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WOLBOER

WOOL FARMER



NWKV-publikasie vir die wolbedryf van Suid-Afrika



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- // Learn more about Karoo paralysis
- // Swakker verbruikersvraag hou wolmark onder druk

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VOORWOORD

SEISOENE VAN NOOD EN HOOP - EN MY LAASTE VOORWOORD!



Ná feitlik 21 jaar by die NWKV het die tyd vir my aangebreek om die tuig amptelik neer te lê. Ek het in 2003 diens by die NWKV aanvaar, en as ek vandag terugkyk, kan ek getuig van soveel wonderlike wedervaringe en geleenthede wat hierdie uiters geseënde tyd in my lewe meegebring het.

Oor die jare was daar verskeie hoogtepunte, wat veral op die terrein van suksesse in die NWKV se adviesdienste gesetel was en waar tegnologie in die volhoubare-produksie-omgewing vir wolprodusente ontwikkel en bevorder is. Natuurlik was daar ook groot uitdagings wat die wolbedryf direk geraak het. Ek dink veral aan die groot uitbreking van Slenkdalkoors wat tussen 2010 en 2012 ernstige veeverliese veroorsaak het, en ook menselewens geëis het.

Sedert 2013 ondervind produsente geweldige entstoftekorte, wat reeds vir meer as 'n dekade voortduur. Ingryping deur die privaatsektor bring genadiglik verligting hiervoor. Uitbrekings van beken-klouseer in Limpopo, en meer onlangs in Kwazulu-Natal, Noordwes en die Vrystaat, het gelei tot 'n verbod op woluitvoere. Langdurige droogtes oor die meeste van die wolproduserende gebiede het daartoe gelei dat sommige produsente die handdoek moes ingooi. En dan was daar nog ook die grendeltydperk ...

As ek egter terugkyk, dan het baie van die uitdagings lewenservaringe gebied en die bedryf genoodsaak om voorkomende maatreëls te ontwikkel en in te stel. Alle rolspelers in die wolbedryf het nou saamgewerk ten einde die uitdagings aan te pak en suksesvolle oplossings te vind.

Die rol van 'n produsente-organisasie soos die NWKV op die terreine van skakeling en onderhandeling, asook die rol om die produksie- en markomgewing te verbeter, is myns insiens ononderhandelbaar en sal in die toekoms van toenemende belang raak.

Hierdie is die laaste keer dat ek die voorwoord vir *Wolboer* skryf. Ek wil graag die geleentheid gebruik om elke leser van die tydskrif, almal betrokke by die redaksie en publikasie, elke adverteerder en almal wat oor die jare artikels geskryf het, hartlik te bedank vir hul gewaardeerde ondersteuning deur die jare. Mag die tydskrif en die wolbedryf steeds in die toekoms geseën word met volgehoue sukses en van krag tot krag gaan om nog groter hoogtes te bereik!

Leon de Beer



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Vol 12 Nr 2
2024



INLEIDEND ☉ INTRODUCTION

VOORWOORD

KONTAKBESONDERHEDE

MEDEWERKERS / CONTRIBUTORS

REDAKTEURSBRIEF / ED'S NOTE

SÊ JOU SÊ / HAVE YOUR SAY

STILTETYD

'n Kort oordenking wat jou siel sal voed

MARKOORSIG / MARKET OVERVIEW

Swakker verbruikersvraag hou wolmark onder druk

BULLETINS

Bly op hoogte van alle nuus en gebeure in die streke en in die plaaslike en internasionale wolbedryf

BEDRYF & NUUS ☉ INDUSTRY & NEWS

LEON GROET DIE BEDRYF

Klink 'n glasie op sy suksesvolle loopbaan en lees meer oor wat hy alles bereik het

DIE VROU AGTER DIE VOORSITTERSPOS

Leer ken Cecelia Beukes, die eerste vroulike voorsitter van NWKV Mpumalanga

CRUCIAL AGRICULTURAL POLICIES HANG IN THE BALANCE

Important agricultural bills still need to be finalised in Parliament

FREE STATE UNVEILS GROUNDBREAKING TRACEABILITY SYSTEM

Free State Agriculture (FSA) wants to enhance traceability with pioneering initiative

SOUTH AFRICA'S WOOL AND RED MEAT EXPORTS ON A PATH TO RECOVERY

There are signs of recovery in both sectors despite obstacles

ASK THE (AFRI)VET

Wolboer / Wool Farmer's veterinary Q&A column, sponsored by Afrivet

IWTO SNIPPET

The latest from the International Wool Textile Organisation

3
6
7
9
11
12
13
16
26
30
34
38
40
42
44

PRODUKSIE-ONTWIKKELING & VOLHOUBAARHEID ☉

PRODUCTION DEVELOPMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

DIE ROL WAT LAMHOKHIGIENE SPEEL IN BIOSEKURITEIT

'n Paar nuttige wenke om die gesondheid en welsyn van ooie en lammers in die lamhokke te behou

PRIVATE ENTSTOFVERVAARDIGER MAAK DEURBRAAK

'n Private entstofvervaardiger van Pretoria het 'n nuwe entstof ontwikkel om longontsteking by skape en bokke te voorkom

PREDATION MANAGEMENT – the good, the bad and the ugly

All you need to know about the latest research on this topic

MANAGEMENT CALENDAR

The management practices to have completed in the summer rainfall areas by April/May

PREDASIEBESTUUR

'n Dieper blik op veediefstalpatrone

46
51
52
58
62

NAVORSING/TEGNOLOGIE ☉ RESEARCH/TECHNOLOGY

CHANGE A CHALLENGE INTO AN OPPORTUNITY

Challenges often bring opportunity – we just need to change our perspective

SOLAR PANELS AND SHEEP – a match made in heaven

Discover the interesting connection between solar panels and sheep

TRACEABILITY – valuable lessons to be learned from our neighbours

Learn more about what our neighbouring countries like Namibia and Botswana do when it comes to traceability

THE ROADMAP TO TRACEABILITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

LITS SA developed over the course of six years, what is their next step?

66
70
74
78

VERBRUIKER & LEEFSTYL ☉ CONSUMER & LIFESTYLE

DISCOVER A NEW WAY OF SLEEPING WITH WOOL

Wool is a great fibre choice for making natural mattresses

RECIPE

Lamb pastitsio

WOOLLY STORY

Lead the way

82
86
88



Read and enjoy this issue and send your news, opinions, and information to nichelle@agricconnect.co.za. *Wolboer/Wool Farmer* is a wool magazine for everybody!

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TEL JOU SKAPE EN HOU HULLE VEILIG!



Michelle Steyn

Naspeurbaarheid en biosekuriteit: boere is waarskynlik nou al amper moeg om hierdie woorde te hoor omdat dit die tema van menige konferensie is en feitlik op elke spreker se lippe is – maar dit is twee woorde wat die kern van soveel uitdagings is.

As goeie biosekuriteit nie op plase en in die waardeketting toegepas word nie, het dit verreikende gevolge. So ook gaan die stryd teen veediefstal voort – en 'n goeie naspeurbaarheidstelsel mag dalk net die antwoord wees op dié voortslepende probleem.

Dus is hierdie uitgawe van *Wolboer* propvol inligting oor dié twee onderwerpe. Dr Daniel van der Merwe het 'n artikel geskryf oor lamhokhygiëne. Dit is vanselfsprekend dat 'n lam se lêplek 'n uiters belangrike rol speel in biosekuriteit en dat die onderhoud daarvan noodsaaklik is, daarom bied die artikel 'n lekker nagaanlyisie om net weer seker te maak dat alles in die lamhokke nog seepglad verloop.

Ek het by Leon de Beer ingeloer om met hom te gesels oor sy affrede. Hy het diep spore in die bedryf getrap en my herinner aan al die suksesse van die NWKV, en hoe hard die organisasie daaraan werk om 'n regterhand vir die wolboer te wees. Die NWKV se suksesse is ook sy suksesse, en die boere se uitdagings is ook Leon se uitdagings. Hy het 'n sterk fondasie gelê – en dit is sy nalatenskap. Lees meer oor sy loopbaan se hoogte- en laagtepunte en vier sy bydrae tot die bedryf saam met ons!

Lees ook meer van die Vrystaat se plan om veediefstal met naspeurbaarheidstegnologie hok te slaan, en nog vele meer oor die onderwerp. Onthou ook om jou foto's in te stuur vir die NWKV-Santam fotokompetisie. Daar is groot kontantpryse op die spel! Ons sien uit daarna om die foto's in die komende uitgawes van die tydskrif te publiseer.

