

## Background

SA Essential Oil Business Incubator (SEOBI) was started in April 2006 after receiving initial funding from the Seda Technology Programme (STP), a member of the Department of Trade & Industry (dti) group.

SEOBI was created to establish and support emerging essential oil farmers. This highly specialized incubator addresses all the known constraints experienced by emerging oil farmers.

## Vision & Mission

### Vision

To become the catalyst to propel small enterprises into market leaders in the essential oils industry.

### Mission

To provide comprehensive business development support through training, mentorship, market facilitation and commercialization of enterprises in the essential oils industry.

## Contact Us

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# seobi

SA ESSENTIAL OIL BUSINESS INCUBATOR

## SEOBI Services

- Evaluations of potential emerging farms and assess viability of essential oil production.
- Recommendations of essential oil crops to be planted.
- Assessment of agricultural infrastructure required before essential oil production can be considered.
- Assistance with developing business plans for the farmers and their stake holders or financiers.
- Assistance in obtaining financial support from the public and private sectors both locally and internationally.
- Comprehensive assistance with initial land preparation and plantings.
- Continual, on-farm agronomic training of incubates from experienced SEOBI agronomic field officers.
- On site training in the process of essential oil extraction by steam distillation.
- Access to cost-effective mobile steam distillation equipment for smaller scale farmers.
- Access to reliable and competitive international markets via long term supply contracts.
- Chemical and sensory analyses of essential oils in orders to determine quality and marketability.
- Design & implementations of the appropriate governance, legal and management structures for the business being incubated.
- Community development interventions within the incubated business and the broader community in which it operates.
- Business skills training;
- Liaison with other appropriate Government Departments e.g. Agriculture and Land Affairs.



## What are Essential Oils?

Essential oils are the volatile, fragrant components from the various indigenous and exotic plants. They are high value products sold predominantly to the international fragrance, cosmetic, flavour and aromatherapy markets.

The production of essential oil is achieved by a process called steam distillation. This involves mixing the plant material and low-pressure steam, breaking the membranes of the cells in the plant tissue containing the oil and releasing the essential oil into the stream of steam in the distillation unit.

Essential oils have been traded internationally for several centuries. The unique opportunities South Africa has, to compete in the international essential oil markets, include a diverse range of climatic regions and agricultural land, a production season different to northern hemisphere competitors, and a well developed business, scientific, agricultural and transport infrastructure.

Essential oils are ideal products for small-scale farmers, provided that they receive the correct technical and marketing training. The SEOBI focuses on transferring appropriate technologies and training to emerging black farmers in order to facilitate starting or increasing commercially viable essential oil production on their farms.

That farmers that form part of the business incubation processes of SEOBI produce a range of conventional and organic essential oils that are in demand in the international markets.



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**the dti**

Department:  
Trade and Industry  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Seda was born out of the merger between the former Godisa Trust and the National Technology Transfer Centre, and is a special initiative of the Department of Trade and Industry (the dti) responsible for technology transfer and business incubation. Seda specialises in the creation of business incubators that focus on facilitating the creation of small businesses and technology transfer in specific market sectors. These centres provide a variety of business support services and office infrastructure to small enterprise. **For more information visit: [www.seda.org.za](http://www.seda.org.za)**