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Boston farmer receives #Agristars award

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Kwanalu board member, Boston farmer and business owner, Sihle Ndlovu has been awarded the first prize at the National Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries #Agristars Recognition Awards for his success and contributions to the agricultural sector, specifically within animal and plant production. The awards showcase the exceptional achievements of young graduates, young entrepreneurs, and producers in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, from around the country.



Sihle Ndlovu with award

Ndlovu was recognised above other young farmers from all over South Africa for his outstanding achievements as owner and managing director of Mjadiya Oil Suppliers and Renewable Energy - a company that offers both agricultural products (crop and livestock) and renewable energy products and services.

Despite his young age, he is also a qualified accountant under full membership of the South African Institute of Professional Accountants (SAIPA), attained an Advanced Diploma in Management Accounting from the Chartered Institute of Management Accounting (CIMA), a Professional Body from the United Kingdom, holds a Master's in Business Administration Degree (MBA), among other certificates and diplomas, and is currently enrolled for a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) at the

University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN).

On the farm and beyond

On top of running his company and studying, Ndlovu still finds time to be involved in organised agriculture, serving a variety of advisory committees and boards. Besides being a Kwanalu board member, he is the chairperson of the board of the Build Environment Support Group (BESG) and serves on the audit and risk committee of Agribusiness Development Agency (ADA) and the ILembe District Municipality. Additionally, he sits on the Management Committee for the Agripark Advisory Council for the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform.

"I think this is why I won – not just for what I do on my farm, there are a lot of good young farmers, but rather for what I do outside of farming and how I help the community and the development of agriculture," said Ndlovu.

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Maximising agriculture and tourism

This is where his real passion lies - on his 360ha farm just outside of Boston, KZN, where he farms livestock, maize, potatoes, and cabbages. Virginia farm, which is home to a number of horse-riding trails, is split by the main road (R617 highway) that goes from Durban through to Lesotho and the Sani Pass. There Ndlovu plans to build a truck stop, petroleum depot and travel centre complete with a coffee shop, curio stands, traditional arts market and food market, which he hopes will boost tourism and create jobs in the area.

"Boston is a beautiful place and it is a shame that people do not stop here. My farm is in the perfect position to draw tourists to the area and to create jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for locals from the surrounding communities," said Ndlovu.



[Image Source: News24](#) - Chelsea Pieterse

As part of his plan to maximise Boston's agricultural sector and tourism and to give back to the local community, Ndlovu has also initiated several cultural development projects, including an Indlamu Traditional Dance Festival and a Rural Horse Riding Club, which run from Virginia farm.

The Impendle Rural Horse Riding Club aims to encourage local horse owners to get involved in horse related recreational activities, particularly horse racing. The club, which meets monthly, places emphasis on teaching the youth about how to better care for their animals and about the opportunities that lie within the horse racing arena. Three of their riders have been invited to participate in the Dundee July later this month, all expenses paid, by the Department of Sports and Recreation. "I believe sport is a great way to discourage our youth from getting involved in drugs and other disruptive activities. By giving people a platform to showcase their talents and learn more, we can encourage more youth to take part in these activities," said Ndlovu.

"Owning your own land or business in South Africa comes with great responsibility, especially for farmers. Real success and transformation comes when you find a way to create meaningful jobs, uplift communities and provide opportunities for others, this is what Sihle is doing, and we are proud of his accomplishments," said Sandy La Marque, CEO of Kwanalu.