

# SASTA 2026 Award Winners

The 2026 SASTA Congress celebrated excellence in research, innovation and technical achievement through its annual awards, recognising individuals whose work continues to advance the sugar industry. The awards acknowledge outstanding papers and posters across the agricultural and **factory** sectors, highlighting the dedication, expertise and valuable research undertaken by scientists, researchers and industry professionals.

Congratulations to all the 2026 award winners and highly commended recipients on their well-deserved achievements and for helping to shape the future of the sugar industry.

## AGRICULTURE

### Kynoch



**First: Robyn Jacob** with co-authors M Ghai, S Joshi poster *“Deciphering Molecular Defence Pathways Underlying Sugarcane Resistance to Eldana saccharina.”*



**Highly Commended: Hendrik Jansen van Rensburg** poster *“Tons-Time: A More Appropriate Metric for Quantifying Haulage Effort in Sugarcane Supply Chains in Terrain-Variable Environments.”*

### Cecil Renaud



**First: Hendrik Jansen van Rensburg** paper *“Tons-Time: A More Appropriate Metric for Quantifying Haulage Effort in Sugarcane Supply Chains in Terrain-Variable Environments.”*



**Highly Commended: Ikageng Maluleke** with co-author M Kadwa for paper title *“Macroeconomic Volatility and Its Implications for RV Pricing and Grower Sustainability”.*

### Student



**Neliswa Madlala** with co-authors Mdlambuzi T, Elephant D & Muchaonyerwa P for paper *“Preliminary Evaluation of the Mehlich-3 Multi-Element Extraction Method for Soil Phosphorus Determination”.*

### Poster



**First: Sharon McFarlane** with co-authors A Koch, C Kistan, T Mofurutsi, Y Mfeka, S Rutherford. Poster title *“100 years of sugarcane pathology research in SA”.*



**Highly Commended: Peter Tweddle** poster title *“Updating of SASRI’s Mechanisation Performance Standards”.*

# FACTORY

## Talbot-Crosbie



**First: David Love** for paper “A New C-Masseccuite Reheater at Eston.”



**Highly Commended: Bryan Barker** with co-authors Davis, SB and Zhou, M paper “Assessing the Millability and Colour of Pre-Release Sugarcane Varieties.”



**Highly Commended: Washington Mutatu** with co-authors Mambanje CN, Rambwawasvika H paper “Impact of Carryover Cane on Processability and Quality Parameters of Selected Sugarcane Varieties in the Zimbabwe Sugar Industry.”

## Cecil Renaud



**First: Ameel Bobat** with co-authors Dlamini S, Kalua N and Naidoo S for the paper, “Steps taken in Reducing Supplementary Fuel Costs and Increased Pith Revenue at Maidstone Mill.”



**Highly Commended: Brad Rawlins** with co-authors Marais CPF and van der Merwe S for the paper, “Influence of Overfire Air Strategies on Combustion Stability Under Bagasse Moisture Variability in Industrial Grate-Fired Boilers.”



**Highly Commended: Anthony Wewege** –for the paper, “IE3 Motor Efficiency an Industry Perspective.”

## Robin Renton Memorial Award



Brad Rawlins with co-authors Marais CPF and van der Merwe S for the paper, *"Influence of Overfire Air Strategies on Combustion Stability Under Bagasse Moisture Variability in Industrial Grate-Fired Boilers."*

## Operational Paper



Marcel Nkwesam with co-authors Ansari H, Abede D, Kumar P, and Rodrigues J for the paper, *"Start-Up Challenges and Operational Performance of a Standalone Sugar Refinery."*

## Poster



Shared First: Hardlife Rambwawasvika for the poster, *"Hydrothermal Synthesis and Characterization of Low-Cost Zeolites from Sugarcane Bagasse Fly Ash."*



Shared First: Sanet Nel for the poster, *"The Dextran Trilogy."*