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CAUSED CONCERN –**

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The year started with abundant rains which really continued since late last year. But now a larger area is covered, albeit with severe storms and losses of homes, livestock, crops and lives in some areas. It seems this is a world-wide situation at the moment but, as we are in the beginning of a new year, let us look at positive outcomes and positive actions we as farmers and agriculturists can put in place to overcome the obstacles we, and more so our customers, the consumers of meat and fresh products and retailers can put in place. Our crops generally looks good, outlook on beef and sheep farming looks good, if we can collectively work on government to re-instate services at harbours and air-freight, our exports can once more rise. At street level, consumers are perplexed about many well-known stores with shelves containing really poor quality greens and sometimes meat packages, but all these at much inflated prices. The farmer, amidst all former mentioned obstacles and more, receive less for his produce per item, is curbed by inflated input costs while retailers slap on mark-ups because of unsold perishables that are ditched and, I am convinced, fewer sales. Answer; Be alert to smaller markets, direct to public sales, maintain good service and keep up your quality!

Best for 2025. *John Swier*

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SCRIPTURE



But I will bless the person who puts his trust in me. He is like a tree growing near a stream and sending out roots to the water. It is not afraid when hot weather comes, because its leaves stay green; it has no worries when there is no rain; it keeps on bearing fruit. – Jeremiah 17:7-8

ASF IN GARDEN ROUTE CAUSED CONCERN – PIG FARMERS BEWARE!



In February 2024, a new outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) was confirmed in pigs of small farmers on the outskirts of Groeneweide Park, George. This is the fourth outbreak of this disease in the Garden Route area since 2022. Previously there had been outbreaks in KwaNonqaba and Mossel Bay in 2022 and 2023 which were both resolved; and an outbreak in Thembaletu in 2022 which remains a concern.

It was estimated that about 45 pigs have died and about 250 pigs placed under quarantine and community members have been urged to not remove any pigs or pig products from the area to prevent further spread of the disease.

ASF is a virus that affects pigs and there is no vaccination or treatment currently available for the prevention of the disease. Good biosecurity measures remain the best way to protect the pig industry.

The following measures are critical to minimising the spread:

All carcasses should be disposed of safely. Pigs should be confined to prevent roaming and potentially picking up and spreading the disease. Hands, shoes, clothing and equipment should be sanitised before and after being in contact with a pig, so people do not spread the virus between animals. Any meat products should be thoroughly cooked before being fed to pigs. Farmers should confirm that any purchased pigs are bought from known ASF-free herds.

ASF virus is specific to pigs and does not affect humans or other species of animals. The public needs to know that pigs slaughtered at abattoirs have undergone meat inspection. Pork products found in supermarkets are safe for human consumption.

Usually, the first signs of an ASF outbreak are the sudden death of pigs. Still, in some cases, other symptoms can include breathing difficulties, redness of the skin, especially underneath the pig and on the ears, hind leg weakness and loss of appetite. Occasionally the pig may also have blood in their faeces and their vomit.

Should these signs be seen, please contact your closest State Veterinary Office at <https://www.elsenburg.com/veterinary-services/animal-health-and-disease-control/>.

The department calls on all pig owners to implement strict biosecurity to protect their livestock from this disease and to call their nearest State Veterinary Office should farmers have any concerns. **Source: Dr Leana Janse van Rensburg, State Veterinarian: George**



Pigs showing the remotest sign of AFS should be confined to prevent roaming and potentially spreading the disease.

PIG FARMERS URGED TO COMPLY WITH BIOSECURITY MEASURES



A healthy-looking female swine with her off-spring. This is every pig farmer's dream, but it should also be his aim towards success.

Several outbreaks of serious diseases affecting pigs in the past have made it very clear to the pig industry that disease prevention is a vital part of farming.

The three diseases; foot and mouth disease (FMD), "Blue ear" (PRRS), and classical swine fever (hog cholera) at the time caused havoc in the industry.

They are all serious because they spread very rapidly in a confined population of pigs, and they do a great deal of damage to the herds that they infect, causing deaths, abortions and still-births on a large scale and without end.

The first outbreaks were fortunately detected in time for strong measures to be taken by the Veterinary Department, including the destruction of many pigs and the clearing out of contact farms. Classical swine fever is very difficult to eradicate.

This is always a distressing and expensive exercise, especially for the owners of apparently healthy animals that are taken away for slaughter because they may be carrying the infection. Compensation may be paid for animals that are culled by Government but not for those which have died during the acute period of the disease.

As a result, some farmers seem to do well out of the system while others suffer heavy losses.

Diseases cripples an enterprise

Producers who were not affected by the two diseases in the past are nevertheless engaged in a daily battle against the "ordinary" problems that can bankrupt any pig project if badly handled. Raising pigs as a profitable commercial pork producer is not all that easy, and biosecurity risks are a large part of the threat to our success.

Protective measures

Initiating protective measures on your pig farm is really a logical process.

Think of how your herd is exposed to the things that can bring infection to it.

Infective agents are viruses, bacteria and microscopic parasites, none of which are visible but all of which can be carried by people and their clothing, vehicles, other animals, birds, wind and food.

Ask yourself ten important questions about your piggery:

Do your pigs have freedom to wander outside and mix with other pigs?

If so, do the other owners have the same concerns as you do for their pigs' health?

Do you have visitors from other places who want to come and see the pigs, especially the babies, which are, after all, so cute?

Do speculators and butchers come on to the farm to buy or load your pigs when they have been to other pig units?

Do you feed swill from restaurants, compounds, hospitals etc that is brought to the farm as part of a delivery route involving many properties?

Do you have a problem with rats, mice, birds in and around the piggery?

Are your buildings suitably designed and strongly built, to keep your pigs secure and properly housed?

Do you go to auctions or other places where people and pigs from different areas come together, and do you buy unknown pigs at sales and take them home?

Do advisers such as vets, nutritionists, reps from firms, feed suppliers, have free access to your pig pens without changing their outer clothes?

Do you know enough about pig diseases and how to control them with vaccines, injections, in-feed

medication? Would you recognize FMD or PRRS or any other serious infection in your herd?

If you are in an area with small pig units which cannot be isolated from each other, is there an organisation that can get you together for talks on pig problems, sharing local knowledge, looking for safe and economic ways of buying supplies, finding markets, replacing breeding stock, treating everyday diseases such as mange, scours, pneumonia, malnutrition?

Is your piggery is completely, or partly or not at all bio-secure?

To make a small piggery less vulnerable to disease takes time and money, but not as much as you may think.

Here are a few simple steps that will make a huge difference to the biosecurity of your herd, big or small:

- Keep strangers and visitors away from your pigs; have a fence and a gate with a lock that you can control.
- When advisers come to help on the piggery, supply a clean overall and boots which never leave your property.
- Don't buy other people's troubles at auctions; get your pigs from one or two reliable breeders.
- Make a structure or an arrangement for the delivery of feed and the loading of pigs that keeps vehicles outside your fence.
- If swill is fed, make sure of its origin and do not regard it as an adequate food for modern pigs.
- Use the assistance and advice that is available to help you farm better; every rand you invest in knowledge will be returned many times over.

Biosecurity entails common sense precautions that any prudent pig producer will take when we think about the health threats facing our pigs. **Source: SAPPO**



GOAT KEEPING AND OBSERVATION OF DISEASES

The number one management point in goat farming is the health of the herd. One may ask, “Why should I know that my goat is healthy”?

When you know your goats are healthy you can take care of your other animals or farming activities. You must decide which animals are too old or too sick to keep and which goats to keep for breeding. You must sell or slaughter some of the goats and select only healthy goats when buying new animals.

Is my goat healthy?

A veterinarian may ask the following questions on the phone. “Do all the animals in the herd look well? Has the herd maintained good condition? Are about half the animals chewing the cud (ruminating)? Are the goats lively and inquisitive? At this distance, does everything about the goat look good? Does the goat do what the rest of the herd is doing? Does the goat seem calm, not excited or depressed? Is the goat standing or walking normally? When it lies down, is its position normal?”

“Is the goat eating and drinking normally? When the animal bleats, does it bleat in an expected manner, not excessively or because of pain? Is the animal not scratching or rubbing itself against wire fences? If the goat is a female, does it have kids or does it look pregnant? If she has a kid, is she feeding it well? If the goat is a male, has it made females pregnant?”

Inspect the herd

Go up to that goat, handle it and look closely to find out if the goat is tame and easy to handle. Does the animal seem relaxed? Has this animal maintained good condition, neither too thin, nor too fat? If I pinch the skin, does it return to the normal position quickly?

Is its coat bright and shiny? Is the goat free from loose hair? Is the animal free of ticks, lice and mites under the tail, around the udder, in the ear and between the claws? Is the goat free of wounds or lumps? Is the animal’s temperature normal?

Head and neck

Further investigation on the animal or herd may include, “Is the head, neck and jaw free of any swelling? Is the position of the head normal; not stretched and not twisted? Are the goat’s teeth in good condition and not all worn down? Can you determine the age of the goat by looking at its teeth? Is the goat chewing normally; not grinding its teeth in pain? Is there a normal amount of saliva? Is the mouth free of any other discharges?”

“Does the goat swallow easily without spilling food from the mouth? Are the mouth and tongue healthy with no sores or bleeding? Are the gums pink and firm? Is the nose cool and moist and free from any discharge? Is the nose free of sores or signs of bleeding? Does the breath smell sweet? Are the eyes bright and full, not sunken, not cloudy? Are both eyes free of discharges? Are the eyelids free of growths? If I draw down the eyelid, is it pink, like the gums?”

Chest

Is the animal breathing at the rate of 25 to 35 breaths per minute? Is the depth of breathing normal? Is the animal breathing with its mouth closed? Is it breathing with ease and making the usual breathing sounds? Is the animal free of coughing or sneezing?

Belly

“Does the size and shape of the belly look normal? Is the outlining of the belly smooth and free from swelling or hernias? When you look at the goat from the back, do both sides of the belly look the same? Is the goat urinating normally? Is urination controlled, free from pain and not too frequent? Is the urine clear, yellow and free from blood or pus?”

“Is the tail or rear area of the animal clean of stains caused by diarrhoea? Does the goat pass faeces freely,

without straining due to constipation? Are the faeces of the goat well formed? Are the faeces free from any sign of diarrhoea (watery faeces) or blood?”

Females

Is the udder firm and well-shaped? Does the udder have a smooth outline? Is the udder well suspended; not scraping on the ground? Are there two evenly sized teats, both pointing forwards? Are the teats free of any sign of damage? Is there no sign of pain when you handle the udder? Is the temperature of the udder the same as that of the under belly? In a milking animal, is the milk creamy, smooth and free from clots or blood? Does the milk smell sweet? Is the ewe’s vulva free from abnormal discharges and swellings?

Males

Are the sheath and penis free from any abnormal discharges, swelling and wounds? In uncastrated males, are there two testicles? Are the testicles roughly the same size? Do the testicles feel firm and cool? Are the testicles free of any swelling or wounds?

Feet

Are the feet and hooves in good condition? Are the feet and hooves free of any signs of infection or discharge? Are the joints firm to the touch with no sign of swelling? Are the hooves shaped to the foot and not overgrown? Are there no signs of broken bones?

Should you encounter any deformities or something unusual according to the above questions, it would be of benefit to contact your nearest veterinarian or ARC Onderstepoort for more information.

If an animal looks ill, immediately separate it from the rest of your herd!

Source: ARC – Onderstepoort.

