

Ukhanyo Farmer Development
Annual Report
2024/2025



OUR PARTNERS

John Deere

Ntinga OR Tambo Development Agency SOC Ltd

Farmers Friend

Geekay Agribusiness

Landbank

doa Department Agriculture Province of the Eastern Cape

PepsiCo

Kgodiso Development Fund

AECI

khula!

Senwes

Shell

Ukhanyo Grains

sacta South African cultivar & technology agency

ECRDA Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency

Weaverbird

OVK Saam bereik ons meer Together we achieve more

Tectonic

FABI

Kokstad Milling

Bayer

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CEO's Message

Sinelizwi Fakade
Chief Executive Officer

The 2024/2025 production season tested both our systems and our people — and proved the strength of both.

For Ukhanyo Farmer Development (UFD), the year was defined by resilience and strategic progress.

Despite delayed rainfall, erratic weather, and mechanisation challenges, UFD supported 2,000+ active farmers across four districts, cultivating 823 hectares and strengthening 20 emerging agribusinesses.

While hectares declined, productivity improved significantly, with average yields reaching 5.3 tons per hectare — reflecting a shift toward more efficient, quality-driven production.

Farmers adapted in real time, overcoming challenges through improved practices and determination, supported by dedicated mentors. This resilience was matched by increased farmer commitment and participation.

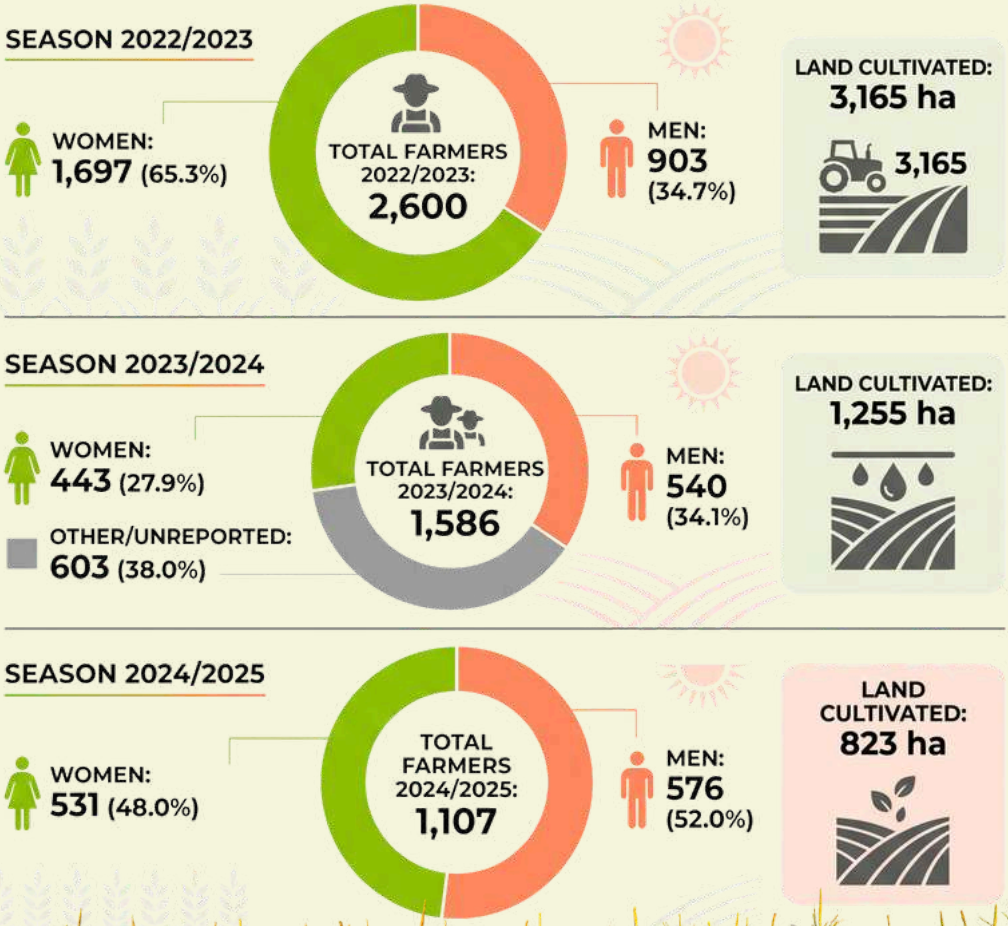
Looking ahead, UFD's focus is clear:

- Strengthen mechanisation systems
- Expand commercial pathways for farmers
- Build resilience against climate variability

The foundation is set. The next phase is scale and sustainability.

