

Local tea brand crowned Food Lover's Market's new social enterprise supplier

Food Lover's Market has named Setšong African Tea Crafters as this year's winning social enterprise to join the retailer's supplier network through its Seeds of Change Supplier Development Partnership. The local tea brand's triumph comes after a stringent bootcamp and a day of pitching to senior Food Lover's Market executives.



Retang Phaahla, chief executive of Setšong Tea Crafters. Source: Supplied

The Food Lover's Market Seeds of Change Supplier Development Partnership was created as an opportunity for social enterprises to join the fresh produce retailer's network as a supplier. The initiative attracted over 270 refined entries, and the successful applicant was announced on 13 May 2022, following a four-day boot camp with the top 10 applicants at Vredenberg Manor in Somerset West, Cape Town.

As the successful applicant, Setšong African Tea Market will now supply tea products to the Food Lover's Market Group. In third place was Yamama Gemmer, a traditional ginger beer and in second place, Home Bao, a producer of frozen dumplings.

Says Michael Coppin, director and co-founder of Food Lover's Market, "A huge congratulations to Retang Phaahla from Setšong African Tea Crafters, who impressed the panel with her well thought-out and cohesive business pitch. The other nine applicants were also very impressive, and the high standard of applications reflects the great mix of social enterprises across South Africa who are focused on building a sustainable society and economy."



Among the top 10 finalists were Tina Long (Home Bao), Retang Phaahla (Setšong African Tea Crafters) and Mbsibudi Makgato (RMCatering Services). Source: Supplied

Community empowerment through tea

Setšong African Tea Crafters, which offers eight types of tea, has created a platform for job creation within rural communities, focusing on the empowerment of youth and women, as well as the promotion of African Indigenous knowledge systems and practices.

Says Retang Phaahla, chief executive of Setšong Tea Crafters, “We have created 20 permanent jobs and 15 casual jobs. We have also upskilled rural cooperatives to supply the processed herbal ingredients to the company for further value addition. Setšong is focused on the conservation of biological resources and plants and we have partnered with the Agricultural Research Council in focusing on the cultivation of indigenous crops as well as by raising environmental awareness within rural areas to preserve and protect these indigenous plants.”

“Being a supplier of FLM offers a welcomed boost to our social enterprise as it offers us growth and sustainability, while making it all the more possible to increase value, through accessibility, for our customers.”



The Village Market Africa triumphs in Food Lover's Seeds of Change initiative

28 Apr 2021



Top 10 finalists

The four-day boot camp exposed the top 10 applicants to a macro view of the global and South African retail landscape, including trends, challenges and opportunities within the sector. During this time they had face-to-face workshops offering guidance, mentorship and necessary skills to market their business.

On the fifth day, the top 10 businesses pitched to the Food Lover's Market panel, consisting of of Mike Coppin (director/co-founder), Andrew Millson (group HR and sustainability executive), Stephen van Vuuren (managing executive: buying) and Terri Harris (head of colleague engagement).

Although the retailer received hundreds of applications, the top 10 candidates were determined after a rigorous selection process and a two-day webinar with the shortlisted 20 applicants.

The top 10 finalists, in no particular order, are:

- Home Bao, represented by Tina (Tzu-Ting) Long (frozen foods)
- Hazile Agriculture, represented by Phindile Msomi (small holder farmer)
- A Greater You Holdings, represented by Siviwe Njozela (organic farmer)
- Kofi Kulcha, represented by Thabiso Mnguni (beverages)
- Setšong African Tea Crafters, represented by Retang Phaahla (beverages)
- Integrated Aquaculture, represented by Lance Quiding (aquaponic farming)
- Kaapschön Boerdery, represented by Chanté Hendricks (apple and pear farmer)
- Farmer's Digital Market, represented by Mvula Zwane (digital farmers market)
- RM Catering Services, represented by Mosibudi Makgato (beverages)
- Little Foodease Pty Ltd, represented by Louisa Gibbons (frozen foods)



SAB Sharp Awards 2022 open for entries

4 May 2022



Says Coppin, "We are so honoured to have been able to work with – and celebrate – these remarkable businesses and the social impact they make in the communities they serve. It speaks directly to the core values of Food Lovers Market. Their dedication to social impact and change, quality, innovation and partnership is critical to achieving a more sustainable economy. We are so proud to be part of their world and being able to support these enterprises through the Seeds of Change Development Partnership."

"We wish to thank our partners who have come on board to help us grow these social enterprises. Home Bao, as the second runner up, will be receiving brand consultation from Hamiltons Advertising - the creative agency to Food Lover's Market, The WorksGroup will be outfitting the Setšong African Tea Crafters team and Vredenburg Manor have partnered with us as hosts for the 2022 Seeds of Change bootcamp and Fertile Ground pitching days," concludes Coppin.

The Seeds of Change Development Partnership, a Food Lover's Market Earth Lovers initiative, was facilitated by the Social Enterprise Academy (SEA), a specialist learning and development organisation supporting social change organisations in South Africa.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>