SMALL-SCALE TOMATO FARMERS IN MUSINA SUPPORTED



Since the launch of the All Gold Tomato Sauce brand in 1908, Africa's largest fast-moving consumer goods manufacturer Tiger Brands has grown to support two prominent tomato-growing regions in the country, including small-scale farmers operating in these areas.

With the company procuring between 70 000 and 100 000 tonnes per year of tomatoes, it is one of the top players in the South African tomato value chain. The All Gold brand is valued at R1-billion (USD 56 million) in the R10-billion sauce and condiments segment.

Support local producers

The group is committed to supporting local production and procuring produce locally; however, in instances of disease outbreak or shortages, the company looks to other African countries for supply before considering imports from elsewhere in the world.

Tiger Brands' domestic tomato supply chain extends from two geographical tomato-growing areas – Musina, in Limpopo, and Lutzville, in the Western Cape.

The company operates two tomato processing plants in these regions, which grade, sort, cook and refine tomatoes to a paste that is transported to a plant in Boksburg, Gauteng, for further processing and packaging.

Transformed tomato supply

Tiger Brands determined the need for a transformed tomato supply chain in 2018 and started providing enterprise development support to small-

scale farmers, including in the form of technical knowledge-sharing and bonus payments for farmers meeting production targets.

The company invests in seedling development, with 29-million seeds having been used last year valued at R13-million (about USD 700,000), as an effort to assist farmers with this upfront cost. Tiger Brands also provides "advance cash" to farmers valued at 10% of their contracts to support production, while subsidising transport costs.

Tiger Brands culinary MD Dumo Mfini says black farmers, have historically not been capacitated with technical skills to meet the required product quality. He adds that many small-scale farmers struggle with access to market, with Tiger Brands providing letters of intent to take up all output from these farmers to help them gain market access.

Contracts

Tiger Brands has spent more than R100-million (USD 5.6 million) on supporting farmers and aggregators in the market and reviews supply contracts on a yearly basis to ensure fair and equitable terms for the company and producers.

Tiger Brands agricultural manager Siphon Modiba says the company is involved in the supply chain from the breeding of seeds through to harvesting.

He explains that farmers supplying tomatoes to the company are paid according to the sugar content of the produce.

This is measured according to a Brix rating, with tomatoes averaging a rating of between 5.5 and 8. Tomatoes outside of this range are rejected for tomato paste processing but are processed as animal feed.

695 Tomato producers

South Africa has about 695 tomato producers in the commercial and emerging agriculture sectors, to

which the emerging farmer sector only contributes 5% of production.

More than 100 farmers grow and supply tomatoes to Tiger Brands in Musina, comprising 38 commercial farmers and 70 small-scale farmers. In turn, these farmers employ about 600 people on a permanent basis and 4 000 on a seasonal basis.

Harvest season

The tomato harvest season runs from April to September in Musina, while the Lutzville harvest season spans from January to May. The Musina processing plant processes about 500 t of tomatoes a day, or 3 000 t of tomatoes a week.

Tiger Brands is ensuring that small-scale farmers' contribution to the country's 600 000 tonnes per year of tomato production continues to grow, while solidifying local supply to its beloved All Gold brand.

Source: François-Xavier Branthôme, Tiger Brands



PREPARE SOIL EARLY FOR OPTIMAL TOMATO PRODUCTION

Using good management practice, tomatoes can be successfully cultivated in almost any type of soil and under diverse conditions, although crops will fare better and flourish under ideal conditions.

The soil should preferably be prepared between eight and 12 months before planting. Compost or kraal manure is recommended in addition to applications of the correct fertiliser and trace elements. A sound management programme is one of the most important factors that determines yield.

FERTILIZING

With tomatoes, as with most vegetable crops in South Africa, there are no precise fertiliser guidelines. Consequently, growers rely largely on results of trials undertaken overseas and adapted for local conditions.

Comprehensive details for a fertiliser programme is available at Sasol Nitro. The farmer should take into consideration the particular requirements of tomatoes and the specific characteristics of the relevant soil-type. While ideal conditions are not necessarily present, success can be achieved by paying attention to the basic requirements of specific factors.

Among the factors that farmers should consider, are the following:

Soil. Almost any soil-type, well drained, at least 600 mm deep, and without physical or chemical obstructions. Sandy loam or sandy clay-loam soil is ideal. With good management, success can also be obtained with other soil-types.

Soil acidity. As tomatoes have high calcium requirements, the correct pH level is essential. Water. When irrigating, take the water requirements of the plant into account.

Soil analysis. There are ideal norms for tomato cultivation, and it is important to take soil samples in order to identify shortcomings and rectify them by adding nutrients.

Fertiliser guidelines. As these call for thorough and expert planning, using a specialist company can simplify the farmer's task.

NEEDS FOR TOMATOES

Removal figures for nitrogen, phosphate and potassium are used to determine the fertiliser needs for tomatoes. Various nutritional aspects must be considered, as well as the application rate. Adding compost or kraal manure before planting increases moisture retention in the soil and promotes better fertiliser utilisation.

Pay particular attention to calcium, magnesium and micro-elements, particularly boron. Because input costs are so high, it makes sense to automatically include micro-elements in a spray application programme.

The nutrient requirements of tomatoes vary during the season. By taking note of these needs and meeting them, the farmer can achieve better yields and a higher income.

By Willem Engelbrecht, Sasol Nitro Agricultural Services



PLANT DISEASES AND THEIR CONTROL

There are several ways in which plant diseases can be controlled. Generally, once a plant is infected with a disease, it is difficult to cure. Thus, a first measure for the control of plant diseases is to protect the plants from disease infection. Control measures can be regulatory, cultural, physical, biological or chemical.

REGULATORY CONTROL

Avoidance

A pathogen can only cause disease in the host plant if it is found in the same geographical area as the host. Within countries, and between different countries, laws prevent the import of pathogens through diseased plant material to areas where it does not occur. In this context seed and nursery material often has to be certified free of diseases before it can be planted in certain areas.

A grower can also help the plant to avoid getting diseased by using healthy seed; planting on the right date, so that the plant is in an older or more resistant growth stage when the disease appears; and planting in well-drained soils to prevent the water-borne wilt diseases.

Cultural control

The actions of the grower can prevent the build up of an inoculum (source) of the disease. These methods of controlling diseases include:

Eradication of inoculum

Through cultural control the grower can eradicate hosts. For example, in potatoes all kinds of diseases may survive off-season periods in infected tubers left in the field. During the next season these tubers produce infected plants from where the diseases are spread again.

Eradication of these volunteer plants will reduce the inoculum of the pathogens. Some pathogens have alternative hosts, which means that it can survive on the crop plant, but also on some other grasses, weeds or wild plants. In this case the eradication of the wild host will break the life cycle of the disease and so help to control it.

Crop rotation

Some pathogens survive on the host and host residue, but cannot survive in soil alone. If the same crop is grown year upon year on a given land, the pathogen



will infect the plants from the residue. However, planting an alternative crop, which is not a host for the disease-causing organism, can significantly reduce the disease inoculum in the field.

The susceptible host that is planted in the following season will then be protected from the disease as the inoculum would not have survived the period in which no host was available. In some instances, such as stalk rot of maize caused by *Fusarium moniliforme*, leaving the land fallow for a year can also help to reduce the inoculum as microorganisms decompose the residues that harbour pathogens.

Sanitation

Sanitation involves the removal or eradication of diseased plant material. This includes the removal of infected fruit lying underneath trees in orchards and hanging on trees, pruning diseased branches and removing plant debris that may harbour the pathogen. Crop residues can also be burnt to eliminate the pathogen inoculum it may harbour. Washing and disinfecting pruning shears, knives and other farming equipment after use can reduce the spread of pathogens that may be carried on these tools.

Improving plant growing conditions

Cultural practices that improve plant vigour may increase the plant's ability to resist pathogen attack. Proper fertilisation, spacing of plants, drainage of fields, and weed control improve plant growth and will help to combat diseases.

Use of resistant varieties

Planting varieties that are resistant to diseases is the easiest, safest and most economical method of controlling plant diseases. It eliminates the losses due to diseases, but also lessens the cost in trying to control diseases. Resistant varieties of field crops are more generally used than resistant fruit and forest trees.

Biological control

Biological control involves the inhibition or destruction of pathogens by other living organisms. Suppressive soil contains microbial populations that have a negative impact on the pathogen. Plants can also act as biological control agents by releasing toxic substances into the soil.

Some microbes can be applied directly to plant parts to control diseases. The modes of action of beneficial microbes are, amongst others, competition for nutrients and space and production of toxic substances. Fungi from the species *Trichoderma* are known to control a wide variety of disease causing organisms.

These fungi are commonly found in soil. Some species are parasitic on other fungi, but competition for space and production of substances toxic to the pathogen are also modes of action of these fungi. *Trichoderma* species also inhibit nematode populations by direct parasitism. In South Africa, several formulations of *Trichoderma* are available for the control of several diseases on various crops.

Plants can be used as traps. By planting a few rows of tall plants like maize around a field of beans or peppers, the aphids that feed on the bean or pepper plants will first stop and feed on the taller plants on the perimeter of the planting of lower plants.

The viruses that infect beans and peppers are not persistent, and the aphids lose these viruses by feeding on the maize before moving on to the bean or pepper plants.

Source: Small Grain Institute, Bethlehem



FEEDING YOUR CHICKENS CORRECTLY BY IMPROVING THEIR MINERALS INTAKE

It is not possible for any bird to put more in the egg for a longer period than is supplied by the feed. Modern, more efficient stocks ask for adequate feed. In the case of a lack of protein or energy, only a part of the genetic capacity is used. If minerals are lacking, the normal quantity of eggs may be reached, but without the usual quality of eggshells. Often imbalance of nutrients is confounded with breed effects.

Breed differences for eggshell quality are present. More efficient flocks require a higher mineral concentration to get the same absolute amount of minerals. Present genetic selection favours birds, which are productive, efficient, and utilising minerals in a way to achieve maximum shell strength. On the other hand formulation should count with the developments in requirements of modern laying stock.

It is known that calcium is the main mineral in shell formation. The Ca concentration in the feed should increase from 3.0% in the early stage of lay to 4.5%. Extra help can be expected from granular forms of calcium. Even if a flock is producing 70%, the individual bird should be able to form her full-size shell more than 20 days in a row.

Besides calcium, manganese should also be sufficient, while an optimum level for phosphorus and magnesium exists. The larger part of the eggshell is calcium taken

directly from the duct. Shell formation occurs during the later part of the day and the night. Feed stimulation and calcium supply in the afternoon is more favourable for eggshell formation. The stronger shell of afternoon eggs, which have been formed during the day, while the bird was eating, illustrates this.

How much feed do chickens need?

This is a rough guide as to how much feed, under average conditions, your chickens will eat. Remember that the actual quantity will also depend on other factors such as housing, whether it is hot or cold (chickens eat more in winter than in summer), the breed you use, the amount of feed wastage and other management considerations.

For broilers, you can work on using 0.75 to 1.0 kg of Starter feed per bird for the first three weeks, 1.25 kg to 1.5 kg of Finisher feed from three to five weeks, 1.0 to 1.3 kg of Finisher or Post-finisher from six to seven weeks, and 1.2 to 1.5 kg of Finisher or Post-finisher from six to seven weeks.

Some farmers order a fixed amount of Starter for the number of broilers they have, and when that is finished, they change over to the Finisher. You may have a little of the last kind of feed left over when you sell your broilers, but you can keep it for the next batch.

Hybrid layer pullets will eat about 1.0 to 1.2 kg of Chick mash from day-old to six weeks of age, 2.5 to 3.0 kg of Grower mash from six to 12 weeks, 3.0 to 3.6 kg of Grower mash from 12 weeks to 18 weeks and 1.0 to 1.2 kg from 18 to 20 weeks.