KOM KUIER SAAM BY NAMPO
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It's back!
The **2024 Santam/NWGA
photo competition**
is ready to receive entries

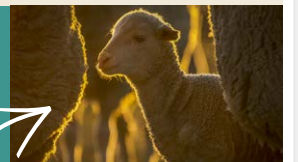


Ready, set – cheese! Get your cameras ready for the highly successful Santam/National Wool Growers' Organisation's (NWGA) photographic competition, which is back this year. The outcome of our 2016 and 2017 photo competitions was so successful and the images were used on so many platforms and websites, that the NWGA decided to launch another.

Santam is the main sponsor of the competition and will be awarding **R12 500** to the person who takes the winning photo. The runner-up will receive **R6 500** and the second runner up will receive **R3 500**. Santam will also pick their favourite 'wild-card' entry from the top 10 photo's (excluding the winners of course). The person who take that photo will also receive **R2 500**. The NWGA invites farmers and wool industry friends alike, to enter their best work into the competition. The theme of the competition is sustainable wool and sheep production. Photographers can enter into three categories: lambs, shearing, and sheep in the veld. The minimum size of a photo should be 1 MB.

Liza Bohlmann, the former national chairperson of Agricultural Writers South Africa, who is also the media liaison and communications manager at Bayer Crop Science, and Charl van Rooyen, former deputy editor of *Landbouweekblad* will be the judges. Big prizes are up for grabs this year, so make sure you feature the wool industry in the best light!

The competition closing date is **15 May 2024**. The winner will be announced at the NWGA's national annual congress in June. Please participate by sending your images to Bonita at nwga@nwga.co.za.



Franci Swart submitted this winning picture for the 2016 photo competition.

ONTVANG ELKE MAAND VARS WOLNUUS

Om in te teken op die maandelikse elektroniese nuusbrieff in Afrikaans en Engels, gaan na nwga.co.za/index.php/mailling-list-sign-up en vul jou kontakbesonderhede in.

■ DEUR CHARLEA GREY

Bou 'n huis wat *vas* staan

Matteus 7:25, Bybel vir Almal: Dit het gereën en die riviere het vol water geword. Die winde het hard gewaai en dit het die huis geruk. Maar die huis het nie omgeval nie, want die man het sy huis op die rots gebou.

Jesus het graag vir die mense wat Hom gevolg het, gelykenisse vertel. Stories. 'n Gelykenis is 'n kort storie wat God se boodskap verduidelik deur 'n voorbeeld te gebruik. Jesus het dit gedoen sodat die boodskap wat hy wou oordra, meer toeganklik en verstaanbaar was vir die skares mense wat kom luister het wanneer hy gepraat het.

En is dit nie wonderlik nie? Die gelykenisse in die Bybel was nog altyd van my gunsteling-gedeeltes. Juis as gevolg van die eenvoud daarvan – die storie met 'n duidelike, verstaanbare les.

Jesus het uiteraard geweet dat ingewikkelde woorde en verduidelikings nie vir almal ewe sinvol gaan wees nie. Met sy stories kon hy iets regkry – hy kon mense meevoer en hulle help om in hul verbeelding 'n prentjie te skep om eendelig te verstaan wat God vir hulle wil sê.

Ja, die gelykenisse in die Nuwe Testament is vir baie mense van die bekendste gedeeltes in die Bybel. Dis ook die stories wat ons dikwels die beste kan onthou. Dalk het jy ook grootgeword met die Jan de Wet-liedjie waarin ons sing: “Die wyse man bou sy huis op die rots ... Die wyse man bou sy huis op die rots ... En die reën het neergeval ...”

Die gelykenis oor die wyse man wat sy huis op 'n rots gebou het, en die dwase man wat sy huis sommer net so op die sand gebou het, is baie

bekend. Die huis wat op die rots gebou is, het vas gestaan toe die storms woed. Die huis op die sand het sommer vinnig weggespoel.

Dit was 'n goeie besluit om die rots as fondament te gebruik, maar die bouwerk was vir seker meer moeite.

Jesus wil hê ons moet ons lewens op 'n stewige fondament bou. Hy wil hê ons moet die dinge wat Hy ons leer, as fondasie gebruik. As ons spreekwoordelike huis op sand gebou is, kan die wêreld se dinge, die uitdagings van die lewe, ons baie vinniger en makliker oorweldig.

Helaas is dit so dat 'n huis met 'n rots as fondament harde werk verg. Jy moet diep grawe as jy by 'n rots wil uitkom om daarop te bou. Dit gebeur nie oornag nie. Dit verg toewyding, tyd en moeite. Eintlik verg dit ook beplanning en 'n doelgerigte houding.

As jy dalk, soos ek, soms wonder of jou huis se fondasie stewig genoeg is, kom herontdek Jesus se stories en die lesse wat hy vir ons wil leer.

GEBED: Here Jesus, dankie dat U iets so eenvoudigs soos 'n storie kan gebruik om my te herinner aan die basiese, maar wonderlikste lewenslesse in u Woord. Amen.

Hierdie dagstukkies kan gevind word by versndag.co.za. Gaan loer gerus vir nuwe dagstukkies elke dag. 



Swakker verbruikers- vraag hou wolmark onder druk

■ DEUR PAUL BUYS

Kommoditeitsmarkte word steeds in die wiele gery deur swakker verbruikersvraag in veral die noordelike halfgrond vir produkte van gehalte. Gevolglik het die wolmark tot dusver vanjaar futloos vertoon.



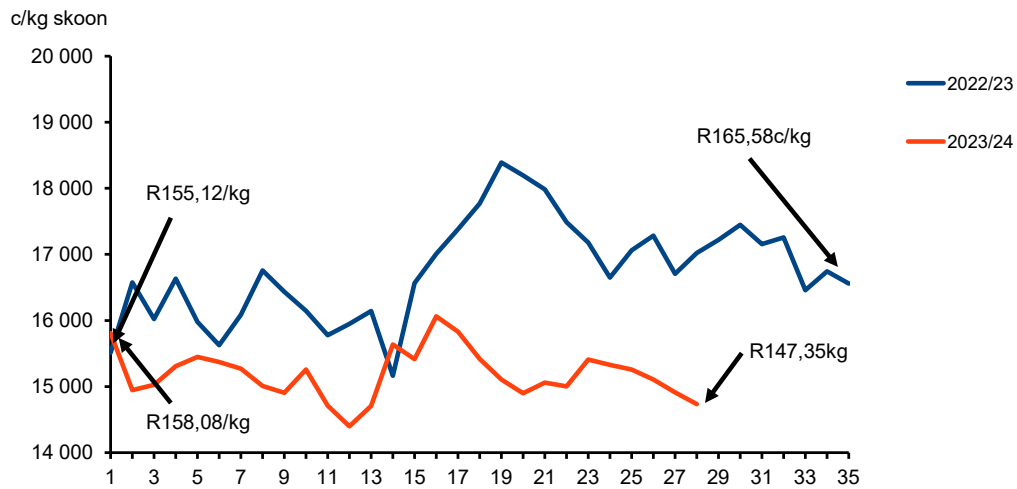
Cape Wools se markaanwyser vir ongesertifiseerde merinowol het op die veiling van 10 April op R147,38/kg (skoon) gesluit. Dit is 13,4% laer as dieselfde veiling die vorige seisoen en bykans 7% laer as die openingsveiling (kyk grafiek 1).

In Australië het die markaanwyser op Ac1138/kg skoon gesluit, wat 'n daling van 11,4% vergeleke met dieselfde veiling

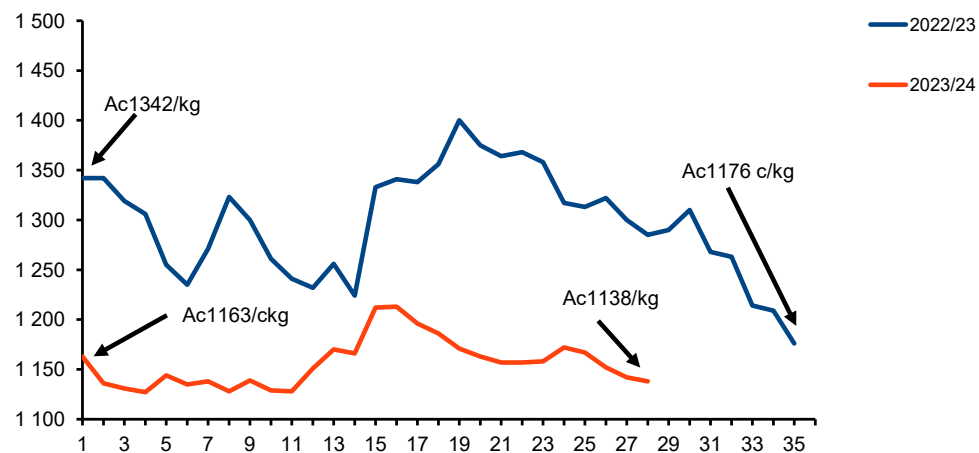
verlede seisoen is. Dit is 2,1% laer as die openingsveiling en 6,2% laer as die hoogste vlak van die seisoen (kyk grafiek 2).

