

Toyota Kwanalu Young Farmer of the Year 2022 winner announced

KwaZulu-Natal's Agricultural Union, Kwanalu has announced macadamia and banana farmer, Tammy Williams as its 2022 KZN Toyota Kwanalu Young Farmer of the Year.



Source: Supplied | Tammy Williams

Williams will represent Kwanalu and all KwaZulu-Natal farmers in the Toyota SA/Agri SA National Young Farmer of the Year Competition 2022 taking place later this year, where she will compete against top farmers from all nine provinces.

Williams impressed judges with her determination in learning from the ground up, mastering many technical aspects of farming implementing environmentally conscious applications and driving community upliftment.

"Every year we are astounded at the extremely high standard of our young farmers this is a testament to the passion, determination and excellence of agriculture in our province. Their resilience, commitment and optimism in both the industry and our country is truly inspiring," says Sandy La Marque, CEO of Kwanalu.

The Toyota/ Kwanalu Young Farmer of the Year 2022 competition was open to farmers under the age of 40, male or female who are members of their provinces' agricultural unions.

The judging and evaluation of the farmers and their agricultural practices take place at a provincial level with the applicants being evaluated on all aspects of their business including their overall vision for the future of their farm/ business. Entrants are judged on their management and business philosophies, as well as the technical competence with which their philosophy is applied.

Perseverance key to success for young farmer

With no prior farming experience, Williams started as a receptionist at Windemere Farm near King Shaka International Airport 12 years ago. Taking an interest in farming and showing a willingness to learn, Williams' potential was recognised and she was promoted to manage a section of the banana farm operations.

Rising to each challenge over the years, Williams took over the production and management of several banana farms totalling 120 hectares and, in 2013, she expanded into macadamia production. Since then, they have grown their macadamia operations to 150 hectares.

"Having been involved in both the technical and administrative aspects of farming, I have learnt that the two go hand in hand in keeping a farming operation efficient and, as a result, a lot of money can be saved when these elements are not viewed as separate," says Williams.

Striving towards areas of improvement, Williams has her sights set on fine-tuning their macadamia and banana operations towards increasing profitability for the business in the future.



Source: ©Zoran Orcik via [123RF](#)

"I believe that the quality of the macadamia nuts produced on our farm will be what sets us apart in future and we have been getting closer to understanding how to do this by trying out new techniques, while also calibrating the ideal conditions for a superior end product," says Williams.

Williams is passionate about conservation and is always looking for new ways to minimise the use of insecticides and herbicides.

"I am an avid bee lover and have introduced basil and other vegetation to attract good insects for the farm. I also make sure we conserve the natural bush and waterways to take care of the sensitive ecosystems on the farm," says Williams.

Williams believes that anyone with a willingness to work hard and to learn can achieve their heart's desire.

"I am not from a farming background, but through opportunity and perseverance, I have found a passion for agriculture. We provide opportunities for our staff to extend themselves into new areas, just as I have been afforded. Watching their growth and passion for farming develop and enabling them to provide for their families is extremely gratifying," says Williams.

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