During the laying period, a hen should eat, on average, about 120 kg of Layer mash a day. It will vary between about 80 g a day at 20 weeks of age to about 135 g a day at the end of the laying year.

It is therefore better not to try to feed your layers a fixed amount of feed each day but to make sure that there is always Layer mash to eat and they will adjust the amount they eat according to their needs at the time.

Make sure the feeders are not more than one-third full, otherwise the layers will waste a lot of feed – it is better to put feed in the feeders several times a day rather than over-filling them. Make sure that there is enough feed in the feeders in the late afternoon because this is the time that hens eat a lot. The egg is formed in the body overnight so the hen must get enough feed for this.

Feed concentrates

If you live in an area where maize or sorghum is cheap, you can reduce your costs by using these grains and adding what is called a concentrate. A concentrate is a commercial feed that contains all the normal feedstuffs except the cereal (maize/sorghum) part.

You can get concentrates for all the different kinds of feed you may need. If you only keep a few birds, you can mix the concentrate and grain with shovels, but for large numbers of birds you will need a feed mixer.

Feed storage

Proper storage of your chicken feed is important. You should have a cool, dry storeroom. Feed that gets damp becomes mouldy and can make chickens sick. Store the feed on wooden slats so that it is not directly on the floor, and do not lean the bags against the walls. In this way, air will be able to circulate around the bags and there will be fewer dark places where rats can make nests.

Keep different kinds of feed well separated. Do not keep feed for too long (more than four to six weeks) otherwise it goes off and will no longer give the production levels you require.

Source: Ed Wethli

ARE YOU STORING YOUR GRAIN THE RIGHT WAY?



Poly-bags are manufactured to store grain.

There are several factors that farmers should take into consideration when storing grain. Incorrect, or bad storing methods can lead to a total lost of the harvest and, above all, money down the drain.

Insects

Insects in stored grain can cause much damage. The farmer may lose up to a third of the stored grain. It is therefore important to know exactly how and where to store grain.

Should you eat the insects in stored grain, it does not necessarily mean that you will become ill, but you can lose a lot of money when you sell the grain due to sub-standard quality. However, sometimes grains containing insects become mouldy, and mildew is poisonous.

Insects infesting grain

Adult insects, such as beetles and larvae or worms cause serious damage to stored grain products. Many different insects infest grain. Some of them are very small and are not seen easily. Insects that you may find in grain include:

- Indian meal moth and moth larva
- Tropical warehouse moth and moth larva
- Saw-toothed grain beetle
- Flat grain beetle
- Lesser grain borer
- Rice and grain weevils
- Confused flour beetle
- Grain mites
- Storage of grains

For the very small grains farmer, grain can be stored in a variety of containers, such as clay pots, grass baskets, grain wells, bags and grain huts.

Grain huts

Wheat, sorghum, dry beans and maize are often stored in grain huts, in a room in the house, or in large containers in the kitchen. Grain huts should not be built too close to grain crops.

Bags

Maize can be stored in bags. The bags must be placed in an ordinary hut or a clean, cool grain hut. Maize in bags can also be hung in a tree or strung between the branches of a tree. Stored grained insects can, however, fly and will damage the grain stored in the tree.

Small steel grain bins

It's important to have your grain stored safely and effectively. On the bigger farms, massive grain bins keep thousands of tons of grain stored away. But what about the smaller farmer? It's too expensive to invest in a 10m tall grain bin, plus it is very inefficient. That's where small grain bin sizes come into play.

Hygiene

It is essential that the storage place must be clean. Insects breed easily and thrive among old maize kernels, old maize bags and dust.

There are many insects in grain crops (maize lands) and therefore the storage place should not be close to the crop. If the storage place is close by these insects may spread to the stored grain. The storage place must be flushed out or scrubbed. Wait until the place is dry before the grain is stored.

CONTROL

Insecticides can be used, but they are very expensive as well as toxic and dangerous. Contact your local cooperative store or extension officer for further advice on insecticides.

Insects can be controlled naturally by doing one of the following:

- Pick dry leaves from the lower part of the cat's tail aloe (*Aloe castanea*), burn the leaves in the veld and mix the ashes with the grain
- Grind dry maize leaves and mix them with the grain
- Mix the grain with wood ash
- Mix fine, dry clay with the grain.

Mix the ash or fine, dry clay with the grain before it is stored. The ash and clay meet the insects when they crawl around in the grain. The wax layer on the insects is rubbed off and they die because they lose moisture. The powder (of ash and fine soil) fills the small holes in

the grain and prevents insect damage. Before the grain is used, the clay or ash can be removed by washing or sieving.

FLOUR

Flour must be stored in an airtight container in a cool, dry place. The container is airtight when it closes properly. Insects in flour or fine grain can be a problem. The larva of the tropical warehouse moth spins constantly while moving through the grain, covering all the grain with threads. Ash cannot be used to control insects as it is impossible to sieve the ash from the flour or fine grain. In conclusion – it is wise to seek information on your particular needs from a grains consultant or your nearest cooperative. There at least, you may be able to view the different items mentioned above and discuss your requirements for your quantities of grains in person. **Sources: Grains SA and other sources**



A 1.5-ton portable grain bin. This small grain bin size works well for soybeans, maize, and grain.



Wheat in bags.



A small cane grower in his cane field. The environment's wellbeing ensures his future and that of his family.



Burning sugar cane leads to a decline in soil nutrients and loss of soil structure is experienced through persistent monoculture. The sugar cane industry, through continuous training and supervising looks after its environment's future and that of the industry.

GROWING SUGAR CANE BY MANAGING NATURAL RESOURCES

The environment is the lifeblood of sugarcane production. It is most important to make the large complement of farmers in this sector aware of their responsibility to the environment.

As a producer of sugarcane, whether you farm one hectare or one thousand, you are entirely dependent on natural resources for production. Soil, water and air, and the ecosystems and nutrients they contain are the lifeblood of a successful cane farm. It makes sense then that effective management of cane production, which considers these natural resources, will result in improved economic, social and environmental benefits to cane producers, the industry and society.

Responsible management of natural resources in the cane production process does not simply lead to improved production. In the increasingly competitive global market, it is an excellent marketing tool. Quite simply, the consumer wants to be assured that the sugar that ends up in his or her tea has not happened at some undue environmental or social cost.

With the move to minimum tillage, soil conservation has improved remarkably. Wetlands are no longer being drained and growers are pulling back from watercourses. Local Environment Committees are spearheading improved environmental performance in their areas. Environmental education courses have been developed targeting all levels of the industry.

However, several challenges remain: The cane growing industry needs to profile itself as an environmentally responsible producer in an increasingly competitive global market. There is tension and public sensitivity around cane burning. Soil quality together with production levels are declining in many areas for several reasons.

While the economic or financial benefits of good natural resource management practices are easy to measure, social benefits are more difficult but

are equally important. Cane burning provides us with a good example. As development options diversify, cane farmers increasingly find themselves neighbouring on residential areas, tourism developments and on other agricultural activity.

Green Harvesting

Green Harvesting is accomplished by using mechanical harvesters to mechanically separate the sugarcane leaves and tops from the sugar-bearing stalk — no burning is required. All modern mechanical harvesters used by developed sugarcane growing nations could green harvest sugarcane.

Where practiced, sugarcane trash is either left on the soil to be used as mulch, or it is separated and collected to be utilized along with bagasse (the waste product left over after sugarcane refining) to produce electricity, biofuels, biochar, tree free paper products, cattle feed, disintegrant for medicine and more.

Research on green harvesting has shown that this harvesting method can provide numerous agronomic, environmental, and economic benefits like reduced soil oxidation and increase in soil matter to combat soil erosion, increased nutrient cycling leading to increased soil fertility, increased carbon sequestration and reduced herbicide and chemical fertilizer costs to name a few.

Global Green Harvesting Trends

Increased awareness of the negative health and environmental impacts caused by pre-harvest sugar field burning has put pressure on governments to enact laws and policies promoting green harvesting. The published agronomic and economic benefits of utilizing sugarcane trash instead of burning has also been driving sugarcane growers to modernize their harvesting practices.

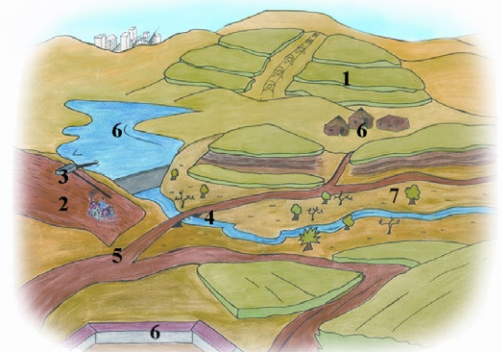
Green harvesting of sugarcane is the predominant practice in nations like Brazil, Australia, Cuba, Zimbabwe and in parts of Louisiana within the US. There are efforts underway to end sugarcane burning by governments and impacted communities all over the world where burning is still practiced including the major sugarcane growing nations of Thailand and India.

Market competitiveness

South Africa is an important player in the global sugar market. In order to maintain a competitive advantage, it needs to demonstrate to the world market that cane is being produced in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner. What does this mean?

It means quite simply that to do this, a commitment from every constituent in the industry is required; from labourer to corporate miller-cum-planter and processor. The cane growing industry will be judged, not against the performance of the best or the average, but against the poorest performers.

Source: SA Cane Growers



The various areas of environmental concern to the diligent and environment-wise sugarcane farmer.



CARE FOR LAMBING EWES

Time which ewes remain at the spot at which they lamb is all-important. Trials at Elsenburg indicate that ewes who remain for less than two hours at the various points at which they give birth, have a much greater chance of becoming separated from one or more of their lambs, than ewes which remain longer. Ewes with newly born lambs must be disturbed as little as possible.

By remaining longer at the spot where birth took place, it is easier at an early stage for the ewe and lamb to have a strong bond. It reduces the possibility of later separation. Ewes must thus not be chased away from where they have lambed shortly after giving birth. Conditions which could cause ewes to move away from the place where birth took place shortly after lambing must be avoided.

Examples of these are:

Poor distribution of water in a camp which necessitates ewes, shortly after lambing, to have to walk a long distance in search of water, particularly when ewes lamb at the hot time of the year.

Just so, ewes are forced to leave the spot where they gave birth early on if they lamb on poor veldt. Ewes which receive supplements can be very easily enticed away from the spot at which they lambed by the vehicle that brings the supplements.

Wool length of ewes

It would appear that it is better, in the case of wool sheep to shear the ewes before lambing, particularly if lambing takes place in cold periods, except in regions where it is very cold and ewes run the danger of freezing to death. Ewes shorn four weeks or less before lambing make more use of shelter from wind, cold and rain than ewes with longer wool, with the result that lamb mortalities due to exposure are reduced.

It must be noted that recently shorn ewes have a higher energy need than ewes with longer wool in cold conditions, which increases their food requirements. To provide for these greater needs, there must be adequate grazing available or supplementary feeding must be provided.

Besides that, shorn ewes seek shelter, the udders and teats are more accessible and the lamb can suckle easily. Therefore, it is recommended that if ewes cannot lamb with short wool, then four to six weeks before lambing, they be crutched.

Influence of the lambing season.

The advantage of the traditional autumn lambing season in the winter rainfall region is that there is seldom inclement weather at the beginning of the lambing season and that it is early enough not to interfere with the activities such as sowing. The risk is inadequate grazing should the rain be late. A higher level of supplementary feeding must then be given to ewes in late pregnancy and lactating.