Programme Reach & Performance

Farmer Footprint and Participation



Production Performance

YEAR	HECTARES	YIELD/HA
2022/2023	3165	4.8
2032/2024	1255	4.5
2042/2025	825	5.3

Despite reduced hectares, productivity improved significantly.



THIS INDICATES:

- Better agronomic practices
- More effective mentorship
- improved input utilisation.



UFD is transitioning from a scale-led growth to efficiency-led performance.

Financial Participation and Sustainability



- R7,800 per hectare (input contribution)
- R70 annual membership fee
- Stronger farmer buy-in
- Increased trust in the programme
- Movement toward shared investment models.



Farmer Contributions in years

22/23

Input Contributions:
R24,687,000



2600 farmers, 3165 hectares and R182,000 in farmer memberships.

23/24

Input Contributions:
R9,789,000



1586 farmers, 1255 hectares and R111,020 in farmer memberships.

24/25

Input Contributions:
R6,419,400



2000+ active farmers, 823 hectares and R77,490 in farmer memberships.

Operational realities and response

Key Challenges

- Delayed rainfall and planting windows
- Hail and extreme weather conditions
- Mechanisation breakdowns and delays

UFD's Response

- Rapid agronomic interventions
- Labour-based harvesting strategies
- Strengthened supplier coordination.



Programmes and strategic partnerships

Ukhanyo Farmer Development's impact is driven through integrated programmes and strategic partnerships that respond to the practical realities faced by emerging farmers. Rather than offering one form of assistance only, UFD works through a support model that combines production support, mentorship, training, access facilitation and commercial development pathways.



Sandile Khumalo
Technical Representative
Bayer

This approach allows farmers to receive support that is not only seasonal, but developmental and progressively aligned to long-term growth.

Shell Farmer Development Programme (2024 – 2027)

The Shell Farmer Development Programme is focused on strengthening the capacity, productivity and long-term sustainability of emerging farmers. Through this programme, 50 farmers are supported through structured development interventions that improve planning, production oversight and participation in agriculture as a viable economic activity.

The value of the programme lies in its ability to combine practical support with longer-term developmental intent, helping farmers move beyond seasonal survival toward stronger productivity and clearer commercial pathways.

For the 2024/2025 season, UFD has 238 hectares in production under the Shell programme, across maize, soybean and sunflower.





Kgodiso Development Fund

The Kgodiso programme report confirms 361 ha planted across four entities: Jay Jay Farming, Uphuhliso Lwethu, MMD, and Mthakatye. The crop farmed is maize, with Mthakatye split between white maize and yellow maize.

The report confirms 997.43 tons delivered from completed blocks, with harvesting nearly done.

Mthakatye grows both white and yellow maize, supporting farmers with structured assistance to remain active and productive. This reinforces that support must build discipline, commitment, and sustainability.

ECRDA
Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency

The Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency

Ukhanyo Farmers Development partners with the Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency to aid rural farmers through agricultural initiatives, skills training, market access, and community empowerment. This joint effort enhances food security, strengthens farmer support systems, and promotes sustainable farming and economic growth in underserved areas of the Eastern Cape.



SACTA Partnership Farmer Development Programme (2024 – 2027)

The SACTA partnership supports broader sector participation and contributes to creating more inclusive pathways within agriculture. Through partnerships such as this, UFD is able to strengthen the position of emerging farmers within a wider agricultural and economic system.

The value of this relationship lies not only in direct support, but in expanding visibility, opportunity and participation within organised value chains.

Impact:
For the 2024/2025 season, NTINGA supported 9 farming entities across 320 ha, mainly in OR Tambo, with additional production in Joe Gqabi.

Item	Detail
Programme	Ntinga
Season	2024/2025
Farmers / entities supported	9
Districts planned / covered	OR Tambo and Joe Gqabi
Hectares	320 ha
Crop planted	Not stated in the uploaded spreadsheet

Ntinga Programme

The Ntinga Programme contributes to rural production support and localised farmer development.

It helps extend agricultural support into communities where coordinated development assistance can have meaningful impact on participation, inclusion and production continuity.

For the 2024/2025 season, the NTINGA programme supported 9 farming entities across 320 hectares in OR Tambo and Joe Gqabi.

The programme contributed to expanded production activity among emerging farmers, with support concentrated around areas including Mthatha, Tsolo, Libode and Ugie.

The programme forms part of UFD's broader farmer development work, supporting crop diversification and the inclusion of emerging farmers in structured agricultural value chains.