Dit is veral die pryse van die fynere en beter gehalte wol, waarvan die eindbestemming gewoonlik Europa is, wat onder druk bly. Ontleders sê Europese verwerkers is tans uiters versigtig en selektief in hul aankope.

Figuur 1: Cape Wools SA Merino Aanwyser



Figuur 2: Australiese Merino Aanwyser



Groot Chinese verwerkers

Dit lyk ook nie asof dié situasie vinnig gaan verander nie. Die voortslepende oorloë in Oekraïne en Gaza en die stygende pryse van behuising en voedsel veroorsaak dat verbruikers huiwerig is om geld te bestee aan nie-noodsaaklike en/of luukse goedere.

Gelukkig is van die groot Chinese verwerkers steeds aktief in die mark en absorbeer hulle baie van die gehaltewol,

ofskoon teen ietwat laer pryse.

Chinese verbruikers staar egter ook talle uitdagings in die gesig wat hulle bestedingsvermoë beperk en ’n invloed op die vraag na wol kan hê. Behalwe vir die land se trae ekonomiese groei, is die ineenstorting van die eiendomsmark ’n groot kopseer vir talle verbruikers wat deposito’s op woonplekke betaal het en nou die gevaar loop om hul geld te verloor.

’n Bykomende bekommernis is China se groeiende bevolking van bejaardes, wat ’n demografiese krisis vir die land inhou. Dit was vir generasies die gebruik, of eerder die plig, van kinders om na hul ouers om te sien wanneer hulle te oud word om te werk.

Maar weens die land se eenkindbeleid wat van 1980 tot 2015 gevolg is, is daar nou baie minder kinders om die ouers te versorg. China se geboortesyfer het in 2023 tot ’n rekordlaagtepunt gedaal. Dit daal steeds, al is die eenkindbeleid afgeskaf.

Afree-ouderdomme

Boonop trek die meeste kinders deesdae van die platteland na die stede vir beter werkseleenthede. Dit is egter duur om in die stede te woon en die kinders verdien dikwels nie genoeg geld om veel tot hulle ouers se onderhoud by te dra nie.

Dit beteken dat die ouers na hulself moet omsien en op staatspensioen moet staatmaak.

Berekenings toon dat 300 miljoen werkers in die volgende 10 jaar gaan aftree. Afgetredenes sal dan die grootste ouderdomsgroep in China wees. Dit is amper so groot soos die VSA se totale bevolking. China het een van die laagste aftree-ouderdomme ter wêreld – 60 jaar vir mans en 55 jaar vir opgeleide vroue. Vroue wat in fabriek werk, moet op 50 aftree.

Ekonomie sê China sal verplig wees om sy aftree-ouderdomme te verhoog sodat daar meer mense in die werkplek kan wees om die ouer geslag te ondersteun. In 2020 was daar vyf werknemers om elke afgetredene te ondersteun. Volgens demografiese vooruitskattings sal dié verhouding teen 2035 tot 2,4 werkers daal.

Die eerste probleem wat die verandering in die ouderdomstruktuur vir die regering inhou, is dat die staat se pensioenfonds besig is om uitgeput raak en daar nie genoeg tyd oor is om voldoende fondse teen 2035 op te bou om bejaardes te versorg nie. Die tweede probleem is dat dit ekonomiese groei aan bande sal lê en die vraag na verbruikersgoedere soos kleding kan laat daal.

Stimuleer vraag

Desondanks bly China ’n belangrike mark vir wol. Australiese bemerkers hoop dat die bevorderingsveldtogte wat verlede herfs/winter in China geloods is en vanjaar sal voortduur, vraag sal stimuleer. In dié veldtogte word die klem geplaas op die omgewingsvoordele van wol, en dit het tot dusver goeie resultate opgelewer. Die veldtog fokus veral op jonger mense, die sogenaamde generasie Z, mense wat ná 1997 gebore is. Dié ouderdomsgroep toon ’n groter bewustheid van die omgewing en dring ook op natuurlike produkte aan.

Volgens Jeff Ma, bestuurder van die Australiese bemerkingsliggaam Australian Wool Innovation in China, is daar groeiende belangstelling in ’n volhoubare modebedryf en dring meer verbruikers op natuurlike produkte aan.

Ma sê verbruikers in die hoër inkomste-groepe fokus deesdae meer op omgewingsvriendelike mode-items van gehalte en is bereid om meer daarvoor te betaal.

Ontleders glo dat bemerkingsveldtogte soos dié Chinese verbruikers sal aanspoor om meer wolprodukte te koop, wat wolpryse kan stimuleer.

Paul Buys is uitvoerende hoof van Webroute, ’n maatskappy wat naspurbaarheidsagteware skryf en wat ten nouste gemoeid is met die berekening van Cape Wools SA se wolmarkstatistiek en -aanwysers. Kontak hom by admin@webroute.co.za.



Jong skaapskeerders maak opslae

Landbouskool Hendrik Potgieter se tweede jaarlikse skeer- en wolklasskompetisie is op 4 April by die BKB-kompleks op Bloemfontein se skouterrein aangebied. Altesaam 29 wolklassers en ses skeerders het teen mekaar meegeding. Die NWKV is verheug oor die progressiewe wyse waarop die skool hul skeerders en wolklassers bemagtig om hulle vaardigheid te ontwikkel. Welgedaan!

Skoolhoof Christi Swarts rig namens Landbouskool Hendrik Potgieter 'n uitnodiging aan ander landbouskole om ook aan die kompetisie deel te neem.

Die skool het sedert September 2022 'n skeerspan wat weekliks skape in die skool se wolsentrum skeer, en die skeerspan bied hulle dienste aan plaaslike wolskaapprodusente.

Die deelnemers aan die kompetisie. Foto: John Gunter



Hoogtepunte van Oos-Kaap NWKV-kongres

Niel du Preez, voorsitter van die NWKV Oos-Kaap, het tydens die tak se tweejaarlikse kongres in Oos-Londen gesê dit lyk asof die wolbedryf aanpas by die uitdagende ekonomiese tye waarin die wêreldwye ekonomie tans verkeer. Hy het die veerkragtigheid van die wolprodusente geloof: "Ten spyte van 'n afname in wolpryse bly die verkope van hoëgehalte-wol sterk – 'n teken van die bedryf se aanpasbaarheid."

Volgens hom kry kommersiële produsente gemiddeld tussen R105 en R115/kg vir hulle wol. Hy het die hoop uitgespreek dat steunprogramme soos 'n ramskema weer ingestel sal word om kommunale produsente te ondersteun. Wat pryse betref, is die beste kommunale produsente tans op gelyke voet met kommersiële produsente.

Niel sê die NWKV Oos-Kaap reik uit na boere om hulle in die huidige uitdagende omstandighede te ondersteun. Die tak het reeds verskeie roetevergaderings, studiegroep-

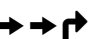
byeenkomste en opleidings- en skeerkursusse aangebied wat 'n merkbare verskil maak, veral in die kommunale gebiede. Hy het ook die belangrikheid van volhoubare oudits uitgelig.

Lawrence Maduna, die Oos-Kaap-tak se adjunk-voorsitter vir kommunale sake, het gesê 696 produsente het verlede jaar aan die NWKV se wolhanterings- en verbeteringskursusse deelgeneem. Dit is ook bemoedigend dat 16 gemeenskappe by die NWKV se inligtingsdae betrokke was.

Billy van Zyl, nasionale voorsitter van die NWKV, het die organisasie se voortdurende soeke na nuwe markte en geleenthede uitgelig. Hy het verwys na die potensiaal van wol as isolasiemateriaal in elektriese voertuie, wat dit 'n waardevolle uitvoerprodukt maak. Jacques le Roux, hoof van wol en bokhaar by OVK, het die uniekheid van wol in vergelyking met sintetiese produkte beklemtoon en die aankoop van wolprodukte aangemoedig.



Die bestuurslede van die NWKV Oos-Kaap is almal herverkies. Hulle is van links: Frikkie Wentzel, ondervoorsitter (kommersiële), Donna Green van Barkly-Oos, Niel du Preez, voorsitter, Lawrence Maduna, ondervoorsitter (kommunaal).





Bemoedigende opkoms maak van vergadering 'n sukses

Ten spyte van veediefstal, predasie en mynbou wat tot gevolg het dat baie skaapboere die bedryf verlaat, was die opkoms by die onlangse Mpumalanga NWKV-jaarvergadering bemoedigend.