In the Western Cape, there was a movement away from a winter lambing season as it is well-known that rain, wind and cold has a negative effect on the survival of lambs. It has however, been found that the number of lambs weaned per ewes mated and the survival of lambs in the Caledon region is not greatly influenced by the month that the ewes lamb.

According to research done at Langgewens research station near Moorreesburg, there are indications that supplementary feeding during the autumn lambing is essential while during the winter lambing season is of lesser importance. It appears that inclement weather in the winter has a negative effect on lamb survival, but lamb survival can be improved with the provision of shelter.

Australian research has found that the highest long term economic returns are obtained from wool producing flock which lamb in winter under Mediterranean conditions. The advantage of the winter against the autumn lambing season is closely associated with the low risk involved in the necessity to provide additional supplementary feeding. A winter lambing season when sufficient green pastures can be expected, can thus with confidence be practiced in certain areas.

The advantages of a winter lambing season are that the expenses of additional feeding are normally done away with and that the ewes in lamb are not unnecessarily disturbed. Another advantage is that ewes are mated at a time of normal high sexual activity, which positively influences conception and multiple births.

Provision however must be made against cold, wind and rain by establishing fences and wind breaks. Australian research results show that grass pastures increase the survival of single and multiple births by respectively 10 and 32 percent. When lambing takes place in hot periods then it is important to provide shade (+/- 2m per ewe) in the form of trees.

Source : Flock Management Programme : BKB – Voermol





FLOW PATTERN OF THE DAIRY COWS TO THE MILKING PARLOUR

The flow pattern is the efficient control of cows from the veld to the milking parlour and back with the minimum stress for the cow and the labourer. It is not only applicable to corrals and milking parlours, but to the entire dairy. The flow pattern of cows is just as important in intensive as in extensive systems.

The larger the herd the more important the flow pattern is. Any delay worsens as the cow numbers increase, with problems increasing if the herd number exceeds 60. Physical barriers such as sharp corners and bottlenecks are easily noticed. It is however not easy to notice things that frighten cows and make them hesitate to walk. It can be caused by anything such as a slippery concrete floor on which they find it difficult to stand.

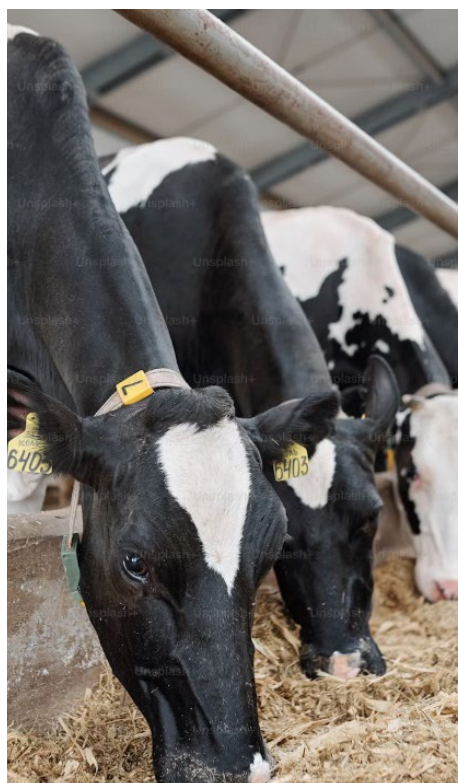
It can also be a result of insufficient current protection around the shed, which causes the cows to get light electric shocks with neutral to earth currents (stray currents) are conducted to the cowshed. As already mentioned, the maximum distance the cows may walk from the veld to the milking parlour must be considered.

These paths must be of good quality. They must be firm, well drained, of even width without barriers and sharp corners. Any object or construction that causes the cows to bunch up, frighten them or push them against fences, influence the flow adversely. Sharp turns in paths must be replaced with a series of wider turns. U- turns hinder flow of cattle and must be avoided. Cows will hesitate to enter a holding pen if the surface is too slippery.

The concrete floor must have a course finish, as cows will move better if they have confidence in their footing. It will be ideal if the cows can enter the holding pen from the back entrance of the holding pen than from the side entrance, so that they can see

the milking parlour. A crowding pen also helps in this situation.

Milking parlours must be provided with a proper entrance door, with railings used for canalizing the cows towards one side or the other, rather than



causing them to block the system by hesitating between the two sides.

Factors that divert the attention of the cows can also obstruct the flow in the cow pens. Cows in the holding pen that can see other cows being milked and being returned to the veld will stand lowing rather than queuing to be milked. A wall or solid gate will rule out this temptation. Illumination is a factor that is often neglected.

Farmers must determine how inviting their milking parlours are. Cows do not like to move from light to dark. The ideal is therefore that the milking parlour must be lit and free of barriers.

The exit from the milking parlour is also very important. If it is too narrow, cows are crushed and if it is too wide, they will stand and socialize. It does not matter how well the milking parlour is designed, as soon as the cows leave the parlour and suitable heading-off facilities are not provided, all aforementioned flow system will be futile.

The simplest heading-off facility consists of a set of ropes, pulleys and gates. The other extreme is automatic identification and air-pressure head-off gates. It is at any rate necessary on any farm with 20 or more cows. This enables the labourer to head the cattle off with the minimum effort. Head-off facilities are a necessary part of a dairy and makes out an integral part of good flow and an efficient routine.

Source: ARC-ILI

SOURCING ONLY CAGE-FREE EGGS IN GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN



The world's leading Quality of Life services company, Sodexo with operations in 80 countries, announced that it will source only cage-free eggs for its global liquid and shell egg supply chain by 2025.

Poultry raised outside the cage. Still, poultry can be raised in a poultry house where they are not cooped up together in a wire cage but able to move around and grow well.

The company, which sources approximately a quarter of a billion shell eggs worldwide per year, will partner with Humane Society International and other animal protection organizations, including Compassion in World Farming and The Humane League, to implement this new animal welfare and corporate social responsibility policy. HSI applauds Sodexo for this significant step forward.

Egg-laying hens are often confined for their whole lives in wire battery cages, so small that they cannot even fully stretch their wings. The use of conventional battery cages for laying hens is banned or being phased out under laws or regulations throughout the EU, five U.S. states, New Zealand and Bhutan. The majority of states in India, the world's third largest egg producer, have declared that the use of battery cages violates the country's animal welfare legislation, and

the country is debating a national ban. A growing number of companies that have also committed to sourcing only cage-free eggs in their global supply chains, including Unilever, Grupo Bimbo and Nestlé are joined by Sodexo. More than 60 food companies - including McDonald's, Burger King and Walmart, have also announced a complete transition to cage-free eggs in their U.S. supply chains. **Sodexo**

Chetana Mirle, director of HSI Farm Animals, said: "Consumers around the globe care about the way animals are treated in food production and we praise Sodexo for taking these concerns seriously by committing to transitioning to a 100 percent cage-free egg supply chain. With its reach in 80 countries, Sodexo's egg policy will improve the lives of millions of animals and sends a clear message to the global egg industry that cage-free production systems are the way forward. We look forward to working with more companies on similar policies."



Poultry in a cage – a horrendous sight!

Michel Francheschi, Group SVP Supply Management at Sodexo, said: "Our objective is to work collaboratively with our partners to support and contribute to the progressive transformation of the whole industry."

We will gather all the actors around the table in order to accompany the conversion and the evolution of the local industry so that by 2025, we will be able to source cage free eggs from local producers in each country where we operate."

Remember to subscribe for your electronic copy of Undercover Farming! See P19



ADVANCING AGRICULTURAL TRADE AMONG BRICS+ COUNTRIES



The changing geopolitical and global economic landscape necessitates that BRICS countries deepen economic cooperation and improve trade. Agriculture is one sector where the need for deepening regional economic integration and trade is more urgent.

Currently, the original BRICS countries, before the additional members from the 15th Johannesburg 2023 Summit, imported, on average, nearly US\$300 billion worth of agricultural products annually. China and India account for the lion's share of these imports. Key produce imports

The key agricultural products the BRICS grouping imports are soybeans, palm oil, beef, maize, berries, wheat, cotton, pork, apricots and peaches, sorghum, rice, and sugar. These are products that are produced at scale by some BRICS countries. However, imports to other BRICS members typically originate from suppliers outside the grouping.

The higher tariffs and ambiguous and prohibitive phytosanitary regulations have proven to be a barrier to agricultural trade within the BRICS grouping. Remarkably, some BRICS countries have far more favourable trading terms with other countries outside the BRICS grouping,

thus resulting in lower intra-BRICS trade.

The need to correct this misalignment in trade is even more urgent with the expanded BRICS grouping to BRICS+. The new BRICS+ members mean that the agricultural market of the grouping is even much broader and thus holds a potential economic benefit for members.

A proposal put on the table states that, as BRICS+ matures from the political front, deepening regional economic integration and trade is the most logical step towards expanding the ambition of the group, particularly in agriculture. Another vital benefit of advancing agricultural trade is ensuring food security within the BRICS+ grouping.

Therefore, while a "BRICS+ comprehensive free trade agreement would be a protracted process, for the near term, some form of trade area (PTA) that establishes preferential market access to agricultural products among countries, lowering import tariffs, and clearing phytosanitary is urgent and appropriate.

Brazil, South Africa, and Russia typically have a large surplus volume of products that India and China, amongst others, import from the world market. Reducing import tariffs and various non-tariff barriers, or the opening up of tariff rate quotas for specific agricultural products would help expand the level of ambition in a more meaningful way, and initiate a process of progressively deepening trade among these countries.

The level and scope of reciprocal trade arrangement

would be subject to negotiation, and it means that China and India would also receive preferential market access to various products they produce, which South Africa, Brazil, and Russia, amongst other members, import in large volumes.

All countries' BRICS+ Business Council members support advancing trade to broaden and deepen the relationship beyond diplomatic and political relations and translate these to tangible economic benefits for member countries. Importantly, with the rising population in huge BRICS+ markets like India and China, the demand for food, fibre and beverages is high and will continue to rise. Thus, it would be helpful for other BRICS+ members with the potential to boost agriculture to support a potential increase in demand. Policy consideration

The BRICS+ Business Council members call on the political principals to formulate an intergovernmental working group that explores the scope for reducing import tariffs and removing non-tariff (phytosanitary) barriers amongst the members, and developing a terms of reference (ToR) that establishes the work of a negotiation platform for a BRICS+ PTA.

Also, to encourage agricultural trade for food security and economic progress within the BRICS+ grouping. To explore a long-term and more ambitious BRICS+ agricultural trade agreement, with necessary measures for countries with industries still at infancy stages and requiring protection.

By: Wandile Sihlobo, Chair: Agribusiness Working Group, BRICS+ Business Council (South Africa).



A fish farming project can begin small and extended as your business grows.

FISH FARMING: AERATION IN AQUACULTURE

The flow pattern is the efficient control of cows from the veld to the milking parlour and back with the minimum stress for the cow and the labourer. It is not only applicable to corrals and milking parlours, but to the entire dairy. The flow pattern of cows is just as important in intensive as in extensive systems.

