

SOYBEAN SYMPOSIA

DATE: 31 July 2025

VENUE: NAMPO Park, Bothaville



OPDT/OAC

SOYBEAN SYMPOSIA

DATE: 29 July 2025

VENUE: CSIR Convention Centre, PTA



OPDT/OAC



SESSION 1 - Facilitator - Mr Andries Theron

I am Andries Theron, born on 1 April 1961 in Moorreesburg. I grew up on our family farm in the Moorreesburg/Koringberg district, attended school there, and studied at the University of Stellenbosch. I'm married to Karin, and we have three children and six grandchildren.

I'm actively involved in our farming business that produces winter grains and livestock, with my son managing the day-to-day operations.

As Chairman of the Protein Research Foundation (PRF) Board, I aim for self-sufficiency in animal feed protein and prioritise teamwork to attract top talent. My leadership style focuses on unlocking the potential in our staff, maintaining financial discipline, and ensuring the long-term health of both my business and the PRF.

Throughout my career, I've experienced significant transitions, including my time as an Executive Committee Member and Vice-Chairperson of GrainSA. I led a turnaround strategy in the Wheat Industry and established the first Research and Technology levy.

Now, I enjoy travelling across South Africa and Africa with my bush trailer, fishing, hunting, and reading hardcover books. I am grateful for the skills I've been given to navigate life's challenges.



OPDT/OAC



SESSION 1 - Facilitator - Mr Andries Theron

Speaker 1: Dr Leandro Eugenio Cardamone Diniz - EMBRAPA

- Biologist with a PhD in Genetics and Plant Breeding.
- Postdoctoral fellowships in Molecular Biology (IRD, France) and Biotechnology (KUL, Belgium).

- Researcher at Embrapa since 2007, currently at Embrapa Soybean since 2022.
- Expertise in plant genetic transformation, gene editing (CRISPR), genetic diversity analysis, functional characterisation of microorganisms, and bio-input development.
- Published over 45 international papers and book chapters.
- Holds nine patents in Biotechnology innovation.
- Currently, he serves as the international liaison for Embrapa Soybean.



OPDT/OAC



Ferdi Meyer

SESSION 1 - Facilitator - Mr Andries Theron

Speaker 2: Prof Ferdi Meyer - BFAP

Professor Ferdi Meyer is an agricultural economist with more than two decades of experience in agricultural market and trade modelling, value chain analysis, strategic foresight, and scenario planning. As a founding member and Managing Director of the Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP) since its establishment in 2004, he has played a pivotal role in fostering national and

international networks, guiding multidisciplinary teams, and advancing sustainable development within the agricultural sector.

In addition to his leadership at BFAP, Professor Meyer serves on the boards of various companies and is a Trustee of the Protein Research Foundation. He holds the position of Professor Extraordinary in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Stellenbosch University. His deep understanding of agriculture is rooted in his upbringing and involvement on a crop and livestock family farm in South Africa's North West Province.



OPDT/OAC

SOYBEAN SYMPOSIA

DATE: 29 July 2025

VENUE: CSIR Convention Centre, PTA



OPDT/OAC



PANEL DISCUSSION

Facilitator - Dr Lukeshni Chetty - SANSOR

Lukeshni Chetty has been the General Manager of the South African National Seed Organisation (SANSOR) since October 2012. She holds a B.Sc. in Genetics and Biochemistry, an Honours degree in Genetics with distinction, an M.Sc. in Genetics (thesis on pollen movement and maize), and a Ph.D. in Genetics (thesis on managing gene flow).

Previously, she was the Deputy Director of GMO Monitoring and Research at the South African National Biodiversity Institute, where she developed a national GMO monitoring framework and managed a significant research program in collaboration with Norway.

As the first female, person of color, and youngest General Manager in SANSOR's history, she represents the seed industry's interests in national and international seed trade and policy matters. SANSOR is recognized as a leading seed trade association in Africa.



OPDT/OAC

SOYBEAN SYMPOSIA

DATE: 29 July 2025

VENUE: CSIR Convention Centre, PTA

PANEL DISCUSSION

Facilitator - Dr Lukesni Chetty - SANSOR



Facundo Stella
GDM Seeds

From Argentina, an Agricultural engineer graduated from the National University of Mar del Plata. Currently, the Commercial Manager for GDM in South Africa. He has been working with soybeans since I graduated from university, first in the development area and later in commercial.