Die interessante onderwerpe wat deur deelnemende sprekers gedek is, het bygedra tot die sukses van die dag. Hoofspreker Johannes Khosa van Nedbank het uitgebrei oor landbou-ekonomie, en Leon de Beer, NWKV-hoofbestuurder, het breedvoerig gerapporteer oor NWKV-sake en -bedryfsinligting.

Dan Kriek, inkomende NWKV-hoofbestuurder, se spreukbeurt het gehandel oor landbou-leierskap, en Koos Dafel, 'n plaaslike boer van Amersfoort, het sy kennis gedeel oor winsgewendheid. Gerhard Schutte afgetrede RPO-hoofbestuurder, het vir oulaas gerapporteer oor die rooivleisbedryf se bedryfsinligting. NWKV-Mpumalanga verwelkom die betrokkenheid van Mooikrans Opleidingsinstituut, en het die studente se braaivernuf getoets aan die einde van die dag se verrigtinge.

NWKV-Mpumalanga spreek hul dank uit teenoor die borge wat die dag moontlik gemaak het.

Koos Dafel, Japie Celliers (jnr), Leon de Beer, Dan Kriek, Johannes Khosa, Gerhard Schutte en Leon Hiestermann.



New chairperson for the Wool Trust

During a special meeting of the Wool Trust held recently, Mr Frans van Wyk was elected as chairperson, succeeding Mr Herman van Schalkwyk, who served in that capacity for 15 years. Van Wyk, appointed as a trustee by the Wool Forum, brings expertise in the category of 'specialist – asset and financial management' to fulfil the trust's purpose. This purpose is twofold: to maintain and grow the industry's capital base, and to generate income for activities benefiting the wool industry and its stakeholders at both producer and pipeline levels. Dr Arno Moore and Mr Lawrence Maduna represent the wool producer grouping on the Trust as well.

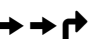
The National Wool Growers' Association (NWGA) welcomes Van Wyk's appointment and anticipates that his expertise in asset and financial management will enhance the viability of the South African wool industry.

Farmers gathered to gain valuable knowledge



More than 40 farmers from Dundee, Newcastle, and Normandien took time out to attend a two-and-a-half hour information session presented by NWGA KZN chairperson Dr Ariena Shepherd. Dr Shepherd, who is also a private veterinarian and sheep expert, covered various topics, including worm control, treatment and management, correct sheep nutrition, FAMACHA (FAffa MAlan CHArt), and breeding a resistant flock.

During her presentation, Sanele, Dr Shepherd's assistant, provided training to approximately 30 staff members of attending farmers. This training focused on FAMACHA scoring, condition scoring, identification of sick animals, and proper dosing and injection techniques.





Gesog: Gekwalifiseerde plaaspersoneel



Die tyd is verby dat KI net vir kunsmatige inseminasie in lewende-hawe produksie staan. Nee, KI staan deesdae vir seker ook vir die inspan van kunsmatige intelligensie. En in hierdie tyd, waarin slim werk met die hulp van die allerjongste tegnologiese vooruitgang ook in GPS en ChatGPT opgesluit is, bly resultaatgedrewe harde werk en slim boereplanne noodsaaklik vir volhoubare, moderne wolproduksie.

Om optimaal en volhoubaar met die minste moontlike onderbrekings te produseer, het wolprodusente verskeie redes om oorweging te skenk aan die aanstel en bevordering van gekwalifiseerde, bekostigbare jongmense, of om seker te maak dat hul bestaande werkspanne die geleentheid kry om in belang van beter boerdery hul kennis en ervaring uit te brei.

Onder die sambreel van UXi Artisan Development (UXi AD) bedryf Elsie Harmse en haar span geakkrediteerde ambags- en landboukundige fasiliteerders sewe opleidingsentra landwyd waarby boere, plaasbestuurders en plaaswerkers kan baat. Saam met meer as 20 QCTO- en SETA-geakkrediteerde ambagte bied UXi AD ook NQF 5 Diereproduksie- en NQF 5 Plantproduksie-kursusse aan. Skoolverlaters en ervare werknemers kan vir saamgestelde teoretiese, praktiese en werkplek-ervaringskursusse inskryf.

Volgens Harmse vereis gesweide kleinveehanteringstoerusting, asook skaapkampe en lammerbehuising; elektriese

weidingsbestuur; elektriese pomp- en gerekenariseerde spilpuntbesproeiingstelsels; GPS en gerekenariseerde aangeplante weidings- en sonkragoptimalisering; watervlakbestuur in krippe; watertanks; geëlektrifiseerde skeer- en wolklasskure; wetenskaplike voerstelsels en die immer stygende koste van arbeid, energie, en diervoeding en -gesondheid die beste kombinasie van kennis en ervaring in 'n suksesvolle skaap- en gemengde boerdery.

“Ons kursusse in diere- en plantproduksie en die uiteenlopende aantal internasionaal erkende en SAQA-geakkrediteerde ambagskursusse is deur landbou- en tegniese bedryfskundiges ontwikkel en saamgestel om 30% teorie en 70% praktiese en werkplek-ervaring in te sluit. Dit verseker dat nuut gekwalifiseerde UXi AD ambagslui ook op plase oor die allerjongste tegnologiese inligting en bedryfsoplossings beskik,” sê Harmse.

Saam met tegnologiese, en veral landbou-technologie-vooruitgang, bly 'n gekwalifiseerde werknemer met die kundigheid om die gewone dagtake suksesvol en vindingryk te laat verloop, 'n noodsaaklike bate vir winsgerigte wolproduksie. Dit is hier waar die noodsaaklike onderbou van 'n knap diereproduksietegnikus en die nut van ambagslui met 'n internasionaal aanvaarde Rooi Seël Sertifikaat, ook op die skaapplaas, deurslaggewend word.

Harmse sê: “Dit is nie net skoolverlaters en jongmense wat by UXi AD-kampusse in Kaapstad, George, Pofadder, Gqerberha, Newcastle, Centurion, Roodepoort, Germiston

en Meyerton se lewensveranderende kursusse baat nie. Deur die RPL-stelsel kry werknemers wat reeds drie of meer jaar ervaring in byvoorbeeld sweis-, loodgieters-, of elektrisiteitswerk het, of as 'n skrynerker of bouer op die plaas of in 'n ander bedryf, ook geleentheid om getoets en afgerond te word om 'n formele kwalifikasie te verwerf. Deur Erkenning van Vorige Leer (EVL) kry boere die geleentheid om hul werkers se potensiaal te verbeter.

Die wol- en vleiswaarde van kleinveekuddes en wolverwerking is lankal nie meer net 'n sogenaamde tradisionele bedryfsvertakking, soos wat daar deur die eeue heen na onder

meer skaap-, saai- of melkboerdery verwys is nie. Net so is moderne, geakkrediteerde en beproefde vakmanskopleiding nie net meer op handewerk gebaseer nie. Vandag is ambagslui 'n groot bate vir boerdery.

Om te help om die druk op produsente, wat telkens onder die natuur se aanslae soos oorstromings en droogtes gebuk gaan, te verlig is 'n kundige en ervare ondersteuningspan op die plaas 'n belangrike bestuurshulpmiddel. Soos die tegnologie, is hardwerkende, slim vakkundiges 'n noodsaaklikheid vir 'n volhoubare toekoms in die kleinveebedryf. – **Persverklaring UXi Artisan Development**



DIE TOEKOMS IS AGRI

Stel jou voor jou produksievoorman is 'n gekwalifiseerde kleinvee-technikus. Volhoubare winsgewendheid vereis praktiese plaaservaring en die allerjongste kennis oor die strawwe eise van internasionaal mededingende praktyke.

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Aangedryf deur UXi Artisan Development

NQF 5 - DIEREPRODUKSIE KURSUS

Na voltooiing sal studente hierdie take kan hanteer:

- Toepaslike diereproduksie prosesse vir kwalitatiewe- en kwantitatiewe uitsette onder toesig.
- Onder leiding en evaluasie, verantwoordelikheid te neem vir sy/haar eie diereproduksie-aksies.
- Instelling van toepaslike veiligheids, kwaliteits- en tegniese diereproduksie standaarde.
- Evaluasie en bestuur van diere volgens spesifieke anatomie en fisiologiese kriteria.
- Kennis en toepassing van wetenskaplike en tegniese beginsels van diervoeding, voer, voertegnologie en voedingbestuur.

- Toepassing van basiese genetiese beginsels in die beplanning en volhoubaarheid van aantelstelsels.
- Potensieel skade aan en beskadiging van diereprodukte kan identifiseer en alternatiewe voor te stel.
- Die gebruik van basiese en herhalende kliniese prosedure en die gebruik van korrekte medikasie dosisse vir die behandeling van algemene diersiektes.
- Kennis oor die historiese- en geografiese oorsprong en verspreiding van kommersiële dierspesies.