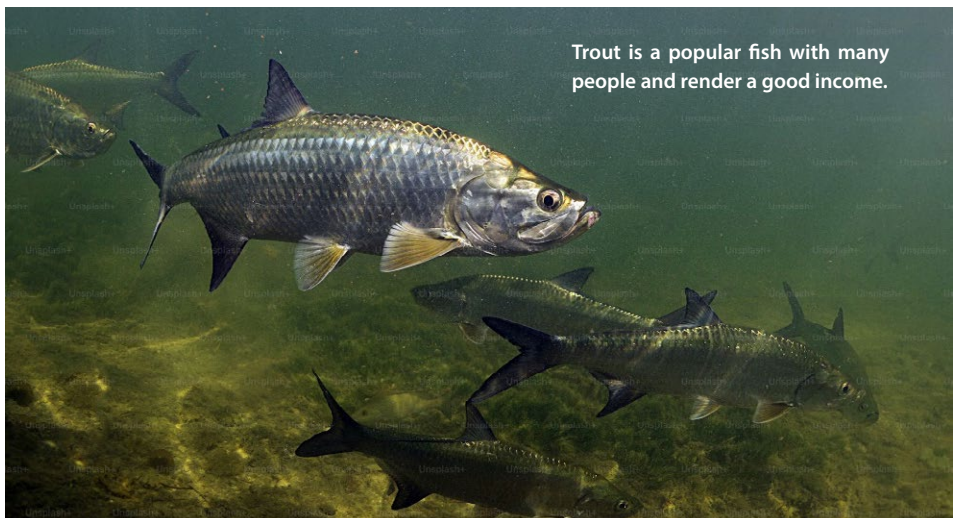
Fish is among the healthiest foods on the planet. It's loaded with important nutrients, such as protein and vitamin D. Fish is also a great source of omega-3 fatty acids, which are incredibly important for your body and brain.

To enter this lucrative market, some expertise must be sought before starting a farm. The great advantage of fish is that over and above the many good health and food prospects, there always exist a market for your fish near you or in your community.

There are different freshwater fish that are farmed with which are either edible species or ornate (high priced, colourful) that consumers and fish enthusiasts are keen to purchase.

Aquaculture fish require oxygen for their metabolism and, if you are using a recirculating system, the bacteria in the biofilter also need oxygen for their life processes. The oxygen is present in the water in a dissolved form and taken up via the gills of the fish by simple osmosis. As there is a base requirement for oxygen within the blood of the fish, the more oxygen there is dissolved in the water the greater the gradient and easier it is for the fish to absorb oxygen into their blood. If the level of oxygen in the water decreases then the osmotic potential also falls, reducing the amount of oxygen the fish can access from the water, placing them under stress.

Generally, cages are not aerated, but rather select the site carefully and stock the cages appropriately so that water movement through the cages replenishes the oxygen utilised by the fish. In earth ponds planktonic algae produce oxygen by day through photosynthesis, but beware, at night the algae also respire, adding to the demand for oxygen within the



Trout is a popular fish with many people and render a good income.

system. Recirculating systems have no significant external source of oxygen and water movement is heavily relied upon to supply the oxygen required by the fish and bacteria.

There are several methods that can be utilised to get oxygen into water, including water replacement, passive transfer, aeration and oxygenation. As mentioned, water replacement is the preferred method in cage culture where high exchange rates ensure water quality inside the cage always remains high.

Earth ponds can be stocked at low fish densities so that oxygen dissolving from the air into the pond at the water surface (passive transfer) is adequate to supply the needs of the fish, or at far higher densities where the additional oxygen requirement is supplied by means of active aeration. Usually, such aeration is only required at night when there is no photosynthesis,

and the algae are also consuming oxygen. In recirculating systems, we supply aeration to each tank to stir the water and stimulate active transfer of oxygen into the water at the surface. With sensitive species at high densities, we may consider introducing oxygen directly into the water to significantly increase the levels, but this is an expensive process and substantially increases risk associated with equipment failure, so proceed with caution.

At this time of the year when the water is warm and holds less oxygen it is especially important that we ensure adequate oxygen is available to our fish and bacteria, whichever infrastructure type you are using. Stress compromises growth and feed conversion efficiency and is the beginning of the sickness and mortality continuum, and should be avoided at all costs.

By: Leslie Ter Morshuizen



CAPE TOWN TERMINALS UPGRADED BY TRANSNET FOR FRUIT EXPORT SEASON



The Cape Town Container Terminal (CTCT), under Transnet’s Cape Town Terminals, including both and the Cape Town Multi-Purpose Terminal (CTMPT), prepares for a good deciduous fruit export season. A fleet of over 70 pieces of additional equipment and the appointment of more operators are on the list.

This investment intends to improve efficiency and streamline the export of table grapes, peaches, apricots, nectarines, plums, and cherries to international markets. Apple and pear harvests, starting in January, will continue exports throughout the year.

During the previous season about 80% of all deciduous fruit exports from South Africa were shipped from the Port of Cape Town.

Fruit Industry collaboration

Fruit industry leaders have welcomed the transparent

and productive engagement facilitated by Transnet’s local and national management, which marks a collaborative turning point.

The progress made to date to enhance infrastructure and equipment availability at the Port of Cape Town and Transnet’s commitment to continue this progress is encouraging.

However, industry representatives caution that the impact of these improvements would only fully materialize over the medium to long term. The fruit industry has also been engaging with the Western Cape Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development, and Tourism, Dr Ivan Meyer.

Awareness of challenges

The fruit industry warns that growers, exporters, and logistical service providers should still be ready to respond to challenges that may arise during the export season. This could include implementing the use of alternative modes of shipping or shipping routes to alleviate the pressure on the Cape Town Container Terminal, to facilitate fruit reaching markets in the shortest possible time in the interest of servicing clients, meeting program deadlines, and ensuring quality fruit upon arrival.

Additional sailing routes

Shipping lines have announced the addition of sailing



routes this season. This could play an important part in alleviating the pressure on Cape Town Container Terminal during peak export weeks. In addition, alternative shipping methods, such as Specialised Reefer Vessels, may again need to be utilized from December 2024 to April 2025. These options come with added costs but, are some of the most effective methods available to industry to mitigate risk.

Growers lost under uncontrollable conditions

During the past few seasons, growers have suffered financially largely due to conditions beyond their direct control, including rising input costs, load-shedding, and challenges at the port. While it is encouraging to see the progress made at the Port of Cape Town due to collaboration between industry and the Transnet since last season, it will take time for the plans and actions already undertaken to filter down to the ground and orchard level.

The fruit industry reported they have realistic expectations about the coming season. Whilst challenges such as equipment breakdowns, staffing issues, and adverse weather conditions may arise, the industry appreciates the efforts, planning, equipment, and replacement resource allocation plans made by Transnet. **From Denene Erasmus, SATGI**



THE ARC NATIONAL BEEF PERFORMERS VIRTUAL AWARDS 2024

Zelda King, Frans Jordaan & Dr Ben Greyling | ARC-Animal Production, Irene | Zelda@arc.agric.za

Acknowledging and rewarding the accomplishments of our farmers is just one of the numerous objectives of the ARC's National Beef Performers Awards 2024. This aligns with the National Beef Recording and Improvement Scheme's (NBRIS) main mission, which is to support the adoption and implementation of technologies designed to improve the production efficiency of our livestock nationally. This allows farmers to produce more profitable and sustainable and therefore boost their role towards food security and enhancing the socio-economic welfare of our country.

The Scheme has worked alongside industry stakeholders and research institutions for many

years to meet their needs and ensure we can adjust to an evolving industry. A key measure of the Scheme's success is the progress and advancement of our farmers and the difference they are creating. The Scheme holds its national awards each year to acknowledge and reward the remarkable progress that farmers have achieved by utilizing performance recording and associated technologies, encompassing the whole range of the production industry.

The Scheme places significant importance on their collaborating with farmers from all sectors, as well as with government and other agriculture stakeholders, to bolster our joint endeavor in improving production and access to the beef value chains in our country.

On 28 November 2024, PlaasMedia broadcasted The ARC National Beef Performers Awards

<https://youtu.be/oHamQitUgMc>



*Congratulations to all our winners!
Thank you for your support and keep performance testing part of the growing success of your herd*

2024 ARC NATIONAL BEST ELITE COW AWARDS

Only the participating cows' actual performance data is taken into account for this award category. In addition to other economically significant characteristics like maternal aptitude and pre-weaning development rate (weaning weight), participating cows should have remarkable reproduction figures. As before, cows of all breeds compete in this award category, and only one cow per breed will be named the top female of each competing breed. Participation is open to both registered and commercial cows, and particular requirements include the age at first calving, the average interval between calvings, the number of days since the last calving, and the completeness of the weaning weight records. The 23 ARC National Best Elite Cows with their respective performance figures and owners.

Hentie Jansen van Rensburg | **JVR 13 0024**




AFRISIM: JVR 13 0024

Hentie Jansen van Rensburg | Noordbrug, North West
Age: 11 | Number of calves: 8 | Age 1st calving (months): 28 | Avg ICP (days): 416
Avg Weaning Index: 107

EBVs

Birth Direct: 2.76 | Weaning Direct: 11.2 | Weaning Maternal: 2.1
Cell: 082 825 2168 | Email: obgynae@icon.co.za

Dail van Rensburg | **DT 15 0083**






ANKOLE: DT 15 0083

Dail van Rensburg | Delareyville, North West
Age: 9 | Number of calves: 7
Age 1st calving (months): 25 | Avg ICP (days): 369
Avg Weaning Index: 117

EBVs

Birth Direct: - | Weaning Direct: - | Weaning Maternal: -
Cell: 082 809 8841 | Email: dail@cluesnet.co.za

Laurence & Allistair Brown | **BLK 13 0229**

BEEF SHORTHORN: BLK 13 0229

Allistair Brown | Komani, Eastern Cape
Age: 11 | Number of calves: 7
Age 1st calving (months): 31 | Avg ICP (days): 413
Avg Weaning Index: 113

EBVs

Birth Direct: 1.99 | Weaning Direct: 10.4 | Weaning Maternal: 11.1
Cell: 083 236 4040 | Email: akcbrown@global.co.za

De Wet Hartzenberg | **FHK 15 0167**




BONSMARA: FHK 15 0167

De Wet Hartzenberg | Lichtenburg, North West
Age: 9 | Number of calves: 7
Age 1st calving (months): 25 | Avg ICP (days): 337
Avg Weaning Index: 105

EBVs

Birth Direct: 0.55 | Weaning Direct: 15.8 | Weaning Maternal: 10.5
Cell: 082 414 6988 | Email: dewet172@gmail.com

Braam Dekker | **AAA 08 0010**




BORAN: AAA 08 0010

Braam Dekker | Louis Trichardt, Limpopo
Age: 16 | Number of calves: 12
Age 1st calving (months): 36 | Avg ICP (days): 334
Avg Weaning Index: 96

EBVs

Birth Direct: 0.68 | Weaning Direct: 6.4 | Weaning Maternal: 3.7
Cell: 082 929 2358 | Email: dekkerboerdery@gmail.com

Dr Daleen Roos, Hans Bester & Dr Hanri Bester-Cloete | **HB 15 0008**




BRAUNVIEH: HB 15 0008

Hans Bester & daughters | Vrede, Free State
Age: 9 | Number of calves: 7
Age 1st calving (months): 30 | Avg ICP (days): 357
Avg Weaning Index: 104

EBVs

Birth Direct: 1.63 | Weaning Direct: 10.7 | Weaning Maternal: 8.8
Cell: 083 469 1258 | Email: daleen22bester@gmail.com

Clive Marshall

MCS 11 0043



CHAROLAIS: MCS 11 0043

Clive Marshall | Gaborone, Botswana
Age: 13 | Number of calves: 9
Age 1st calving (months): 32 | Avg ICP (days): 355
Avg Weaning Index: 107

EBVs

Birth Direct: 2.88 | Weaning Direct: 16.8 |
Weaning Maternal: 11.2
Cell: +677 2331440 | Email: clive@wolfranch.co.bw

Gerhardus Davis

WN 15 0002



DEXTER: WN 15 0002

Gerhardus Davis | Delmas, Mpumalanga
Age: 9 | Number of calves: 8
Age 1st calving (months): 28 | Avg ICP (days): 353
Avg Weaning Index: 117

