

SASRI and the Swaziland Sugar Association Joint Research Agreement

South African Sugarcane Research Institute

THE SOUTH AFRICAN SUGARCANE RESEARCH INSTITUTE (SASRI) AND THE SWAZILAND SUGAR ASSOCIATION (SSA) HAVE ENTERED INTO A RESEARCH AGREEMENT THAT CENTRES ON SASRI PROVIDING A CROP PRODUCTION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (R&D) SERVICE TO THE SWAZILAND SUGAR INDUSTRY. THE ENVISAGED COOPERATION WILL INVOLVE THE JOINT DEVELOPMENT OF A RESEARCH PROGRAMME OF WORK IN ACCORDANCE WITH SASRI NORMS AND STANDARDS.

The R&D needs of the SSA will be addressed by SASRI in a similar manner in which they are addressed for the South African sugar industry. This will involve a systematic analysis of research needs of the Swaziland sugar industry followed by thorough scrutiny, validation and prioritisation of needs in accordance with SASRI research evaluation procedures. While the

programme will be jointly managed by both parties, the SSA will finance its operational costs and will continue to maintain its support for, and administration of, its existing resources.

The expected benefits of this cooperation include a renewed and consolidated focus on research into irrigated areas as well as an opportunity to organise and manage released variety trials for irrigated regions of the sugar industry. Biosecurity will also be improved through the implementation of disease screening trials and monitoring of insect pests. Finally, the research agreement will encourage information sharing and access to resources while providing an opportunity for both industries to consolidate their research efforts and benefit from joint collaboration. ☺



From left to right: Charlie Reinhardt (Research manager - SASRI), Patrick Mkhalihi (Irrigation assistant - SSA), Mike Matsebula (Head of SSA), Mandla Gama of Royal Swazi Sugar Corporation (RSSC), Bernard Shongwe (Variety Selection - SSA), Musa Dlamini (Head of Crop Production Research - SSA), Gerrie Scheepers (Ubombo grower), Carolyn Baker (Director - SASRI), Riekert van Heerden (Sugarcane physiologist - SASRI), Jabulane Sifundza (Head of extension - SSA), Stuart Rutherford (Senior pathologist - SASRI), Kerry Redshaw (Operations manager - SASRI).