AMBAGTE VIR DIE PLAAS

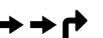
Verwerf jou 3-jaar Rooi Seël vakmanskap vir nuwetegnologieplaasbestuur en -werk.

Diesel Werktuigkundige • Sweiser • Ketelmaker • Auto Elektriesien Elektriesien • Megansiese Passer • Skrynerker • Loodgieter Solar Installeerder (PV) Messelaar • Passer en Draaier

Jy kies jou loopbaan-passie. UXi ARTISAN DEVELOPMENT het die geakkrediteerde, internasionaal erkende kursus vir jou.

Teen slegs R40 000 en minder per jaar kan jy met of sonder werkservaring teorie, prakties en werkplek-ervaring kom opdoen, jou vakoets doen en kwalifiseer.







South Africa's agricultural machinery sales reflect normalisation

BY FIDELIS ZVOMUYA

Recent data from the Agricultural Business Chamber of South Africa (Agbiz) sheds light on the state of the country's agricultural machinery market, revealing a trend of weakening sales. Despite previous years of robust activity, the sector is now experiencing a downturn, signalling a normalisation after a period of heightened sales.

In March 2024, tractor sales in South Africa plummeted by 26% year-on-year, with only 498 units sold. Similarly, combined harvester sales witnessed a significant decline of 33% year-on-year, with just 26 units sold. This stark contrast to previous years' performance reflects the sector's shift towards a more moderate sales trajectory.

Chief economist at Agbiz, Wandile Sihlobo, underscores this trend, citing the exceptional performance of the agricultural machinery market in 2022. Tractor sales reached a 40-year high of 9 181 units, marking a 17% year-on-year increase. Similarly, combined harvester sales surged to 373 units, representing a notable 38% year-on-year growth. However, 2023 saw a marginal decline in tractor sales, signalling the beginning of a normalisation phase.

Despite the significance of agricultural

machinery sales as indicators of farming sector health in the past, Sihlobo emphasises the need for a nuanced interpretation in the current context. With persistently adverse weather conditions, characterised by a prolonged heatwave and dryness attributed to the El Niño cycle, South Africa's agricultural sector faces considerable challenges.

The Crop Estimates Committee's recent report paints a sobering picture, projecting a 21% decline in total grain and oilseeds production for the 2023/24 season, compared with the previous year. This decline is primarily attributed to poor yields rather than reduced cultivation area, indicating a widespread impact on agricultural productivity.

As the country approaches the winter crop planting season, farmers grapple with economic pressures exacerbated by relatively higher interest rates and elevated input costs. While prices for inputs such as fertiliser and agrochemicals have softened since 2023, they remain substantially higher than pre-pandemic levels, further straining farmers' finances. Additionally, the repercussions of a poor summer crop harvest loom large, posing additional financial constraints in the months ahead.



HET NAMIBIESE INVOERE 'N INVLOED OP SUID-AFRIKAANSE PRYSE?

DEUR DR FRIKKIE MARÉ, HUB VAN DIE NASIONALE ROOIVLEISPRODUSENTE-ORGANISASIE

Daar heers groot kommer oor die afwaartse neiging van Suid-Afrikaanse lewendehawepryse wat tans gesien word. Hoewel verskeie faktore vir dié scenario verantwoordelik gehou kan word, is produsente die meeste bekommerd oor die invoer van lewende diere uit Namibië. Dit het tot 'n situasie gelei waar heelwat aannames en persepsies onder produsente en ander rolspelers gedeel word.

Die RPO wil graag die volgende inligting deel ten einde 'n realistiese prentjie te skets van die scenario wat betrokke is by

Namibiese invoere. *Dit is belangrik om daarop te let dat dit nie moontlik is om toegang tot intydse data te verkry nie, en daarom kan daar slegs staatgemaak word op data van die onlangse verlede.*

Beeste

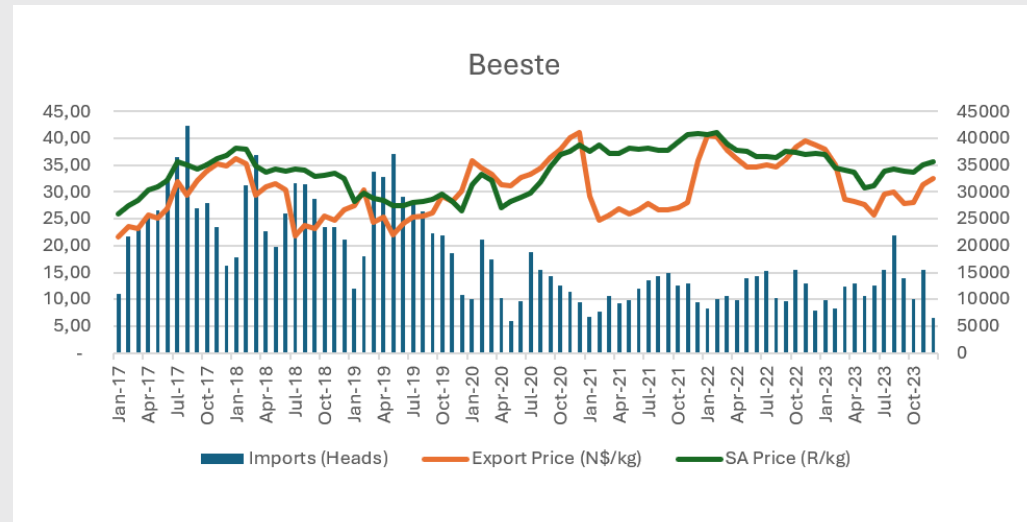
Beesinvoere vanuit Namibië het grootliks uit speenkalwers bestaan wat bestem is vir voerkrale in Suid-Afrika.

Eerstens moet gemeld word dat Namibiese lewende beesinvoere 'n relatief klein gedeelte van die totale formele slagtings in Suid-Afrika opneem ('n gemiddeld van 8% van 2017 tot





Figuur 1: Maandelikse Namibiese beesinvoere, Namibiese uitvoerprys en die Suid-Afrikaanse speenkalfprys van 2017 tot 2023.



2023). Hoewel die voorsiening uit Namibië 'n invloed op die prys sal hê, is dit nie genoeg om groot pryskotte te veroorsaak nie.

Figuur 1 verteenwoordig die maandelikse beesinvoerstatistieke van 2017 tot 2023, sowel as 'n vergelyking tussen die Namibiese uitvoerprys (N\$/kg) en die Suid-Afrikaanse speenkalfprys.

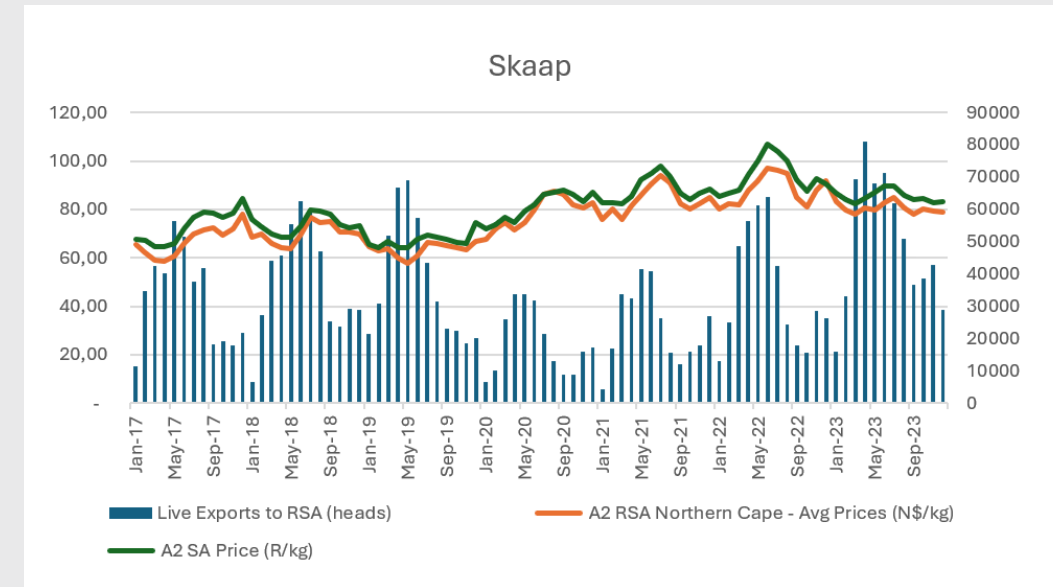
Figuur 1 bewys daar is geen verwantskap tussen die getal invoere en die pryse nie, aangesien die prys daal tydens die jare wanneer Suid-Afrika minder invoer (byvoorbeeld in 2019) en andersom (byvoorbeeld in 2018).