EBVs

Birth Direct: 2.09 | Weaning Direct: 7.4 |
Weaning Maternal: 3.0
Cell: 076 560 9856 | Email: sales@mnani.co.za

Carel Nel

BLK 13 0229



DRAKENSBERGER: CL 09 0069

Carel Nel | Brandfort, Free State
Age: 15 | Number of calves: 12
Age 1st calving (months): 31 | Avg ICP (days): 375
Avg Weaning Index: 103

EBVs

Birth Direct: -0.04 | Weaning Direct: 12.0 |
Weaning Maternal: 8.4
Cell: 082 828 1984 | Email: carelnel02@gmail.com

Chippy Watson

VOVA 13 0047



DROUGHTMASTER: VOVA 13 0047

Chippy Watson | Underberg, KwaZulu-Natal
Age: 11 | Number of calves: 8
Age 1st calving (months): 33 | Avg ICP (days): 377
Avg Weaning Index: 107

EBVs

Birth Direct: 1.80 | Weaning Direct: 3.8 |
Weaning Maternal: 5.1
Cell: 082 853 4975 | Email: admin@vova.co.za

AJ du Toit

LR 06 0029



LIMOUSIN: LR 06 0029

AJ du Toit | Tulbagh, Western Cape
Age: 18 | Number of calves: 5
Age 1st calving (months): 26 | Avg ICP (days): 385
Avg Weaning Index: 97

EBVs

Birth Direct: 0.90 | Weaning Direct: 15.0 |
Weaning Maternal: 3.0
Cell: 072 377 3792 | Email: larhone@obiekwa.co.za

Hannes Eksteen

EX 16 0123



NGUNI: EX 16 0123

Hannes Eksteen | Piketberg, Western Cape
Age: 8 | Number of calves: 7
Age 1st calving (months): 23 | Avg ICP (days): 348
Avg Weaning Index: 110

EBVs

Birth Direct: 1.03 | Weaning Direct: 10.0 |
Weaning Maternal: 9.0
Cell: 082 946 2157 | Email: exteen@telkomsa.net

Fanie Potgieter

GB 12 0056



PINZGAUER: GB 12 0056

Bertie van Zyl Edms (Pty) Ltd | Modjadjiskloof, Limpopo
Age: 12 | Number of calves: 9
Age 1st calving (months): 33 | Avg ICP (days): 389
Avg Weaning Index: 106

EBVs

Birth Direct: 1.69 | Weaning Direct: 9.2 |
Weaning Maternal: 4.2
Cell: 082 336 7199 | Email: grootboom@zz2.co.za

Fanie Potgieter

WE 14 0002



PINZYL: WE 14 0002

Bertie van Zyl Edms (Pty) Ltd | Modjadjiskloof, Limpopo
Age: 10 | Number of calves: 8
Age 1st calving (months): 32 | Avg ICP (days): 367
Avg Weaning Index: 107

EBVs

Birth Direct: -0.01 | Weaning Direct: 5.8 |
Weaning Maternal: 2.3
Cell: 082 336 7199 | Email: grootboom@zz2.co.za

Sanetta du Preez

ZDW 14 0009



SA ANGUS: ZDW 14 0009

Sanetta du Preez | Stellenbosch, Western Cape
Age: 10 | Number of calves: 9
Age 1st calving (months): 29 | Avg ICP (days): 332
Avg Weaning Index: 101

EBVs

Birth Direct: 0.33 | Weaning Direct: 22.5 |
Weaning Maternal: 5.5
Cell: 082 495 5107 | Email: sanetdp@gmail.com

Theuns de Jager

NT 13 0005



SA BRAFORD: NT 13 0005

TJ, Theuns & Marlene de Jager | Ladysmith, KwaZulu-Natal
Age: 11 | Number of calves: 8
Age 1st calving (months): 36 | Avg ICP (days): 368

EBVs

Birth Direct: 2.70 | Weaning Direct: 17.0 | Weaning Maternal: 7.0
Cell: 072 909 1861 | Email: marlene.dejager@gmail.com

Bertus & PJ Mong

BMH 15 0041



SA HEREFORD: BMH 15 0041

Bertus Mong | Villiersdorp, Western Cape
Age: 9 | Number of calves: 7
Age 1st calving (months): 28 | Avg ICP (days): 350
Avg Weaning Index: 115

EBVs

Birth Direct: 1.26 | Weaning Direct: 20.4 |
Weaning Maternal: 13.7
Cell: 082 947 0701 | Email: bertus@ppmong.co.za

Amy Williams

DJW 11 0009




SANTA GERTRUDIS: DJW 11 0009

Amy Williams | Barberton, Mpumalanga
Age: 13 | Number of calves: 10
Age 1st calving (months): 30 | Avg ICP (days): 368
Avg Weaning Index: 104

EBVs

Birth Direct: 1.59 | Weaning Direct: 14.1 |
Weaning Maternal: 4.6
Cell: 083 627 0978 | Email: amy@scotston.co.za

Theuns Vlotman **VL 13 0026**



SENEPOL: VL 13 0026

Theuns Vlotman | Brandfort, Free State

Age: 11 | Number of calves: 8

Age 1st calving (months): 26 | Avg ICP (days): 358

Avg Weaning Index: 109

EBVs

Birth Direct: 1.21 | Weaning Direct: 8.9 |

Weaning Maternal: 7.3

Cell: 083 899 7977 | Email: vlotvlei@yahoo.com

Stephan Voigts **GV 11 0223**



SIMMENTALER: GV 11 0223

Stephan Voigts | Klein Windhoek, Namibia

Age: 13 | Number of calves: 11

Age 1st calving (months): 20 | Avg ICP (days): 356

Avg Weaning Index: 109

EBVs

Birth Direct: 0.40 | Weaning Direct: 24.0 |

Weaning Maternal: 14.0

Cell: 0026 481 1244430 | Email: stephanv@iway.na

James & John Miller **JM 14 1693**



SOUTH DEVON: JM 14 1693

John & James Miller | Cathcart, Eastern Cape

Age: 10 | Number of calves: 7

Age 1st calving (months): 37 | Avg ICP (days): 362

Avg Weaning Index: 113

EBVs

Birth Direct: 1.61 | Weaning Direct: 22.7 |

Weaning Maternal: 10.9

Cell: 083 659 8269 | Email: johnno@hazeldean.co.za

Theo van Zyl **TZ 15 0108**



SUSSEX: TZ 15 0108

Theo van Zyl | Ladybrand

Age: 9 | Number of calves: 7

Age 1st calving (months): 29 | Avg ICP (days): 346

Avg Weaning Index: 105

EBVs

Birth Direct: 2.73 | Weaning Direct: 21.5 |

Weaning Maternal: 7.2

Cell: 082 564 4921 | Email: theovanzy@vodamail.co.za

Cornelis Rautenbach **CR 13 0104**



TULI: CR 13 0104

Cornelis Rautenbach | Reitz, Free State

Age: 11 | Number of calves: 8

Age 1st calving (months): 37 | Avg ICP (days): 351

Avg Weaning Index: 111

EBVs

Birth Direct: 0.51 | Weaning Direct: 7.4 |

Weaning Maternal: 8.3

Cell: 082 371 4390 | Email: nonstoet@schoolink.co.za

2024 ARC NATIONAL PLATINUM BULL AWARDS

It is known as the "best from the best" award category because, in addition to having outstanding performance figures themselves, bulls can only be eligible for this honour if they were bred from an elite cow.

Although more than one bull per breed may be eligible for this prize, the strict adjudication criteria usually mean that very few bulls are eligible. In order to be eligible, bulls had to have passed the ARC's Phase C test with a Gold Merit certificate, and the bull's dam had to be granted Elite cow status in the year that the bull was awarded Gold Merit.

Additionally, eligible bulls are required to have finished their Phase C test between 1 January and 31 December 2023.

The 11 ARC National Platinum Bulls with their figures and owners.

BONSMARA

Gert Nel | Danhof, Free State | Cell: 082 800 0444 | Email: gertjnel@mweb.co.za

GJN 22 0345

ADG Index: 112 | FCR Index: 115 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference: 311

Dam: GJN 15 0072 | Age (years): 9 | Calvings: 7 | Age 1st Calving (months): 31 | Avg ICP (days): 361

EBVs: Birth Direct: 2.03 | Weaning Direct: 21.8 | Weaning Maternal: 14.3

GJN 22 0450

Gert Nel | Danhof, Free State | ADG Index: 108 | FCR Index: 112 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference: 371

Dam: GJN 12 0093 | Age (years): 12 | Calvings: 9 | Age 1st Calving (months): 34 | Avg ICP (days): 374

EBVs: Birth Direct: 1.24 | Weaning Direct: 11.4 | Weaning Maternal: 7.0



Gert & Gerhard Nel

GJN 22 0345 **GJN 22 0450**



BONSMARA

Nick Serfontein (Sernick Bonsmaras) | Edenville, Free State | Cell: 082 554 7690 | Email: nick@Sernickgroup.co.za

NFS 22 0015

ADG Index: 105 | FCR Index: 113 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference: 352 | Dam: VV 14 0046
Age (years): 10 | Calvings: 8 | Age 1st Calving (months): 24 | Avg ICP (days): 366
EBVs: Birth Direct: 2.40 | Weaning Direct: 20.8 | Weaning Maternal: 5.8

NFS 22 0203

ADG Index: 104 | FCR Index: 111 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference: 383 | Dam: ZVJ 13 0101
Age (years): 11 | Calvings: 8 | Age 1st Calving (months): 30 | Avg ICP (days): 367
EBVs: Birth Direct: 1.60 | Weaning Direct: 12.0 | Weaning Maternal: 7.5

NFS 22 0205

Nick Serfontein (Sernick Bonsmaras) | Edenville, Free State
ADG Index: 112 | FCR Index: 107 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference: 314 | Dam: NFS 13 0014
Age (years): 11 | Calvings: 8 | Age 1st Calving (months): 29 | Avg ICP (days): 421
EBVs: Birth Direct: 1.90 | Weaning Direct: 19.1 | Weaning Maternal: 10.0

NFS 22 0244

Nick Serfontein (Sernick Bonsmaras) | Edenville, Free State
ADG Index: 107 | FCR Index: 109 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference: 337
Dam: VV 14 0529 | Age (years): 10 | Calvings: 7 | Age 1st Calving (months): 22 | Avg ICP (days): 403
EBVs: Birth Direct: 0.67 | Weaning Direct: 15.4 | Weaning Maternal: 4.6

NFS 22 0568

Nick Serfontein (Sernick Bonsmaras) | Edenville, Free State | ADG Index: 104 | FCR Index: 111
Adjusted Scrotum circumference: 367 | Dam: NFS 10 0135 | Age (years): 14 | Calvings: 10
Age 1st Calving (months): 31 | Avg ICP (days): 424
EBVs: Birth Direct: 1.08 | Weaning Direct: 11.4 | Weaning Maternal: 6.7



Nick Serfontein

NFS 22 0015

NFS 22 0203



NFS 22 0205



NFS 22 0244



NFS 22 0568



Fanie Potgieter | **PZ 22 0122**

PINZ2YL: PZ 22 0122

Bertie van Zyl (Pty) Ltd | Mooketsi, Limpopo
ADG Index: 120 | FCR Index: 116 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference: 355
Dam: PZ 14 0333 | Age (years): 10 | Calvings: 7
Age 1st Calving (months): 28 | Avg ICP (days): 396
EBVs: Birth Direct: 0.69 | Weaning Direct: 4.2
Weaning Maternal: 9.5
Cell: 082 336 7199 | Email: grootboom@zz2.co.za