Ntinga farmer breakdown:

Farmer / Entity	District	Area	Hectare
Mhlonitshwa	OR Tambo	Mthatha	20 ha
Zuzu Akha Trading	OR Tambo	Tsolo	20 ha
Wela Farming	OR Tambo	Mthatha	60 ha
Mbal Agroc Co-Op	OR Tambo	Mthatha	20 ha
Tyopho Trading	OR Tambo	Mthatha	20 ha
Uphuhliso Lwethu	OR Tambo	Mthatha	50 ha
Bonani Lina Trading	OR Tambo	Libode	20 ha
Jay Jay Farming	OR Tambo	Mthatha	50 ha
Swale Dale	Joe Gqabi	Ugie	60 ha
			Total: 320 ha

What these partnerships make possible

Together, these programmes strengthen UFD's ability to provide:

- Technical mentorship and production support;
- Access to development and funding pathways;
- Market integration opportunities;
- Crop diversification support;
- And commercialisation pathways for emerging farmers.

During the 2024/2025 season, this support contributed to farmer participation across multiple districts, with production centred mainly around maize and soybean cultivation.

More importantly, these partnerships helped UFD strengthen not only output, but also farmer resilience, institutional trust and the overall quality of support delivered.











Impact in Practice: Farmer Stories



FARMER STORIES

FROM RISK TO RECOVERY: PEST MANAGEMENT IN ACTION

Xhamakazi Sali – 10ha Maize

Faced with a severe maize stalk borer infestation during peak growth, Xhamakazi's crop was at risk of total loss.

Through coordinated support from UFD mentors, FABI, and AECI, a targeted intervention was implemented. Despite delays due to rainfall, the pest outbreak was successfully controlled.

Impact: Crop recovery and yield preservation under high-risk conditions.



RESILIENCE AFTER HAIL DAMAGE



Msimelelo Gwazihashe – 2ha Soybeans

A hailstorm destroyed early-stage soybean crops. Through rapid mentor intervention and foliar treatment, the crop recovered significantly.

Impact: Demonstrates the power of **timely intervention in mitigating climate shocks.**



SCALING INTO COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE

Jay Jay Farming

From borrowing equipment to owning:

- Grain dams
- Augers
- Large-scale production infrastructure

Expanded from:

- 100ha to 560ha maize
- 50ha to 100ha soybeans

Secured **Land Bank blended finance.**

Impact: Full transition into **commercial agribusiness.**



WOMEN-LED GROWTH EXPANSION

Nokuthula Mafikwana

Grew from:

- 2ha to 61ha mazie
- Added 20ha soybean rotation.

Now operates as:

- Farmer
- Contractor
- Equipment owner

Impact: Demonstrates **scalable, women-led agricultural success.**

Capacity Building and Knowledge Systems

UFD's work is not only about supporting farmers directly in the field; it is also about building the quality of the support system around them.

For this reason, mentor development remains a key part of the organisation's impact model. By strengthening the technical knowledge, reporting capacity and practical response ability of mentors, UFD improves the quality of assistance that farmers receive throughout the production cycle.

This work matters because mentors are often the first line of support when farmers are faced with production challenges, whether related to pests, climate shocks, mechanisation issues or reporting requirements.

When mentors are well-equipped, farmers receive more timely, informed and practical guidance.

In this way, capacity building becomes a multiplier of impact.



FABI

Pest and Disease Management

This training strengthens the ability of mentors to identify, assess and respond to pest and disease threats before they result in major crop losses. Its significance lies in protecting crop health, preserving yield potential and enabling quicker response during high-risk periods in the season.

Digital Reporting

Digital reporting training with HYDRA improves the collection, tracking and use of field-level data.

Its value lies in strengthening accountability, monitoring progress more effectively and enabling faster, evidence-based decision-making across the programme.





Mechanisation Training

Mechanisation training with John Deere equips mentors with stronger understanding of machinery use, production timing and operational efficiency. This is significant in a context where delays or breakdowns in mechanisation can affect planting windows, productivity and overall seasonal performance.

Crop Insurance

OVK – Crop insurance training strengthens understanding of agricultural risk and the systems available to support farmers in times of loss. This is particularly important in seasons marked by hail, drought and other climate-related shocks that can significantly affect farmer performance and recovery.

UKHANYO FARMER DEVELOPMENT

Why this matters



Through these training interventions, UFD is building not only better farmers, but also a stronger knowledge system around agricultural development.

