



Autumn Ridge Trading -

A Local Enterprise Development Success Story

Testimonial: A Journey of Growth Through Partnership



In late 2012, HERNIC Ferrochrome launched an Enterprise Development Initiative aimed at empowering local businesses within the Madiabeng Local Municipality. At the time, Bidvest was delivering cleaning, gardening, and laundry services at the mine. The initiative was designed to create real, sustainable opportunities by providing hands-on, practical training to local enterprises in partnership with Bidvest.

Autumn Ridge Trading, led by Mr. Lesley Nthodi, was one of the standout participants selected for the programme. Over a 26-month period, the company benefited from intensive on-the-job training, during which Mr. Nthodi was appointed as the Contract Manager for both the laundry and gardening divisions - services earmarked for future transition to local ownership. He reported to Mr. Johan Alberts, who played a pivotal role as Operations Manager throughout the training phase.

This journey culminated in April 2024, when Autumn Ridge Trading was awarded a three-year standalone contract, marking a significant milestone in its development. Bidvest's ongoing support included the donation of essential start-up equipment and operational guidance, enabling the company to commence operations with a solid foundation. The impact was immediate, with 18 new employment opportunities created within the North West province.

Today, Autumn Ridge Trading is proud to employ 65 permanent staff, delivering gardening services to Sibanye Stillwater - Marikana Operations. What's more, Bidvest's support has not ended. They are currently positioning to partner with Mr. Nthodi and his team on a major tender within the mining sector—an exciting prospect that stands to expand Autumn Ridge Trading's footprint even further.

This is a true example of enterprise development done right: a 100% black-owned company growing from local initiative to long-term sustainability through mentorship, partnership, and perseverance.