Willem & Carl Scholtz | **ZK 22 0176**




SA HEREFORD: ZK 22 0176

Carl Scholtz | Clocolan, Free State
ADG Index: 129 | FCR Index: 122
Adjusted Scrotum circumference: 368
Dam: ZK 13 0143 | Age (years): 11 | Calvings: 8
Age 1st Calving (months): 31 | Avg ICP (days): 385
EBVs: Birth Direct: 1.45 | Weaning Direct: 15.4
Weaning Maternal: 6.7
Cell: 083 305 0668 | Email: drscholtz@zuikerkop.co.za



Desmond Robertson | **SS 22 0129**




SANTA GERTRUDIS: SS 22 0129

Desmond Robertson | Bloemfontein, Free State
ADG Index: 104 | FCR Index: 118
Adjusted Scrotum circumference: 338
Dam: JO 10 0084 | Age (years): 14 | Calvings: 10
Age 1st Calving (months): 35 | Avg ICP (days): 387
EBVs: Birth Direct: 0.40
Weaning Direct: 5.8 | Weaning Maternal: 6.1
Cell: 082 494 7032 | Email: desmond@desley.co.za

Erina Cillie du Preez & C.B. Cillie | **CC 22 0123**

SUSSEX: CC 22 0123

C.B. Cillie | Bloemfontein, Free State
ADG Index: 100 | FCR Index: 115
Adjusted Scrotum circumference: 346
Dam: CC 13 0032 | Age (years): 11
Calvings: 8 | Age 1st Calving (months): 35 | Avg ICP (days): 379
EBVs: Birth Direct: 2.95
Weaning Direct: 31.0 | Weaning Maternal: 10.2
Cell: 083 388 0830 | Email: ccillie@bfn.co.za

2024 ARC NATIONAL KyD PROVINCE OF THE YEAR AWARD

The objective of this award is to recognise the province with the highest number of participating farmers in the scheme (KyD). These farmers must be registered on INTERGIS and must have loaded data on the database between April of the year preceding the award and March of the year of the award. The three provinces with the highest number of participating farmers will receive the accolades Platinum, Gold and Silver respectively. This award was only introduced in 2016.

This year's finalists for the KyD province of the year was:



Eastern Cape
KwaZulu-Natal
Mpumalanga

The ARC National KyD Province of the Year Award for 2024 was awarded to

Kwa-Zulu Natal
(Platinum award)

Gold was awarded to Mpumalanga and Silver to Eastern Cape

2024 ARC NATIONAL Kaonafatso ya Dikgomo OF THE YEAR AWARD










The ARC's flagship award recognizes emerging beef farmers who excel in herd management and record keeping as part of the Kaonafatso ya Dikgomo (KyD) Scheme. This award, celebrating its 22nd anniversary, identifies finalists from across South Africa who aim to become commercial farmers. The KyD Scheme helps emerging cattle farmers improve productivity through beef recording and selection technologies. With over 8,000 members, the scheme supports improved herd management and economic growth. The award encourages farmers to enhance their livelihoods, promotes KyD participation, and highlights the benefits of performance testing in beef farming.

The purpose of the Kaonafatso ya Dikgomo Scheme is to recognize cattle farmers who excel in herd management and performance.

Key goals include:

1. Encouraging farmers to improve their livelihoods through better animal production;
2. Promoting participation in the scheme;
3. Advancing breeding and management practices in the beef industry;
4. Showcasing the benefits of performance testing by identifying top-performing herds.

The 9 provincial winners for 2024 were as follows:

								
EASTERN CAPE	FREE STATE	GAUTENG	KWA-ZULU NATAL	LIMPOPO	MPUMALANGA	NORTH WEST	NORTHERN CAPE	WESTERN CAPE
Weziwe Zondani Kings Glen Farm, Komga	Pule Moalosi Hoërop, Bultfontein	Catherine Sepeng Portion 14 Jagersbosch Alias, Van Slagterbosch 407, Fochville	Ziphozakhe Zuma Amafu Farming, Estcourt	Azwinndini Maiwashe Maiwashe Estate, Morebeng	Philip Mahlangu Leeupoortjie JS 267 P4, Middelburg	Kgabiso Mookeletsi Sekai farm, Mahikeng	Pieter Theys Membysvlakte, Griekwastad	Thamsanqa Mxokozeli Riverside Farm, Riverside
Breed: Beefmaster & Brahman Herd size: 158 Calving rate: 92	Breed: Bonsmara Herd size: 59 Calving rate: 95	Breed: Commercial Herd size: 137 Calving rate: 80	Breed: Simbra Herd size: 248 Calving rate: 95	Breed: Bonsmara Herd size: 190 Calving rate: 85	Breed: Commercial Herd size: 75 Calving rate: 76	Breed: Nguni Herd size: 84 Calving rate: 100	Breed: Simbra Herd size: 41 Calving rate: 95	Breed: Bonsmara & Sussex Herd size: 66 Calving rate: 90
Cell: 073 291 9159 / 073 292 6858	Cell: 076 810 6635	Cell: 083 308 7955	Cell: 076 161 4494	Cell: 060 481 0584 / 082 258 7888	Cell: 064 951 3381 / 076 367 1690	Cell: 076 714 0219	Cell: 073 366 9800	Cell: 082 938 9841

The winner of the 2024 ARC National Kaonafatso ya Dikgomo of the Year Award was awarded to Thamsanqa Mxokozeli from Riverside | Thamsanqa Mxokozeli | Cell: 082 938 9841

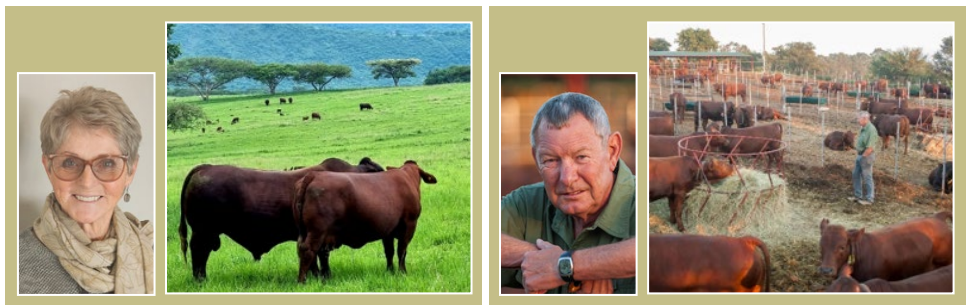
2024 ARC NATIONAL MENTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

This award category's main goal is to recognise farmers who have demonstrated extraordinary leadership abilities and efforts to develop capacity and skills by sharing information, mentoring, and helping other farmers adopt and apply pertinent technologies and management techniques to increase their sustainability and productivity.

To put it briefly, this award category evaluates how a farmer uses his or her expertise, experience, and abilities to help others.

Farmers that fall into this group should have a track record of success that demonstrates their efforts to teach and train others, as well as – and this is crucial – the results of their activities and mentoring programs.

This year we had two winners for this category:



SCOTSTON FARMS (PTY) LTD
(Santa Gertrudis)
Amy Williams
Barberton, Mpumalanga

Email: amy@sctoston.co.za
Cell: 083 627 0978

Sernick Group
(Bonsmara)
Nick Serfontein
Edenville, Free State

Email: nick@sernickgroup.co.za
Cell: 082 554 7690

2024 ARC NATIONAL SPECIAL PERFORMANCE TEST CLASS

This award category, which has existed for more than 40 years, seeks to honour bulls with outstanding performance characteristics. Bulls that passed the National Beef Recording and Improvement Scheme's standardised growth test (Phase C) in 2023 and received Gold or Silver merit certificates are eligible to compete in this prize category. The attribute known as residual feed intake, or RFI, which characterises a bull's capacity to use feed effectively, is also taken into account. Performance qualities and functional efficiency are both considered in the adjudication criteria, and only one bull in each breed is ultimately chosen to represent the entire breed. As a result, every bull representing his breed who competes, is declared the breed's overall national champion. Herewith the 20 bulls with their respective performance figures and the owners with their contact details.

Desmond & Timmy Robertson DT 22 0001




BEEFMASTER: DT 22 0001

Timmy Robertson | Bloemfontein, Free State
 Birth date: 10/10/2022
 ADG (g): 2144 | ADG index: 125 | FCR (kg/kg): 4.25
 FCR index: 130 | Adjusted Shoulder Height (mm): 1223
 Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1414 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 369
 Centre tested: Glen | Tel: 079 496 0115
 Email: Robertson12timmy@gmail.com

Laurence & Allistair Brown BLK 22 0611




BEEF SHORTHORN: BLK 22 0611

Laurence & Allistair Brown | Alexandra, Eastern Cape
 Birth date: 25/03/2022 | ADG (g): 1871
 ADG index: 111 | FCR (kg/kg): 6.06 | FCR index: 103
 Adjusted Shoulder Height (mm): 1103 | Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1444 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 313
 Centre tested: Winter Castles Trading 34CC
 Tel: 083 236 4040 | Email: blackstonebeef@gmail.com

Paul, Michelle & Michaela Brits OLI 22 0046




BORAN: OLI 22 0046

Paul Brits | Naboomspruit, Limpopo
 Birth date: 16/10/2022 | ADG (g): 1527
 ADG index: 133 | FCR (kg/kg): 5.46 | FCR index: 118
 Adjusted Shoulder Height (mm): 1155 | Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1259 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 308
 Centre tested: Irene | Tel: 084 982 1122
 Email: michbrits@gmail.com

Ampie & Riki Rossouw CRE 22 0052




BRAHMAN: CRE 22 0052

Ampie & Riki Rossouw | Mokopane, Limpopo
 Birth date: 14/11/2022 | ADG (g): 1307
 ADG index: 109 | FCR (kg/kg): 5.88 | FCR index: 108
 RFI: -2.139 | Adjusted Hip Height (mm): 1222
 Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1355 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 245
 Centre tested: Bufland | Tel: 083 273 6330
 Email: crebrahmane@mokopane.za.net

Myburgh & Tewie Wessels & David WW2 22 0042




BRANGUS: WW2 22 0042

Myburgh Wessels | Reddersburg, Free State
 Birth date: 23/12/2022 | ADG (g): 2028
 ADG index: 120 | FCR (kg/kg): 4.71 | FCR index: 123
 RFI: -1.491 | Adjusted Hip Height (mm): 1260
 Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1472 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 369
 Centre tested: Glen | Tel: 082 333 3396
 Email: myburgh@nexia-sabt.co.za

Abie Rademeyer LT 22 0012




BRAUNVIEH: LT 22 0012

Abie Rademeyer | Petrusville, Northern Cape
 Birth date: 08/11/2022 | ADG (g): 2133
 ADG index: 117 | FCR (kg/kg): 4.96 | FCR index: 116
 Adjusted Shoulder Height (mm): 1204 | Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1455 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 363
 Centre tested: Vryburg | Tel: 083 282 3996
 Email: arendbrademeyer@gmail.com

Dewald van der Merwe BB 23 0728




CHAROLAIS: BB 23 0728

Dewald van der Merwe | Lichtenburg, North West
 Birth date: 28/01/2023 | ADG (g): 2333 | ADG index: 119
 FCR (kg/kg): 4.47 | FCR index: 122
 Adjusted Hip Height (mm): 1314 | Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1505 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 321
 Centre tested: Vryburg | Tel: 079 898 0785
 Email: dewald@tacet.co.za



