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 paper *"Deciphering Molecular Defence Pathways Underlying Sugarcane Resistance to Eldana saccharina."*



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



Cecil Renaud

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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. Ĵaãôù½ðņùÍù½ņĜğğņ ½©ðôņãÈņhüÉ©ðµ©Þ½ņ a©ùÌãǀãÉČņd½ô½©ðµÌņÍÞņh ıĴ



Highly Commended: Peter Tweddle poster title *"Updating of SASRI's Mechanisation Performance Standards".*



SASTA 2026 Award Winners continued...

FACTORY

Talbot-Crosbie

First: David Love for paper "*A New C-Massecuite 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."*



SASTA 2026 Award Winners continued...

Operational Paper

Marcel Nkwekam *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."*





SASTA Membership

SASTA members are persons engaged in the growing, milling or processing of cane or the refining of sugar in South Africa, or persons engaged in scientific or technical research work into any aspect of sugar production or sugarcane processing. Membership is also accepted from persons not directly involved in these areas of work but who have business relationships with the South African sugar industry.

Membership Benefits

As a SASTA member you will be able to:

- enjoy preferential rates for annual scientific congresses, which are great opportunities for sharing knowledge and networking within the industry,
- attend SASTA webinars, a regular feature on the SASTA calendar of events enabling convenient information sharing via an online platform,
- qualify for CPD points for being a member and for congress and webinar attendance,
- interact with other members by participating in excursions, workshops and visits to farms and factories covering topical issues pertaining to various industries, aimed at encouraging information sharing and skills development,
- enjoy immediate access to congress proceedings, newsletters and related technical publications,
- keep abreast of accurate and standardised factory chemical control methods through our Factory Control Advisory Committee and the SASTA Laboratory Manual.

To become a member or for more information email **sasta.secretariat@sugar.org.za**