

INTEGRATE

Industry • Research • Policy

SUNDAY MARCH 2026

- 17h30-18h00 Registration / Arrival drinks
- 18h00-18h30 Welcoming: *Facilitator: Mr Mike Ellis*
- Welcome and Introduction to NGRP
Mr Richard Krige, Grain SA
- History and Vision of NGRP
Mr Jannie de Villiers, outgoing NGRP Chair
- NGRP Ahead: Vision, Priorities and Expectations, *Prof Danie Vermeulen, GRP Chair*
- 18h30-20h00 Reception and Networking Event

Looking to Future of South Africa's Grain Industry: Integrating Industry Needs, Policy Reform and Research Capacity
Prof Ferdi Meyer, Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy

From Vision to Impact: Mobilising STI for a Thriving and Inclusive Grain Industry
Dr Kenny Tenza, Department of Science, Technology and Innovation

From Research to Resilience: Building Resilient Grain Systems for a Changing Environment
Dr. Litha Magingxa, Agricultural Research Council

MONDAY, 2 MARCH 2026

- 07h30-8h30 Registration / Arrival refreshments
- 08h30-8h35 Opening: *Mr Danie Minnaar, Grain SA*
- 08h35-10h30 Strategic Outlook for Grains Research
Facilitator: Mr Mike Ellis
- Welcome and Producers' Priorities for Research: *Dr Tobias Doyer, Grain SA*
- Shaping a Modern Agricultural Sector Through Integrated Research and Innovation: *Mr Mooketsa Ramasodi, Department Of Agriculture*

Agro-chemicals - Where are we heading?
Mr Marius Boshoff, Villa Crop Protection

10h30-10h45 Sponsor Videos

10h45-10h55 Group Photo

10h55-11h15 Refreshment Break & Poster Session

11h15-13h10 Industry Focus
Facilitator: Dr Dirk Strydom

Integrate to Perform: Biostimulants as the Bridge Between Inputs, Stress, and Yield: *Ms Venessa Moodley, Omnia*

The Future of Crop Protection:
Innovation, Integration, and Smart
Regulation: *Mr Rod Bell, Crop Life South Africa*

Evolving Agronomy: New Approaches
and Precision Agriculture
Mr Johannes Nel, OMYA-IDWALA SA

Trends Driving the Grain Industry and
Producer Insights: *Mr Richard Krige, Grain SA*

Research on the horizon: Ensuring
solutions reach farmers:
Mr Driaan Bresler, Corteva

Panel Q&A

13h15- 14h00 Lunch

14h00-15h30 Policy Focus: *Facilitator: Dr Godfrey Kgatle*

Opening Comments:
*Dr Maanda Rambauli, Department of
Agriculture*

Panel Discussion:
Dr Maneshree Jugmohan-Naidu,
*Department of Science, Technology and
Innovation*
Mrs Isabella Bezuidenhout, *National
Biosecurity Hub*
Mr Rikus Kloppers, *SANSOR*
Prof Aldo Stroebel, *University of Mpumalanga*
Mr Derek Mathews, *Silverton Farming*
Mr Corné Louw, *Grain SA*

15h30-16h30 PhD Student Competition
Facilitator: Dr. Lisa Rothmann

Decoding Resilience: Bioinformatics in Modern Plant Breeding,
Mr. Stephan Henning (University of the Free State)

The Global Hitchhiker: How Fall Armyworm Conquered the African
Continent, *Ms. Muano Netshipise (Tshwane University of Technology)*

Modelling the Risk of Sclerotinia Stem Rot of Canola in the
Western Cape of South Africa for Improved Chemical Control, *Ms.
Mariana van Deventer (Stellenbosch University)*

Impact of Rhizobial Diversity on Symbiotic Efficiency in Soybean,
Mr. Edwin Wanjofu (University of Pretoria)

From Surveillance to Adoption: Closing the Sorghum Innovation
Gap, *Mr. Thabiso Masisi (University of the Free State)*

The Identification of Potential Fungal Biocontrol Agents Against
Fusarium oxysporum f. sp. Phaseoli Infection in *Phaseolus
vulgaris*, *Ms. Kacey Hattingh (University of the Western Cape)*

From Latency to Lesions: Molecular Drivers of Gray Leaf Spot
Disease Development on Maize, *Mr. Trystan Nadasen (University of
Pretoria)*

Effects of Different Fertilization Programs on Pigeon Pea
Production, *Mr. Mbulelo Ncayiyana (Agricultural Research Council)*

Exploring *Paenibacillus terrar B6a* as a Sustainable Biocontrol
Agent for *Fusarium proliferatum*, *Mr. Enriquay Smith (University of
the Western Cape)*

Toward Predicting Maize Ear Rots and Mycotoxin Contamination in
Maize, *Ms. Mandisa Shabalala (Stellenbosch University)*

The Potential of Pheromone Mating Disruption to Control
Spodoptera frugiperda Populations in South African Maize
Systems, *Ms. Fanelesibonge Hlabisa (University of Pretoria)*

16h30-19h00 Industry Site Visit
*South African Grain Laboratory ; South African
Grain Information Services, Crop Estimates
Committee, Brand Republic*

