

Meet Mark Corbett, new MD of Goodleaf Wellness



By [Lauren Hartzenberg](#)

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Mark Corbett has taken up the role of managing director at Goodleaf Wellness, and will work to help further accelerate the growth strategy of the premium cannabis wellness company.



Mark Corbett, Goodleaf Wellness MD. Source: Supplied

Based in Cape Town and a father of three boys, Corbett brings with him over 20 years of professional experience, having spearheaded a number of innovative brands and expanded businesses internationally.

Prior to joining Goodleaf, he was the deputy MD of Canopy Growth Africa, a position that immersed Corbett in the business of cannabis. Before that, he occupied the role of regional director of Asia for Union Swiss, the owner and distributor of popular skincare brand Bio-Oil.

It was Corbett's decades of hands-on operating experience coupled with a consistent track record of transforming enterprises and delivering business objectives, that confirmed him as the best fit for MD of Goodleaf Wellness. This new role marks a welcome return for Corbett to consumer packaged goods, with Goodleaf's consumer product offering including CBD oils, skincare topicals, sparkling flavoured water, natural vapes and powder sachets.



Goodleaf CBD Kit. Source: Supplied

The company's [R650m merger](#) with Lesotho-based Highlands Investments (formerly Canopy Growth Africa) transformed it into the largest vertically-integrated cannabis operation in Africa. And today, Goodleaf Wellness is able to combine high-quality, low-cost cannabis cultivation and production with world-class brand and distribution across South Africa and Europe.

With the industrialisation and commercialisation of cannabis ramping up, we chatted to Corbett about taking up a position at one of the premier companies in this space, and what lies ahead for him and the Goodleaf Wellness brand.

■ **Mark, congrats on your appointment! What excites you most about joining Goodleaf Wellness?**

I was super excited about joining Goodleaf for two reasons really. Firstly, because I've always had massive respect for the Goodleaf brand and what it's achieved in the wellness space; and then secondly, because it brings me full circle back into consumer brands where I cut my teeth for 12 years at Bio-Oil.

■ **What's at the top of your to-do list in your new role?**

To date, I have been focused on bringing structure into the SA business to enable it to scale to the size we anticipate. This will also then enable me to focus my energy on our UK rollout later this year.



Goodleaf Relief Roller. Source: Supplied

■ ***How do you believe your time at Canopy Growth Africa and Union Swiss prepared you for your new position as Goodleaf MD?***

The experience at Bio-Oil (Union Swiss) was invaluable as it taught me how to roll out a dominant consumer brand in the SA market and to replicate that across an outsourced global model. Bio-Oil is now available in over 120 countries.

My time at Canopy Growth introduced me to the cannabis space and taught me all I needed to know about the plant and its value in the wellness ecosystem. I truly believe that plant-based medicine will play an increasingly important role in our daily lives as we transition from a pharma-led wellness paradigm to a much more holistic natural view on health and wellness.

■ ***As a vertically integrated cannabis company in South Africa, Goodleaf is operating in an exciting space with major emerging market growth potential. What would you say are the most notable opportunities, but also challenges, facing the business at this point?***

Goodleaf is very well poised to take advantage of a rapidly growing local wellness and functional category – we see huge potential to grow all parts of our consumer product range over the next three years. We are particularly excited about our medical cannabis brand, Altitude, which will really allow us to leverage our cultivation strength in Lesotho to deliver high quality, affordable, sun-grown organic products into the global medical and wellness markets.

The greatest challenges facing our business are regulatory uncertainty and the lack of speed with which governments and regulatory bodies are opening up and enabling a commercial wellness and medical cannabis category.



Goodleaf Snack Bars. Source: Supplied

■ **How would Goodleaf like to see policies and regulations around cannabis change in South Africa?**

We would wholeheartedly support a well-regulated commercial industry in South Africa.

The government has already indicated its support for the cannabis industry and now the various government departments need to work together to develop and implement a regulatory framework that enables a well-regulated commercial industry to flourish.



Goodleaf merges with Highlands Investments to create R650m cannabis company

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■ **Anything in particular you're currently reading, watching or listening to for work inspiration?**

I love a good biography and I'm currently reading *Amazon Unbound*, the Jeff Bezos story. I find it fascinating how Amazon has become such a powerhouse across the globe and there are so many learnings there for new businesses. I am also watching the series called *WeCrashed*, about the rise and fall of WeWork. Some scary examples of what not to do when building a business...

■ **What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

I love the outdoors and spend as much time there as possible. I used to be an avid trail runner but am now transitioning to open water swimming as my knees are finding the running tougher each year. I'm also starting fly fishing, which I plan to spend much more of my time perfecting :)

■ **What impact do you hope to make in your industry?**

Goodleaf is able to make a significant impact in our industry through:

- Creating employment opportunities across the value chain,
- Educating consumers, medical professionals and regulators on the benefits of cannabis, and
- Working with government and regulators to develop and implement an inclusive commercial cannabis industry.



Lauren Hartzenberg 29 Mar 2022



■ **Could you leave us with some valuable career advice?**

My career has taught me the importance of resilience and perseverance. Working in startups can be tough with new obstacles thrown in your path every day. You just need to constantly work at overcoming these challenges – if it were easy, then everyone would be doing it.

I find great satisfaction in working in nascent industries and knowing that there isn't a well-trodden path to follow and that we need to forge our own way.

ABOUT LAUREN HARTZENBERG

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