unity by exhibiting our pride in the history of the potato industry! See you all there! 🍷

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# CHIPS

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