Die volgende moet egter uitgelig word: Eerstens het die skerp afname wat tans in die speenkalfprys waargeneem word, ook tydens dieselfde periode in die vorige twee jare voorgekom. Tweedens, wanneer daar na invoere van Februarie tot April gekyk word, is die syfers laer as tydens

die wintermaande wanneer Suid-Afrika se pryse eintlik styg, hoewel minder diere ingevoer word. Derdens moet daarop gelet word dat hoewel die Namibiese prys die meeste van die tyd aansienlik laer is as die Suid-Afrikaanse prys, dit die prys is wat Namibiese boere ná vervoer ontvang.

Nog 'n waarneming is die neiging dat invoere van Namibië skynbaar toeneem wanneer die Suid-Afrikaanse prys styg of wanneer die gaping tussen die Namibiese uitvoerprys en die Suid-Afrikaanse prys toeneem (die gaping impliseer inderwaarheid dat die Namibiese pryse tydens dié periodes baie laag is en dat selfs die uitvoerpryse na Suid-Afrika beter is as die plaaslike Namibiese pryse). In tydperke wanneer Suid-Afrikaanse pryse laer is, lei dit grootliks tot 'n afname in invoere.

Figuur 2: Maandelikse Namibiese skaapinvoere, die Namibiese uitvoerpryse en Suid-Afrika se A2-karkasprys van 2017 tot 2023.



Skaap

Skaapinvoere uit Namibië bestaan grootliks uit diere wat bestem is vir abattoirs in Suid-Afrika. Net soos in die geval van beeste, maak Namibiese lewende skaapuitvoere 'n relatief klein gedeelte van die totale formele Suid-Afrikaanse slagting uit (gemiddeld 8,8% van 2017 tot 2023).

Figuur 2 toon die maandelikse Namibiese skaapinvoere, die Namibiese uitvoerpryse en Suid-Afrika se A2-karkasprys van 2017 tot 2023.

Die figuur onthul ook nie 'n verwantskap tussen prys en invoersyfers nie, aangesien pryse dikwels toeneem terwyl invoere ook styg.

Die lae karkasprys wat in Maart gesien is, het ook in die vorige twee jaar voorgekom,

waarna dit in April begin styg het. Die prysstyging wat sedert April voorgekom het, was ook teen die agtergrond van selfs hoër invoersyfers. Hier is dit ook duidelik dat hoewel die Namibiese prys ongeveer R4/kg laer is as die Suid-Afrikaanse prys, die verskil nie genoeg is om "storting" te veroorsaak nie, aangesien vervoerkoste nog bygereken moet word.

Nog 'n waarneming wat uitgelig behoort te word, is die neiging dat invoere uit Namibië skynbaar toeneem wanneer die Suid-Afrikaanse prys styg (soortgelyk as in die geval van beeste). In tye wanneer die Suid-Afrikaanse pryse laer is, lei dit grootliks tot 'n afname in invoere.





Leon groet
die bedryf



– KLINK 'N GLASIE OP SY SUKSESVOLLE LOOPBAAN!

■ DEUR NICHELLE STEYN

Leon de Beer, een van die NWKV se grootste geeste, groet vanjaar die wolbedryf. Na meer as twee dekades se diens aan dié organisasie het hy besluit om die tuig neer te lê. Dan Kriek is aangestel om die leisels vanaf 1 Mei by hom oor te neem, maar hy sal steeds gereeld inloer. Daar word formeel van hom afskeid geneem tydens die NWKV se kongres in Junie. Die *Wolboer* het by Leon ingeloer vir 'n laaste gesprek om te hoor wat volgende op hom wag.

Leon het diep spore in die bedryf getrap sedert hy in 2003 aangestel is. "Dit was so 'n geseënde tyd in my lewe," vertel hy. Vir hom is dit die belangrikste dat hy 'n tasbare verskil in die wolbedryf kon maak. En dit is uiteindelik sy nalatenskap.

Een van die mylpale op die lang lys hoogtepunte is die ontwikkeling van die NWKV se transformasieprojek, wat onder sy leiding verder uitgebrei is. "Deel hiervan is die ramprojek wat daarop geskoei is om opkomende boere met die nodige opleiding te ondersteun om die genetika in hul kuddes uit te brei en te verbeter. Ons het amper 50 000 ramme sedert die begin van die projek in verskeie gebiede regoor die

land geplaas," vertel hy. "Dit is 'n uitstekende projek! Soveel opkomende boere ontvang waardevolle mentorskap."

Suksesverhale

Hy is dit eens dat die NWKV met verskeie suksesverhale kan spog, veral op die terrein van adviesdienste. Hy vertel meer oor die inisiatief wat die NWKV in 2008 op die been gebring het om kommersiële boere te inspireer en te help om meer volhoubaar te boer. "Dit was een van my groot drome om 'n volhoubare produksie-omgewing vir wolprodusente te ontwikkel en te bevorder. Die NWKV het dit reggekry om 'n kode vir beste praktyk vir volhoubare produksie te ontwikkel."

Hy meen dis waardevolle gereedskap wat boere kan gebruik om nie net 'n verskil in hul onmiddellike omgewing te maak nie, maar om ook internasionaal mededingend te bly. Volgens hom is dit die rigting waarin die internasionale mark beweeg, en wolkopers word deur verbruikers gedruk om hierdie standaarde deur te trek na die boer. Hy glo dat sy opvolger die projek na verdere hoogtes sal neem.

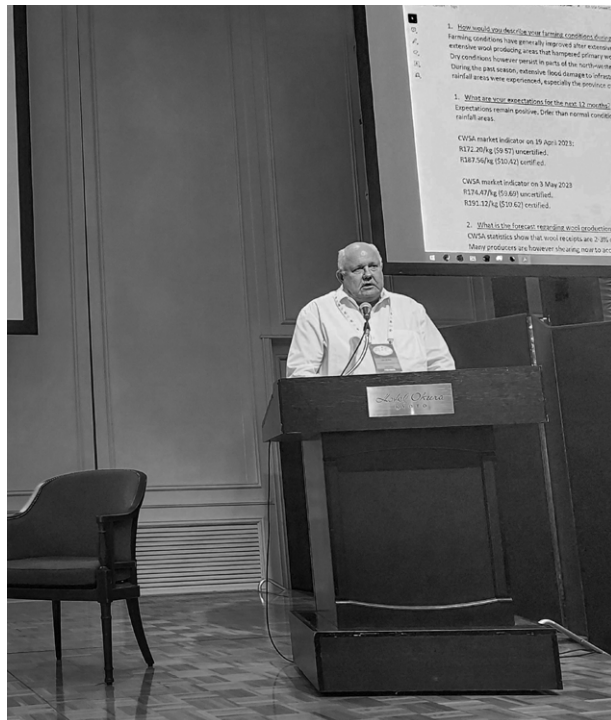
Dit was ook vir hom 'n hoogtepunt om deel te wees van 'n predasiebestuurplan vir die rooivleis- en wolbedryf. "Niel Viljoen, wat aan die stuur staan van die predasiebestuur-navorsingsprojek, doen belangrike werk om boere die nodige kennis en vaardighede te gee om predasie op 'n verantwoordelike manier te bestuur." Hy meen die doel agter al hierdie projekte is juis om vir wolboere 'n goeie ondersteuningsnetwerk te gee en vir hulle 'n NWKV-gereedskapskissie vir predasiebestuur daar te stel.

Laagtepunte

Dit was natuurlik ook nie altyd maanskyn en rose tydens sy loopbaan nie, sê Leon. Daar was baie uitdagings om te oorkom, party moeiliker as ander. Een van die grootste uitdagings gedurende sy tyd by die NWKV was die hewige uitbreking van Slenkdalkoors wat tussen 2010 en 2012 ernstige veeverliese veroorsaak het, en ook menselewens geëis het.

Verder maak die geweldige entstoftekorte wat al sedert 2013 voortsleep nie die situasie makliker nie. "Ons sukkel ook tans om bek-en-klouseer onder beheer te bring." Hy meen die dieregesondheidsforum wat gestig is om biosekuriteit te bevorder, en die feit dat die privaatsektor genadiglik ingespring het om verligting te bring, help darem.

"Toe daar 'n verbod op woluitvoere geplaas is weens die bek-en-klouseer-uitbreking, het ons ingespring om met verskeie rolspelers te onderhandel om die mark weer oop te maak."