GROUP	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	19h00
Group 1	South African Grain Laboratory Venue: Grain Building Ground Floor	Agri -Industry Communication Venue: Brand Republic	Crop Estimates & South African Grain Information Services Venue: Auditorium		Buses Depart
Group 2	Agri -Industry Communication Venue: Brand Republic	South African Grain Laboratory Venue: Grain Building Ground Floor			
Group 3	Crop Estimates & South African Grain Information Services Venue: Auditorium		South African Grain Laboratory Venue: Grain Building Ground Floor	Agri -Industry Communication Venue: Brand Republic	
Group 4			Agri -Industry Communication Venue: Brand Republic	South African Grain Laboratory Venue: Grain Building Ground Floor	

Leveraging Big Data Analytics Capabilities and Data-Driven Decision-Making to Enhance Farm-Level Performance in Agriculture
Mr Francois Wolvaardt, Bayer

Sorghum Research at the University of the Free State: Current Status and Future Planning
Prof Maryke Labuschagne, University of the Free State

Different Soils, Different Responses: Regenerative Farming in Context
Prof Gerhard du Preez, North-West University

SU-BFAP Chair in Precision Agriculture and Relevant Projects
Dr Karen Truter, Stellenbosch University, Winfield United South Africa

09h00-10h00 Minister of Agriculture Session
Facilitator: Dr. Dirk Strydom
Minister John Steenhuisen, Department of Agriculture

Q&A Session

19h30-21h00 Conference Dinner: *Facilitator: Mr Mike Ellis*

Opening: *Mr Jeremia Mathebula (Grain SA)*
Welcoming: *Prof Danie Vermeulen (NGRP Chair)*

Main sponsor address: *Mr Louis Strydom (Omnia)*

Announcement of student presentation winner
Vote of thanks: *Mr Jeremia Mathebula*

10h00-10h30 Refreshment Break

10h30-11h45 Research Focus (Parallel Sessions)

Session A: Disease Monitoring, Surveillance and Management (Facilitator: Dr. Sonia Steenkamp) - *Main auditorium*

Grains of Truth: Integrating Industry, Research and Policy for Smarter Disease Management, *Prof. Adele Mcleod (Stellenbosch University)*

Uniting Science and Stakeholders: Tackling Goss's Wilt in South Africa, *Dr. Henry Njom (Agricultural Research Council)*

Old Enemy, New Faces: New Fumonisin Producing Fusarium Species Emerging in South Africa, *Dr. Neriman Yilmaz (University of Pretoria)*

TUESDAY, 3 MARCH 2026

07h30- 08h00 Registration / Arrival refreshments

08h00-09h00 Research & Industry Focus
Facilitator: Mr Mike Ellis

Host Status of Soybean Cultivars to *Meloidogyne Incognita*: Insight from Greenhouse and Histopathology, *Dr. Milad Rashidifard (University of the Free State)*

Distribution and Relative Abundance of Stem Borers of Maize and Sorghum in Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province, *Dr. Shandukani Netshifhefhe (Tshwane University of Technology)*

From Archives to Alerts: Leveraging Historical Data to Forecast Plant Disease, *Dr. Lindy Rose (Stellenbosch University)*

Session B: Biotechnology and Genomics
(Facilitator: Dr. Renée Prins) - Conference room 2

Biotechnological Innovation for Improving Brassicaceae, *Prof. Marshall Keyser (University of the Western Cape)*

Integrating Mycotoxin Profiling and Long-Read Metabarcoding to Evaluate the Safety of Water-Damaged Grain, *Prof. Cobus Visagie (University of Pretoria)*

Wheat Phenomics: Insights from Recent Studies, *Ms. Cecile Bester (Stellenbosch University)*

Innovations in Fungal Mycobiome Profiling in Maize, *Prof. Dave Berger (University of Pretoria)*

Screening Soybean for *Sclerotinia* Stem Rot Resistance: Effects of Method, Isolate and Genotype, *Dr. Chrisna Steyn (University of the Free State)*

Scanning the Horizon: Maize Virus Diversity and Early Detection in South Africa, *Dr. David Read (University of Pretoria)*

Session C: Agronomy, Climate and Production Practices
(Facilitator: Ms. Pfano Musetsho) - Conference room 1

Forecasting for Farmers: What It Is and How It Works, *Dr. Henno Havenga (North-West University)*

The Potential of Wheat and Canola Production in the Eastern Cape
Dr. Flackson Tshuma (Stellenbosch University)

Challenges We Face, *Dr. Elmarie van der Watt (University of the Free State)*

The Resistance Reality: Navigating the Decline of Conventional Chemistries in *Diuraphis noxia* Management, *Dr. Lintle Mohase (University of the Free State)*

Exploring Nematology: From Grain production Practices, *Dr. Nancy Ntidi (Agricultural Research Council)*

Resilience, Risk, and Profitability of Sunflower Systems in South Africa, *Dr. Phrasia Mapfumo (University of Pretoria)*

11h45-12h00 Move back to auditorium

12h00-13h15 Strengthening Resilience in South African Grain Systems
Facilitator: Dr Lavinia Kisten

Bridging the Gap: Establishing a South African Genomic Framework for Next-Generation Cereal Breeding, *Dr. Francois Burger (Stellenbosch University)*

The Spread of Multiple Herbicide-Resistant Populations of *Amaranthus* in the Summer Grain Region, *Dr. Nhlanhla Shabangu (University of Pretoria)*

Robustodorus arachidis: A New Nematode Threat to the Groundnut Industry, *Dr. Sonia Steenkamp (Agricultural Research Council)*

Epidemiology and Field Pathology Research Shaped by Partnership in the Grain Production Landscape, *Dr. Lisa Rothmann (University of the Free State)*

13h15-13h30 Consolidation and Way Forward
Prof Danie Vermeulen

13h30-14h00 Lunch