

Gibs/Corteva Agriscience programme for women in agriculture kicks off

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The University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) and Corteva Agriscience Women in Agriculture Programme launched recently with its first cohort of participants. The 12-month tailor-made programme aims to enhance the entrepreneurial, business and leadership skills of 30 women in agriculture to enable them to run and operate their agricultural enterprises more effectively. The programme is run through GIBS' Entrepreneurship Development Academy (EDA).

As part of its [2030 sustainability goals](#), Corteva Agriscience, has committed to engaging with and supporting women in agriculture across the globe – to help increase the productivity, incomes, and sustainable farming practices of smallholder farmers as well as to empower women in their communities.

“Women play a critical role in agriculture, and have the ability to produce and make money, uplift their communities, ensuring that their employees and their families have access to education and what they need to be successful,” said Tony Esmeraldo, Business Director of Corteva Agriscience, South Africa. “The programme is invaluable and will build a more inclusive agriculture and food system, ensuring that women in agriculture have the tools they need to be successful.”

The programme was born out of insights from a study conducted by Corteva that investigated women's experiences in the agricultural sector. The research further looked at the role the company could play in ensuring women's success in this sector. As a result, Corteva is collaborating with key institutions and communities worldwide, focusing efforts on empowering women, enabling youth and engaging communities in agriculture to thrive.

It is estimated that globally, women comprise more than 50% of farmers, while in South Africa one out of every ten farmers actively running farms is a woman. Unfortunately, it is widely acknowledged that women in the agricultural sector are not equal to their male peers in terms of economic return and employment. Therefore, empowering and investing in women, specifically in rural areas, will significantly increase productivity while ultimately contributing to economic growth and job creation and help feed growing populations.

Executive Director for Social Education at GIBS, Miranda Hosking, said, “We are living in challenging times, and agriculture is central to many women's livelihoods across the globe. Improvements in the way women run their farming businesses is crucial to improving global food security.”

The programme will seek to help women farmers develop their entrepreneurial, business, and leadership skills through classroom/online interactions and customised workshops that will feature modules such as leading self, developing entrepreneurial competencies, and farming for the future.

“We are excited about this partnership with Corteva Agriscience, because of the potential to contribute to a key economic sector, and impact the lives of the women in the programme as well as the families and communities they support.” She concluded.

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