The organisation is investing in practical expertise, technical confidence and institutional learning so that support to farmers becomes more responsive, credible and sustainable over time.

Key Events and Community Impact

Ukhanyo Farmers Day – 9 April 2025

Ukhanyo Farmers Day is one of the organisation's flagship platforms for visibility, engagement and recognition. It creates an opportunity for farmers, partners, stakeholders and community members to come together around the shared work of agricultural development.

More than a single event, Farmers Day serves as a practical demonstration of what UFD's programmes look like on the ground and why this work matters.

Its significance lies in creating a bridge between implementation and public understanding.



It gave stakeholders the opportunity to see the realities of farmer support firsthand, while also affirming the role of farmers within a broader development and commercial ecosystem.

Shell Programme Launch – 17 September 2024

The Shell Programme Launch marked an important milestone in the strengthening of UFD's partnership-based development model.

The launch signalled the beginning of a focused collaboration aimed at deepening support for emerging farmers through structured programming, strategic investment and stronger links to sustainable agricultural value chains.

The programme is significant because it helps position farmers within a broader development pathway that includes productivity support, sustainability, and future-facing agricultural opportunities.

It also reinforced the importance of collaboration in building farmer resilience and expanding access to growth opportunities beyond immediate seasonal needs.

Disaster Relief – July 2025

In July 2025, UFD participated in a disaster relief response following the devastating floods in Mthatha, which affected vulnerable households and communities already under pressure.

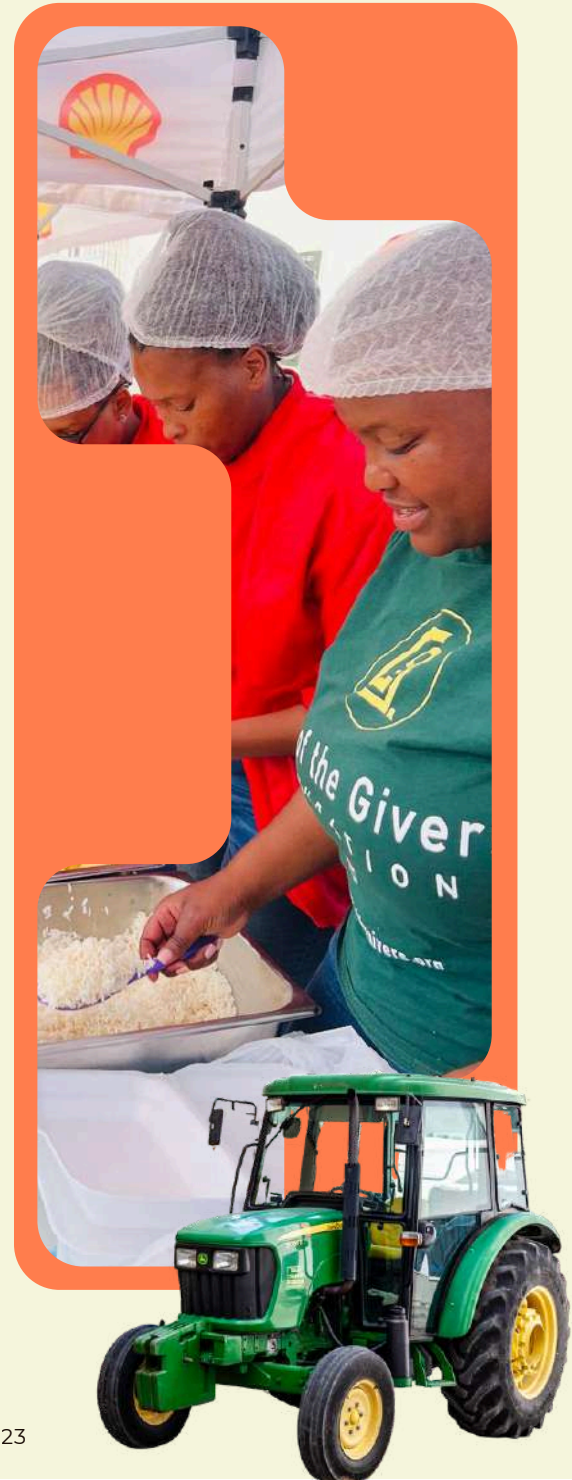
The floods caused severe disruption and left many individuals and families in urgent need of practical support and relief.

Through a partnership with Shell and Gift of the Givers, UFD contributed to a coordinated relief effort that supported affected beneficiaries and responded to the immediate needs created by the disaster.

This intervention reflected UFD's wider commitment to community-centred development and to standing with the communities in which it works during times of crisis.