En dan was daar ook nog die grendeltydperk. Dit was volgens Leon een van die grootste uitdagings van sy loopbaan. "Dit was vir ons 'n groot skok om uit vind dat daar 'n verbod ingestel is op die verkoop van wolprodukte omdat dit nie op die essensiële lys van noodsaaklikhede verskyn het nie. Die regering het verder ook 'n verbod geplaas op skeerders wat tussen provinsies van plaas tot plaas moes beweeg tydens die skeerseisoen. Al hierdie faktore het 'n groot invloed gehad op die hele waardeketting en die bedryf moes selfs aanpas by virtuele veilings!"

Hy meen die doel agter al hierdie projekte is juis om vir wolboere 'n goeie ondersteuningsnetwerk te gee en vir hulle 'n NWKV-gereedskapskissie vir predasiebestuur daar te stel.

Hande vat

"Gelukkig kon die NWKV hande vat met verskeie organisasies, onder andere Agri SA, en die IWTO om die markte weer oop te maak en op dreef te kry," meen hy. Uit al hierdie dinge het hy geleer om op ander staat te maak. "Dit sou onmoontlik vir my gewees het om al die dinge alleen te probeer hanteer, en ek het begin om waarde te heg aan goeie verhoudings met belangrike rolspelers in die bedryf en die bou van 'n goeie ondersteuningsnetwerk. Die NWKV het ongetwyfeld die res van die rolspelers in die waardeketting en in die landbousektor nodig om suksesvol te wees."

Leon glo die feit dat hy doelgerig was,

het hom ook gehelp om baie uitdagings te oorkom. "As jy weet waarheen jy op pad is, en nie fokus verloor op wat jy wil bereik nie, kan jy vorentoe beweeg. Vergeet van die dinge wat buite jou beheer is en doen dit waarop jy wel 'n invloed het, en gee jou alles om dit wat binne jou beheer is, so goed as moontlik te doen."

Dankbaarheid

Leon is van mening dat die personeel by die NWKV sy grootste aanwinst is. "Ek het volle vertroue in die personeel – oor die jare heen het hulle my nie in die steek gelaat nie, van die skeerinstrukteurs tot die produksie-adviseurs en kantoorpersoneel – vir elkeen van my bekwame spanlede is ek diep dankbaar. Hulle is die voertuig waardeur ek oor die jare heen goeie diens aan ons boere kon lewer. Ek is ook dankbaar vir die tyd wat ek met elke voorsitter kon deurbring. Saam met hulle en die bestuurspan kon ons nuwe hoogtes bereik. En dan wil ek ook net dankie sê aan die *Wolboer* tydskrif se span – julle is 'n wenspan en het my ook oor die jare trots gemaak op wat ons in die bedryf bereik het, ons eie tydskrif!"

Leon beplan om nadat hy die leisels finaal oorhandig het, langs die Weskus te gaan toer. "Ek sal ook graag ons buurlande wil verken. En dan sien ek ook uit na tyd saam met die familie en om my stokperdjies weer te geniet, soos rolbal en gholf."

Leon, ons weet jy gaan nie net die wolbedryf verlaat nie, en ons glo jy gaan steeds by die bedryf betrokke wees. Ons wens jou alle sterkte toe in nuwe die fase van jou lewe – ons weet jy gaan alles wat jy besluit om te doen met oorgawe aanpak! 🍀



Cecelia Beukes is gekies as nuwe voorsitter van die NWKV Mpumalanga tydens hul jaarvergadering in Ermelo. Sy neem oor by Japie Celliers, wat vanaf 2019 die wolboere van Mpumalanga se belange op die hart dra. Cecelia is in 2019 deur die NWKV verwelkom as die eerste vrou wat in die nasionale struktuur van die NWKV begin dien het. Haar vise-voorsitter is Lion du Plessis van Ermelo.

Die vrou agter die voorsitterspos

NWKV Mpumalanga het onlangs vir Cecelia Beukes as nuwe voorsitter van die tak verkies. Sy is die eerste vrou wat in so 'n pos verkies is. Die NWKV het met haar gaan gesels om haar beter te leer ken en sy het 'n paar vrae beantwoord.

Waar het jy grootgeword en skoolgegaan?

Ek het grootgeword op die Plaas Mooi-gelegen in die Lothair-omgewing, en was op Chrissiesmeer in die laerskool. Vir my hoërskoolopleiding is ek na Ermelo.

Wat het jy ná matriek gedoen?

Ná skool het ek 'n sportbeurs ontvang om by die Universiteit van Pretoria te studeer en daar het ek die graad BA (LO) voltooi. Daarna na het die lewe maar sy draaie met my geloop en ek was lank in die restaurantbedryf. Ek was ook in die industriële hidrouliese sektor werksaam vir 'n Franse maatskappy.

Wou jy nog altyd boer, en wanneer het jy begin?

Die plaaslewe was nog altyd in my bloed en ek het gereeld by my ouers op hul plaas gaan kuier. Sowat 20 jaar gelede het my pa my gevra of ek sou belangstel om plaas toe te kom. Vir my was dit destyds die logiese volgende stap. Ek is tog bly oor die ondervinding wat ek in die privaatsektor opgedoen het. Ek glo dit maak my vandag 'n beter boer omdat ek weens my ondervinding daar 'n waardevolle bydrae tot die plaas se bestuur kan maak.

Ek en my broer Hendrik boer tans saam in 'n tipiese Hoëveld- gemengde boerdery – ons plant mielies en soja en boer ook met beeste en merino-skape.

Wat was die grootste struikel-blokke wat jy moes oorkom?

Eerstens veediefstal – dit is die vernaamste faktor waarom boere skape verkoop. Boere ly nie net finansiële verliese nie, maar word ook emosioneel uitgeput. Wanneer 'n boer 20 geslagte skape langs die pad kry en nog boonop aanskou hoe die booswigte die lammers op pad soontoe doodgeslaan het – dit vat aan enige mens. Ons het koppe bymekaargesit om nuwe planne te beraam sodat ons een stappie voor die misdadigers kan bly.

Tweedens parasietweerstand. Dit is 'n tipiese probleem waarmee boere op Hoëveld sukkel, en dan ook roofdiere – op die oomblik is predasiebestuur 'n groot uitdaging. Die getal roofdiere in ons omgewing het drasties toegeneem, want so min boere het nog skape.

Het jy enige wenke vir ander boere oor hoe hulle die beste uit hul wolskape kan kry?

My pa se woorde is "Die oog van die boer maak sy diere vet." Wolskape vereis meer gereelde en intensiewe sorg. Ek het ook vinnig geleer dat 'n mens, om winsgewend met skape te boer, deurentyd genoeg lammers moet hê, terselfdertyd moet jy investeer in jou eie kudde. Diere wat op jou plaas gebore word en grootword, is die beste aangepas vir jou omstandighede. Verbeter jou kudde vanuit jou eie genetica. En dan is die gesedje 'om te meet is om te weet' nog altyd 'n wenresep as dit by enige boerdery kom.



Wat sien jy as die grootste uitdagings vir die Mpumalanga NWKV?

Dit is moeilik om boere te oortuig dat dit nog winsgewend is om met wolskape te boer, en dit is 'n uitdaging om boere te inspireer om deel te word van die 'n geakkrediteerde standaard om wol te bemark.

Hoe sien jy jou rol as voorsitter?

Ek het groot skoen wat ek nou moet volstaan, maar in die jare wat ek as ondervoorsitter gedien het, het ek goeie leierskap gehad. Dit is vir my belangrik om die Hoëveld as 'n wolboer-omgewing te behou en ek wil graag werk aan die toekoms van alle wolboere om sodoende die wolbedryf weer gunstig te maak.

Wat is jou boodskap aan wolboere?

Ons boer met 'n unieke produk, skape voed en klee mense al van die Bybel se tyd af. Daar is tans uitdagings in die land en in die veebedryf, boere moet hul eie somme maak, hul teelkuddes verbeter en bewus wees van wat die mark verlang.

Die oplossing is om gedurig nuwe planne te beraam en gereeld met medeboere te gesels. Neem deel aan studiegroepe en sluit aan by organisasies soos die NWKV, wat jou, as wolboer, se belange op die hart dra.

En laastens: bly positief en glo. 🐏



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CRUCIAL AGRICULTURAL POLICIES HANG IN THE BALANCE



As the sixth parliament nears its conclusion, there is evident pressure to expedite the processing of bills currently in the legislative pipeline. Crucial bills pertaining to agriculture and farming linger in uncertainty, presenting significant implications for the country's agricultural landscape if left unresolved before the end of the current administration's term.

■ BY FIDELIS ZVOMUYA

The current parliament's term concludes at midnight on 21 May 2024, with elections scheduled for 29 May. According to an annual summary compiled by the Parliamentary Monitoring Group, as of January this year, 58 bills were under consideration in parliament, with 43 of them introduced in 2023. Presently, 35 bills are under review in the National Assembly, while 23 are with the National Council of Provinces.