Adriaan Jordaan
Bayer

Has been with Bayer for 2 years, initially as a territory sales manager, then moving to the Go-to-market department to oversee Horti and Cereal crops. They are currently a Commercial Strategy Integrator managing Summer row crops, RoundUp, and Intacta portfolios. Overall, they have 10 years of experience in the agricultural industry.



Derick van Staden
AST

PhD in Molecular Genetics
Maize Plant Breeder Pannar
Research Manager Syngenta Seed
Research Manager Afgri Seed
Sunflower Plant Breeder Agricol
Joined AST (Agri Seed and Technology) as co-shareholder and Director in 2013.



Antony Jarvie
Corteva

Manage soybean research programmes for Corteva (consultancy).
Manage dry bean breeding and research for AGT Foods Africa (contract).
Operate a tissue culture laboratory for producing NovaCane® plantlets for the Sugar Industry.
Conduct plant improvement research on a project basis.

SOYBEAN SYMPOSIA

DATE: 29 July 2025

VENUE: CSIR Convention Centre, PTA

**LUNCH
TIME**



OPDT/OAC



SESSION 2 - Facilitator - Prof Pieter Swanepoel

I am the Chairperson of the Department of Agronomy at Stellenbosch University. Our department is known for making impactful contributions, maintaining strong industry connections, and being distinguished for excellence. As an Associate Professor, I lead an active program that involves mentoring MSc(Agric) and PhD students. My approach is grounded in agroecosystem principles, which emphasise the integration of sustainable farm management techniques to support the

Intensification of agricultural production systems.

With a focus on responsible and ethical resource use, my research encompasses soil, water, nutrient, crop, and animal resources. In addition to research, I am involved in teaching Agronomy to BSc(Agric) and Postgraduate Diploma students. My goal is to develop pragmatic and critical thinkers equipped with skills highly valued by the agricultural industry. As an advocate for collaboration, I place great importance on forging purposeful partnerships and cultivating diverse networks.



OPDT/OAC



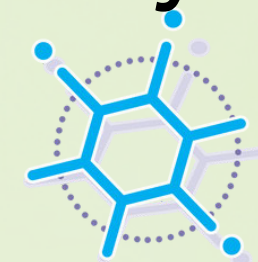
SESSION 2 - Facilitator - Prof Pieter Swanepoel

Speaker 3: Dr Lisa Rothmann - UFS

Dr Lisa Rothmann obtained her undergraduate BSc Agric degrees at the University of the Free State (UFS), and her MSc Agric research focused on sorghum grain mold and associated mycotoxins. Dr Rothmann obtained her doctorate in plant pathology with research titled “The spatial quantification and hierarchy characterization of Sclerotinia prevalence from a decade of observations in soybean and sunflower”

from the UFS in 2020. Her research was under the supervision of Professor Neal McLaren (UFS) and Professor Emerson Del Ponte, at the University of Viçosa in Brazil.

Lisa currently holds the position of lecturer in the Plant Pathology division, Plant Sciences, at the UFS. Dr Rothmann is the Principal Investigator for summer grain pathology and epidemiology research, which is directly associated with producer needs and industry-related challenges. Their research group focuses on management practices associated with Sclerotinia diseases of oilseed and -protein crops, soybean seed health, sorghum foliar and grain diseases as well as concomitant mycotoxins.



OPDT/OAC



SESSION 2 - Facilitator - Prof Pieter Swanepoel

Speaker 4: Mrs Nadia Loubser - MBFI

Mrs. Nadine Loubser is the Head of Microbiology at MBFi, where she develops microbial solutions for sustainable crop production. She focuses on improving Rhizobium, Trichoderma, Pseudomonas, and Bacillus strains in field and lab settings, with an interest in nodulation, abiotic stress, and plant communication.

With extensive experience in agricultural microbiology, Mrs. Loubser manages projects that use molecular techniques and create inoculants. Her research aims to produce biological inputs tailored for South African agriculture.

At the symposium, she will discuss how microbial innovations can enhance soybean productivity and connect science with practical applications.



OPDT/OAC



CLOSING REMARKS:

Dr Erhard Briedenhann

Dr Erhard Briedenhann completed his MSc in Poultry Nutrition at the University of Stellenbosch, followed by his Ph.D. in Agribusiness at the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg. During his career, he has acted as Chairman of the Animal Feed Manufacturers Association for six years; he is currently Vice Chairman of the Protein Research Foundation. He also acts as the Chairperson of the Oilseeds Advisory Committee as well as SAGL, Vice Chairman of SAGIS and on the board of SACTA.



OPDT/OAC