

# Buy agrochemicals from an accredited crop adviser

**Elriza Theron**, marketing and communications manager, CropLife SA

**A**griculture in South Africa is based on more than just a business exchange or making a profit – it is based on human relationships and trust. However, if something goes wrong, it shakes these very foundations to the core and can leave a producer exposed – and often without recourse.

Crop protection plays a critical role in this value chain. One could even say that trust is necessary in this area more so than any other, considering that these important substances are potentially hazardous and could pose an extreme risk not only to a producer's entire harvest, but also to consumers and the environment. Would it not make sense then, to buy from someone who is qualified and who has committed to abide by the highest ethical standards?

This is why CropLife SA embarked on a journey some years ago to establish a continuous professional development (CPD) programme that ensures agrochemical sales agents of member companies are provided with a range of learning activities that maintains and enhances their professional competencies and knowledge. The programme aims to advance and promote the status of the agent as a crop adviser, acting in the interest of the environment, community and the producer.

It requires that a participant reaches a certain number of points in three respective categories, namely technical training and learning activities, business management training and learning activities as well as safety and legal-related training and activities. In addition, they must complete the Basic Crop Protection course as a minimum requirement for participation.

Once an agent has obtained the required number of CPD points, he/she is issued with a CropLife SA accreditation card and earns the title of crop adviser. At the moment it is a physical card, but soon it will be available as a digital card on an Android or iPhone device.

This means that producers can have peace of mind when buying from a CropLife SA-accredited crop adviser, because they know the person is qualified, up to date with industry knowledge and adheres to CropLife SA's code of conduct. For exporters of crops, this is particularly important for auditing purposes such as GLOBALG.A.P.

CropLife SA encourages all producers to insist on this accreditation before purchasing agrochemical products. That being said, a producer must always ensure to only use products that are registered in South Africa for the intended purpose, which refers to a specific pest, crop and application method as well. An easy way to verify this is to register on [www.agri-intel.com](http://www.agri-intel.com) and view the label information of the product in question.

The responsibility lies with each player in the value chain to ensure that the trust that is held so dearly in agriculture, is maintained. ●

For more information contact CropLife SA at 087 980 5163 or [info@croplife.co.za](mailto:info@croplife.co.za).

# OMNIA doen baanbrekerswerk oor grondgesondheid

**Carien Grobler**, Omnia

**“**Om in die toekoms volhoubaar te boer, sal 'n balans tussen alle produksiekomponente, onder meer chemiese en biologiese insette, vereis.”

Só sê Venessa Moodley, hoof van OmniBio® by Omnia Kunsmiss. Venessa en haar span doen reeds meer as 'n dekade lank intensiewe navorsing om die biologiese aspek van grondgesondheid volledig te ondersoek. Sy verduidelik dat die toediening van biologiese produkte 'n toonaangewende ontwikkeling in die landbou is, wat die prestasie van tradisionele insette drasties kan verhoog.

Met spesifieke verwysing na 'n nuwe mikrobiële produk, sê sy: “Mikrobes is 'n niechemiese, omgewingsvriendelike inset wat 'n groot invloed op opbrengste en grondgesondheid kan hê.”

“Hoewel mikrobiële produkte reeds dekades lank op die mark is, het verskaffers gesukkel om betroubare en herhaalbare resultate te verkry. Ná jare van navorsing en toetsing het ons baie van die geheime van mikrobes ontsluit, wat gelei het tot produkte wat 'n reuse-impak het,” sê Venessa.

Sy lê verder klem daarop dat die behoud van Suid-Afrika se landbougrond sal afhang van volgehoue navorsing oor produksiemetodes, wat alternatiewe soos die toediening van mikrobes insluit. “Ons sal moet aanhou om hierdie alternatiewe produkte te ontwikkel om die verbruik van water en voedingstowwe deur plante te optimaliseer.”

Venessa verwys ook na die toepassing van die maatskappy se grondgesondheidsprisma wat pas bekendgestel is. “Hierdie tegnologie meet die biologiese, chemiese en fisiese eienskappe van grond, waardeur groot hoeveelhede data verkry word. Die data word dan aangewend om aanbevelings te maak om die mees beperkende faktore vir volhoubare saaiboerdery effektief te hanteer.” ●



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– Foto: Verskaf