

## POSTER SUMMARY

**EFFECTIVE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER FOR SMALL-SCALE SUGARCANE GROWERS THROUGH RADIO BROADCASTING**BHENGU B<sup>1</sup>, MASONDO T<sup>1</sup>, HLELA S<sup>1</sup>, DLAMINI V<sup>2</sup> AND MNGOMEZULU S<sup>3</sup><sup>1</sup>South African Sugarcane Research Institute, P/Bag X02, Mount Edgecombe, 4300, South Africa<sup>2</sup>Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs, PO Box 9059, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, South Africa<sup>3</sup>University of KwaZulu-Natal, P/Bag X01, Scottsville, 3201, South Africa[bongi.bhengi@sugar.org.za](mailto:bongi.bhengi@sugar.org.za) [thulani.masondo@sugar.org.za](mailto:thulani.masondo@sugar.org.za) [sifiso.hlela@sugar.org.za](mailto:sifiso.hlela@sugar.org.za)  
[vuyani.dlamini@kzndae.gov.za](mailto:vuyani.dlamini@kzndae.gov.za) [Mngomezulus2@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Mngomezulus2@ukzn.ac.za)**Abstract**

The South African Sugarcane Research Institute (SASRI) is continuously finding innovative ways of ensuring that its wealth of knowledge and technology is accessible to the industry. Small-scale growers (SSGs) remain a unique and challenging sector within the sugar industry with regards to getting information across in a manner that is suitable and relevant. Language barriers, low levels of literacy among SSGs and capacity of extension staff are some of the greatest challenges. Although the Extension Venture Agreement (EVA) partnership between SASRI and the Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs (DAEA) has assisted in increasing the capacity of field staff, providing extension service to approximately 20 000 small-scale sugarcane growers in KwaZulu-Natal, the wide geographical areas and displacement of SSGs in rural areas has made it difficult to maintain regular face-to-face contact with growers.

With 89% of the rural community in South Africa having access to radio, this medium has proved to be a cheap, unique and effective method of transferring information and providing advice to SSGs in KZN, thus helping to overcome the language and physical barriers. Since 2003, SASRI, in conjunction with the DAEA, has presented various agricultural topics relating to sugarcane production annually across 10 community radio stations, as well as SABC radio Ukhosi FM. Topics are presented in Zulu by trained EVA extension staff. Awareness created through the broadcasts has resulted in an increase of post-show callers of 38 in 2011 to 73 in 2012 across all radio stations, and an influx of phone calls to extension staff from growers. SASRI will continue this involvement with a focus on monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and impact of radio as a technology transfer medium, with the objective of improving the quality and method of delivery so that it continues to draw a wider audience.

*Keywords:* radio broadcast, extension, technology transfer, small scale growers