While UFD's core focus remains farmer development, the organisation recognises that agricultural resilience is closely connected to the social wellbeing of the communities surrounding it.

Its involvement in the Mthatha flood response therefore demonstrated a broader ethic of care, solidarity and partnership in action.



UFD UKHANYO FARMER DEVELOPMENT

Gift of the Givers FOUNDATION

Shell

Closing Reflections

The 2024/2025 season was a year that demanded resilience, flexibility and a strong commitment to purpose.

Across the season, farmers and mentors had to respond to delayed rainfall, operational setbacks, climate-related disruptions and production pressures that tested both individual effort and programme systems.

Yet within these challenges, UFD's work also revealed important signs of growth.

The season showed that progress is not always measured only by hectares planted, but also by the strength of the systems being built around farmers.

Improvements in productivity, stronger mentorship, continued partner collaboration and visible farmer commitment all point to a development model that is becoming more intentional, more responsive and more sustainable.

What emerges from this year is a clearer picture of UFD's role: not simply as a support programme, but as a growing agricultural development platform that is helping farmers build resilience, improve participation and move closer toward commercially meaningful opportunities.

The work remains challenging, but the direction is becoming clearer. UFD is building not only crops and farmer numbers, but confidence, knowledge, systems and long-term possibility.

Goals for 2025/26

- Expand production support toward 3,000 hectares under cultivation.
- Strengthen mechanisation systems and operational readiness.
- Deepen market access and commercialisation pathways for farmers.
- Build stronger climate resilience and risk response systems.
- Continue investing in mentor capacity and knowledge systems.
- Grow strategic partnerships that support scale, inclusion and sustainability.



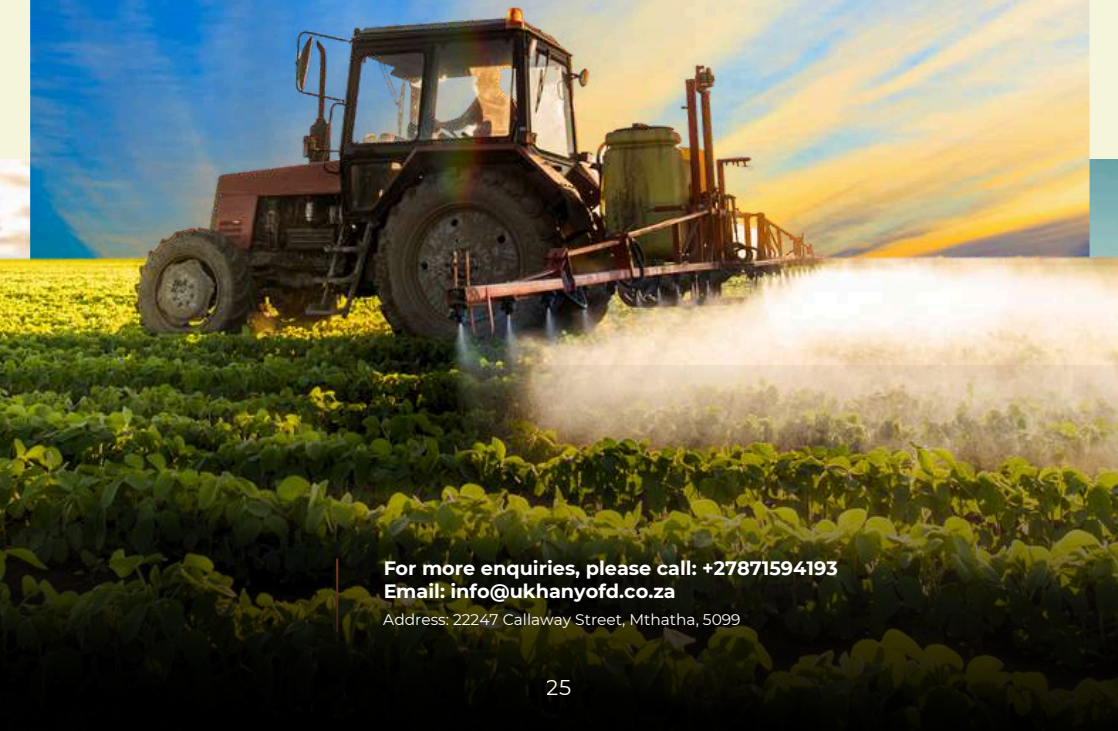




The next Phase

Ukhanyo Farmer Development

The next phase for UFD is not only growth in size, but growth in depth, quality and long-term impact.



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