Mark Wiseman MAC 22 0001




DEXTER: MAC 22 0001

Mark Wiseman | George, Western Cape
 Birth date: 03/03/2022 | ADG (g): 1201 | ADG index: 100
 FCR (kg/kg): 5.81 | FCR index: 115
 Adjusted Shoulder Height (mm): 1096 | Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1332 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 326
 Centre tested: Elsenburg | Tel: 071 879 7390
 Email: info@markwiseman.com

Jan Dhooge AAD 22 0032

DRAKENSBERGER: AAD 22 0032

Jan Dhooge | Heidelberg, Gauteng
 Birth date: 14/09/2022 | ADG (g): 2062
 ADG index: 117 | FCR (kg/kg): 3.79 | FCR index: 129
 Adjusted Shoulder Height (mm): 1177
 Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1436
 Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 373
 Centre tested: Dhooge | Tel: 082 892 5762
 Email: jandhooge67@gmail.com

Frikkie du Plessis

YARI 22 0043



HUGENOOT SA: YARI 22 0043

Frikkie du Plessis | Modimolle, Limpopo
 Birth date: 12/07/2022 | ADG (g): 1689 | ADG index: 114
 FCR (kg/kg): 5.63 | FCR index: 111
 Adjusted Shoulder Height (mm): 1167 | Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1391 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 333
 Centre tested: Bufland | Tel: 083 229 8798
 Email: frikkie@chavari.co.za

Louis, Ronél & Louis (jnr) de Jager

LULU 22 0002



LIMOUSIN: LULU 22 0002

Louis de Jager | Bloemfontein, Free State
 Birth date: 25/06/2022 | ADG (g): 2224 | ADG index: 124 | FCR (kg/kg): 4.64 | FCR index: 117
 RFI: -1.67 | Adjusted Hip Height (mm): 1252
 Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1402 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 327
 Centre tested: Glen | Tel: 083 240 1588
 Email: ronelburger13@hotmail.com

Fanie Potgieter

ZZN 22 0039



NGUNI: ZZN 22 0039

Bertie van Zyl (Pty) Ltd | Mooketsi, Limpopo
 Birth date: 22/10/2022 | ADG (g): 1133 | ADG index: 107
 FCR (kg/kg): 5.83 | FCR index: 110
 Adjusted Shoulder Height (mm): 1159 | Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1344 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 310
 Centre tested: Bufland | Tel: 082 336 7199
 Email: grootboom@zz2.co.za

Fanie Potgieter

GB 22 0060



PINZGAUER: GB 22 0060

Bertie van Zyl (Pty) Ltd | Mooketsi, Limpopo
 Birth date: 12/11/2022 | ADG (g): 1781 | ADG index: 105
 FCR (kg/kg): 5.74 | FCR index: 106
 Adjusted Shoulder Height (mm): 1142 | Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1410 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 347 | Centre tested: Bufland | Tel: 082 336 7199
 Email: grootboom@zz2.co.za

Myburgh & Tewie Wessels & David

WW2 22 0042



PINZYL: PZ 22 0020

Bertie van Zyl (Pty) Ltd | Mooketsi, Limpopo
 Birth date: 14/09/2022 | ADG (g): 1557 | ADG index: 120
 FCR (kg/kg): 6.03 | FCR index: 120
 Adjusted Shoulder Height (mm): 1076 | Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1296 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 383 | Centre tested: Bufland | Tel: 082 336 7199 | Email: grootboom@zz2.co.za

Seymour Currie

SCJ 22 0031



SA ANGUS (Black): SCJ 22 0031

Seymour Currie | Melkbosstrand, Western Cape
 Birth date: 22/02/2022 | ADG (g): 1817 | ADG index: 95
 FCR (kg/kg): 5.63 | FCR index: 105
 Adjusted Hip Height (mm): 1200 | Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1456 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 325 | Centre tested: Elsenburg
 Tel: 072 143 6114 | Email: worsiejdfarms@gmail.com

Seymour Currie

SCJ 22 0094

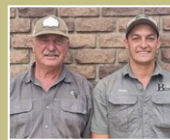


SA ANGUS (Red): SCJ 22 0094

Seymour Currie | Melkbosstrand, Western Cape
 Birth date: 30/05/2022 | ADG (g): 2115 | ADG index: 111
 FCR (kg/kg): 5.81 | FCR index: 103
 Adjusted Hip Height (mm): 1222 | Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1481 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 369
 Centre tested: Elsenburg

Gert van der Merwe & Johan de Jager

GM 22 0061

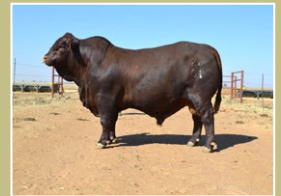


SA BRAFORD: GM 22 0061

Gert van der Merwe & Johan de Jager | Bethal, Mpumalanga
 Birth date: 03/03/2022 | ADG (g): 2153 | ADG index: 121
 FCR (kg/kg): 5.25 | FCR index: 106
 Adjusted Hip Height (mm): 1207 | Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1408 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 344 | Centre tested: Sernick | Tel: 060 966 3693
 Email: dejagerskraal@gmail.com

Sandra Janse van Vuuren

DS 22 0001



SANTA GERTRUDIS: DS 22 0001

Sandra Janse van Vuuren | Sannieshof, North West
 Birth date: 05/02/2022 | ADG (g): 2089 | ADG index: 124
 FCR (kg/kg): 5.03 | FCR index: 118 | RFI: -.381
 Adjusted Hip Height (mm): 1259 | Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1423 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 373 | Centre tested: Vryburg | Tel: 083 508 5376
 Email: marius@ramref.co.za

Erina Cillié du Preez & C.B. Cillié



CC 22 0123

SUSSEX: CC 22 0123

C.B. Cillié | Bloemfontein, Free State
 Birth date: 14/11/2022
 ADG (g): 1778 | ADG index: 100
 FCR (kg/kg): 5.15 | FCR index: 115 | Adjusted Hip Height (mm): 1203
 Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1424
 Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 346

Centre tested: Glen
 Tel: 083 388 0830
 Email: ccillie@bfn.co.za

WAGYU: FGW 22 0223

Fredericksburg Wagyu Stud
 Owned by L'Ormanns
 Franschhoek, Western Cape
 Birth date: 15/06/2022
 ADG (g): 1969 | ADG index: 117
 FCR (kg/kg): 5.18
 FCR index: 106 | Adjusted Hip Height (mm): 1208
 Adjusted Body Length (mm): 1381 | Adjusted Scrotum circumference (mm): 301

Centre tested: Elsenburg
 Tel: 082 610 5397
 Email: stefan@fredericksburg.co.za

Stefan Terblanche (Stud Manager)



FGW 22 0223



2024 ARC NATIONAL BEEF CATTLE IMPROVEMENT HERD OF THE YEAR AWARD

A herd had to achieve several minimum performance criteria in order to be considered as a nominee for this category. It is now among the most esteemed award categories. Over and above the performance of the herd, the nominee's involvement in the industry, interactions with other farmers, and attempts to develop and enhance the beef production sector are also evaluated in this category. This award category is open to Southern African breeders and herds of all breeds.

The traits that are assessed relate to the performance of the herd itself and includes;

- The level of reproduction of the herd
- Overall participation and implementation of performance testing as a tool for improvement
- Cow efficiency in the herd (including post-weaning performance)
- The completeness of performance records
- The size of the cowherd (must consist of at least 50 cows)
- The calving performance of the herd
- Genetic trends and progress in the herd and the application of modern scientific breeding techniques.
- The contributions and reputation of the participating herd owner is also considered, in particular regarding his/her leadership and guidance to other farmers and stakeholders.

The 2024 Top 5 finalist for the ARC National Beef Cattle Improvement Herd of the Year finalists were as followed:



ANKO BONSMARAS

André Höll, Vryburg-North West

Cell: 083 260 6479

Email:

ankobonsmaras@gmail.com



EXSTEEN NGUNI'S & SANGAS

Hannes Eksteen, Piketberg-Western Cape

Cell: 082 946 2157

Email: exteen@telkomsa.net



LORIZA BRAHMANE

Louis Meyer, Zeerust-North West

Cell: 082 925 3829

Email: loriza@truenw.co.za



ONDEKA SIMBRA

Werner Wilckens, Otjiwarongo-Otjosondijupa

Cell: +264 81 366 5177

Email: wilckens@iway.na



LOUWRENS SANTAS

Manie Louwrens, Leandra-Mpumalanga

Cell: 082 335 7220

Email:

Rlouwrens0311@gmail.com



The winner of the ARC National Beef Cattle Improvement Herd of the Year 2024 was awarded to EXSTEEN NGUNI'S & SANGAS of Hannes Eksteen

Piketberg-Western Cape

Cell: 082 946 2157

Email: exteen@telkomsa.net



BUILDING YOUR COMPOST HEAP

It is important that you have easy access to a compost heap and that the materials used for composting are close by. There should be a good balance between sun and shade on the heap so that it doesn't get too dry or remain too wet. The heap should be built on a surface with sufficient drainage and close to a location that can use the nutrients that leaks from the compost heap, so that the soil organisms can reach the heap easily.

Water should also be close-by so that you can wet the compost heap when needed. Stay away from pine trees, because the needles that will drop onto the heap are low in carbon and will slow down the composting process.

Building the heap

Wet the ground underneath the heap
If you wet the ground underneath the pile it will prevent the soil from absorbing the moisture out of the heap. It will also encourage earthworms to penetrate the heap and help the decomposing process.

Layer of twigs and coarse materials

At first, place a layer of twigs and coarse materials approximately 5 to 10 cm thick. This will allow air circulation at the base of the heap that ensures better aeration in the heap.

"Brown" and "greens" layers

It is difficult to mix the carbon and nitrogen or brown and green materials to the correct estimated ratio, so put them in layers on top of each other instead. Layers should be 10 to 15 cm thick, but limit grass clippings

to prevent matting. Wet each finished layer of the heap. It is important that 45 – 50% of the weight of the compost heap should consist of water.

Try to maintain a 50/50 ration between "greens" and "browns" for the correct balance of nutrients. When the heap is turned for the first time, the "browns" and "greens" will mix with each other. Chop or shred the materials as much as possible so that it can decompose easier.

Top layer

It is normally a good idea to add a thin layer, about 2 cm of garden soil as a top layer. This introduces microbes to the heap so that decomposition can start as soon as possible.

Cover the heap

It's a good policy to cover the heap to keep in moisture and to keep out rain. A black plastic bag is ideal. This step is optional and own discretion may be used.

Monitoring the compost heap

The compost heap should be heating up in a few hours time. The temperature can be tested by sticking your arm into the heap. Be careful as it could burn you if the heap is working effectively. If the heap doesn't heat up, you most probably don't have enough nitrogen or "greens" in the compost heap.

The moisture content must be maintained at 45 – 50%. The compost should feel like a wrung-out sponge and should contain enough water to almost drip when you squeeze a handful.



Composting time will be decreased considerably when you turn the compost pile regularly. By turning the compost heap, aeration increases and all the material get exposed to the hot centre. The heap should be turned when the temperature inside starts to decrease. The heap should be wetted every time you turn it. If you turn the heap correctly, the inside should be out and the outside should be in. The season has no effect on the compost heap, because it is the heap's centre temperature that is the crucial factor.

When is the compost ready?

The compost is ready for use as soon as the compost heap fails to heat up once more after being turned. The original ingredients of the compost heap should be hard to recognise at all, except for materials like straw that will not be fully decomposed. Finished compost has a dark colour with a soily structure and the smell of humus on a forest floor.

The volume of the finished compost heap will be 25 – 40% of the original compost heap. The time taken for compost to be ready depends on how often you turned the heap - if sufficient wetting occurred and if the right materials were used to build the heap.

Source: ARC-ILI: Silverton

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