**Ntyatyambo Interview notes**

**INTERVIEW INFORMATION**

Date: April 2021

Location: Online

Interviewer: Makhanana Malungane

1. **PERSONAL INFORMATIONS**

Name/pseudonym: Ntyatyambo

Age: 33

Sex: Female

Highest Level of Education: Undergraduate degree

Role in agro-food system: Farmer (including hydroponics)

Do you have other occupations? No

How long have you been involved in the business? June 2016

1. **FARMER**

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| 8) | Where do you farm? | Bapsfontien |
| 9) | What do you grow? Which of these are your main products? | * Green beans * Baby Marrow * Swiss chard * Green peppers |
| 10) | How many hectares do you farm on? | 14 hectares |
| 11) | How did you obtain this land and under what tenure arrangements? | We began by leasing a portion (2h) of a farm and in three months we took over the whole farm. Within a year we moved to the 14 hectare farm we have now |
| 12) | Have you always produced and sold the same thing? | No. I began selling swiss chard (spinach) and over time I sold the rest - green peppers, baby marrow and green beans. |
| 13) | How did you start farming? How did you learn the business? Where did you obtain the capital? | I had no idea that I would be a farmer one day but I knew I wanted to do my own thing one day - run my own business. I attended a lot of entrepreneurship workshops to prepare me for when that day would come. During one of these workshops I met a guy, who has become one of my closest friends, who is a pig farmer. He told me about his journey and I caught the farming bug instantly. I got home, did some research and a week later I was out looking for land to lease for my farming operations |
| 14) | How many people are employed full-time and how many casual or seasonal workers? | There are 15 employees. We take up casual workers week work gets more hectic. |
| 15) | What are your main inputs | * Seedlings * Fertilizer * labour * Water * Electricity * Tunnels * Nets * Green houses * Logistics * Banking fees |
| 16) | Where do you obtain your inputs? | It is a mix. Local suppliers and big suppliers that I get off the net. |
| 17) | Where do you sell, which markets, to who? | Joburg Market  Pick n Pay  Food Lovers Market  Informal Traders (kerk street etc) |
| 18) | What do you supply? | Swiss chard  Green beans  Green pepper  Baby marrow |
| 19) | How often? | Almost everyday, depending on the delivery and weather patterns |
| 20) | How did you get/find your market? | I leaned my farmers network and some of my previous experience from my first business venture (recruitment company, run for 4 years) |
| 21) | Are produce sold, collected or delivered? | All of the above, depending on the order. |
| 22) | What quantity or value of each crop/produce sold? |  |
| 23) | Which markets are working best for you? | The informal traders, because they pay in cash upon delivery. There is running after them. |
| 24) | What could be improved to make markets work better for you? | Information, transparency and collaboration. People think I am sell-out because I engage with the white farming community but they have been more helpful than the black community. And I have black farmers that I mentored me as well |
| 25) | Have you sold elsewhere before? | Yes, there are sporadic wholesale orders from time to time requiring me to deliver goods to Delmas and the likes |
| 26) | Are you part of any association or organisations | Yes, quite a few. I have sat in numerous forums, conferences, associations and organisations with various farmers and people within the value chain |
| 27) | Do you have any collaborations? | Yes. Among my local farming community and bigger organisation associations |
| 28) | Since this time last year, has there been any changes in your farming, and if so what changes and when and if there was a change what caused the changes? | 1. **What do you grow?** 2. **The availability and prices you buy inputs for?** 3. **The sources and prices you pay?** 4. **What do you sell?** 5. **The prices you sell for**. 6. **In the cost of doing business.** 7. **The quantity sold.** 8. **Customers** 9. **Suppliers?** 10. **People you collaborate with.** 11. **The number of workers?** 12. **The government regulations or taxes or other government interventions**? 13. **Space where you sell?** 14. How you travel to sell produce or to get inputs or to get inputs and the transport used? 15. **What has the biggest impact of Covid-19 on your farming? (Short & long term)** 16. **What are the impacts of the lockdown on your farming, including the markets you supply?** 17. **Have there been any other changes (outside the farming) impacts in your life from Covid?** |
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H. COVID-19 and COVID measures

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| 103) | What do you know about government responses to Covid? |  |
| 104) | How did you hear about Covid and the government responses to it? |  |
| 105) | How have these responses affected you? |  |
| 106) | How have Covid and Covid measures affected your household and reproductive work? Any effects on economic activities |  |
| 107) | How have you responded to the changes brought by Covid? |  |
| 108) | Have you benefitted from any Covid related government or non-government support? If so, what support was received? |  |
| 109) | How have you responded to the changes imposed by the government? | 1. What did they do in response (probe any innovations, changes in equipment or technology)?      1. Participation in any associations? Has the role of that association changed?      1. Have you been part of or had any discussion with any government officials or leaders? If so with who/which level of government? Did you get any benefit or see any change from that discussion? |
| 110) | Has there been any change since Covid in what you and your family eat? |  |

**Additional notes**

Tyatyambo is a well-known young black farmer. She has a very high social media presence and even has her own podcast about her farming journey. I was able to get in contact with her through LinkedIn and email. We spoke briefly about the beginnings of her farming experience and how she initially had a hard time getting access into the market.

Tyatyambo began her career in the corporate world after completing her degree at UJ. She worked in corporate for 2 year then went out on her own to start a business in the human resources space specialising in highly technical skills in the mining and manufacturing. The business thrived for 4 years until the 2015/6 economic downturn in the manufacturing and mining industry that saw fewer companies seeking outsource human resources services.

She was introduced to farming, during an entrepreneurship workshop in 2016. There, Tyatyambo met a guy, who has become one of my closest friends, who is a pig farmer. The pig farmer shared his journey with Tyatyambo and she caught the farming bug instantly. Considering the dip in activity of her human resource business, Tyatyambo saw farming as a better alternative to her current ventur. She went home and did some research and a week later I was out looking for land to lease for my farming operations

However, after some time she pulled out of the interview process and directed me to the organisation for market agents as a better source for the research underway.