Political, legal, and agricultural analysts assert that the destiny of crucial legislative measures, spanning from land reform to climate resilience, remains uncertain, pending completion before the conclusion of this term's parliament session.

Agricultural bills that are still to be finalised

Annelize Crosby, legal intelligence manager at the Agricultural Business Chamber (Agbiz), highlighted several notable bills yet to be concluded, including the Presentation and Development of Agricultural Land Bill, Land Court Bill, Agricultural Produce Agents Amendment Bill, Expropriation Bill, and Plant Health (Phytosanitary) Bill.

Crosby also emphasised that at stake are the Agricultural Product Standards Amendment Bill, National Veld and Forest Fire Amendment Bill, and Climate Change Bill, each containing

critical provisions aimed at safeguarding the nation's agricultural sector against environmental threats and ensuring adherence to international standards.

"Moreover, bills like the Electricity Regulation Amendment Bill, National Ports Amendment Bill, National Water Infrastructure Agency Bill, and National Water Amendment Draft Bill loom large, with their potential impact on agricultural operations, resource management, and infrastructure development," she added.

Political analysts underscored the consequences of delayed legislative action, emphasising the urgency of addressing these bills to offer clarity and stability for farmers, agribusinesses, and rural communities. Failure to finalise these measures before the end of the current administration's term could result in prolonged uncertainty, hampering investment, innovation, and sustainable growth in the agricultural sector.

What happens to the lapsed business?

Dr Thandiwe Mthembu, a political analyst at the University of Johannesburg, explained that according to Parliament's rules, when a bill or another matter lapses, the new assembly can revive the matter through a motion in the house.

"Such motions sometimes stipulate that the matter be revived from the stage it reached on



the last sitting day of the previous house," she said.

Mthembu underscored the importance of timely legislative enactment, stating, "These bills hold the key to addressing critical issues facing our agricultural sector, from land tenure to climate adaptation. Failure to finalise them risks undermining our efforts to build a resilient and inclusive agricultural economy."

Concerns are mounting over the potential impact of political transitions on the legislative agenda, with stakeholders urging policymakers to prioritise the passage of these bills in the remaining days of the current session.

"The need for bipartisan cooperation and swift action is paramount to ensure continuity and progress in addressing the pressing challenges facing South Africa's agricultural sector," she added.

With the clock ticking and the election looming, the fate of these critical bills hangs in the balance, underscoring the pivotal role of legislative governance in shaping the future of agriculture in South Africa. As the nation heads to the polls, the eyes of the agricultural community remain fixed on the halls of parliament, hoping for decisive action to secure a prosperous and sustainable future for farming and rural livelihoods.

Delay

Another crucial bill, the Land Court Bill, seeks to establish a specialised court to address land-related disputes and provide effective resolution mechanisms for issues affecting farmers and landowners, said Crosby. "The delay in finalising this bill could prolong the existing challenges faced by farmers, hindering their ability to seek timely justice and resolution."

She added that the Agricultural Produce Agents Amendment Bill aims to enhance the regulation and oversight of agricultural produce agents, safeguarding the interests of farmers and ensuring fair practices within the industry. "Failure to finalise this bill may leave farmers vulnerable to unscrupulous practices and hinder efforts to promote a transparent and equitable agricultural market."

The Expropriation Bill, which has generated significant debate, seeks to provide a legal framework for land expropriation with just and equitable compensation. The delay in finalising this bill may create uncertainty for farmers and potential investors, impacting agricultural investment and development.

"Other bills, such as the Plant Health (Phytosanitary) Bill, Agricultural Product Standards Amendment Bill, National Veld and Forest Fire Amendment Bill, and Climate Change Bill, address various aspects of agricultural production, environmental conservation, and climate resilience. If these bills are not finalised before the end of the session, it may impede efforts to ensure food safety, maintain high agricultural standards, and tackle the challenges posed by climate change," Crosby said.

Furthermore, the Electricity Regulation Amendment Bill, National Ports Amendment Bill, National Water Infrastructure Agency Bill, and National Water Amendment Draft Bill are of critical importance to the agricultural sector's infrastructure and resource needs. Delaying the finalisation of these bills may hinder the development of efficient electricity supply, effective port operations, and sustainable water management, impacting the industry's overall productivity and competitiveness. 🗣️

Farm smarter with eLivestock



Artificial intelligence (AI) applications such as eLivestock have the potential to significantly improve efficiency in livestock farming, enabling the farmer to make more informed and smarter decisions to increase productivity.

"In today's agricultural landscape, the integration of AI is not just an innovation but a necessity," says Ronald Loon, chief executive officer and principal analyst for Intelligent World, an on-demand and live video content portal.

Loon says the integration of AI in a farming enterprise not only boosts agricultural efficiency but also contributes to more sustainable farming practices by optimising resource use and minimising environmental impact.

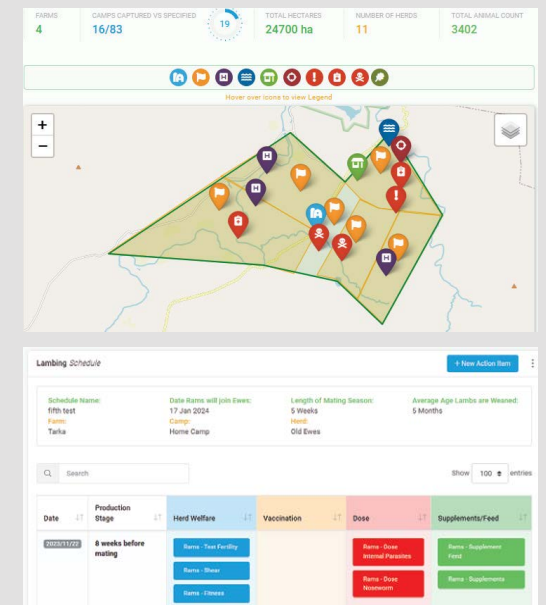
eLivestock has been designed with these objectives in mind. This includes providing solutions to challenges the South African livestock farmer faces.

eLivestock focuses on aspects like livestock movement, record-keeping, biosecurity, and traceability.

These functions have been necessitated by legislation, such as the Agricultural Produce Agents Act (12 of 1992), the Animal Identification Act (6 of 2002), and the Stock theft Act (57 of 1959), as amended.

eLivestock can assist farmers to comply with the requirements of these laws in the following ways:

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- **Compile animal health vendor declarations**, such as for Johne's disease, brucellosis, and biosecurity to meet the requirements of the Agricultural Produce Agents Act.
- **Facilitate documentation sharing** by using the full traceability module to share documentation, certificates, vendor declarations, and more with trade partners and authorities.
- **Substantiate compliance with industry biosecurity requirements** through thorough self-assessments.



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Free State Agriculture unveils a groundbreaking traceability system

■ BY FIDELIS ZVOMUYA

In response to the recent foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) outbreak in the Free State, Free State Agriculture (FSA) has launched a pioneering initiative aimed at enhancing livestock traceability and safety within the region. Spearheaded by Francois Wilken, president of the FSA, the initiative seeks to mitigate further risks to the province's livestock value chain, which has been significantly impacted by the outbreak.

"The FMD outbreak had profound financial repercussions for our province's livestock sector, affecting farmers, agents, auctioneers, feedlots, abattoirs, and exporters," remarked Wilken. "In light of this crisis, the FSA swiftly mobilised to address the urgent need for a comprehensive traceability and safety system."

Following extensive research and deliberation, the FSA identified AIMS (Animal Identification and Movement System), developed by Agri Eastern Cape, and endorsed by the International Committee for Animal Recording, as the optimal solution for the Free State. AIMS incorporates advanced technologies such as electronic identification (EID) and visual identification (VID) laser-printed tags with unique animal identification numbers, ensuring seamless traceability and data capture.

Uniquely numbered ear tags

Dr Jack Armour, the FSA's commercial manager, elaborated on the functionalities of AIMS, emphasising its role in facilitating

the ordering and assignment of uniquely numbered ear tags to livestock, logging sales and transfers, and enabling swift ownership tracing in case of emergencies.

"At the FSA, we are committed to fostering collaboration and innovation to address the challenges facing our agricultural sector," stated Dr Armour. "The launch of the Free State AIMS (FS-AIMS) represents a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to enhance livestock traceability and safety within this province."

During a recent meeting with the Bethlehem District Farmers Union, the FSA unveiled the live site for FS-AIMS, which can be accessed through the FSA website. Farmers are encouraged to register on the platform, providing essential information required for traceability and safety, including contact details, registered brand marks, and location details of farms, land, feedlots, and auction sites.

Furthermore, FSA has entered into a cooperation agreement with Agri Eastern Cape to further develop AIMS, ensuring its alignment with industry trends and needs. A portion of the proceeds from each tag sold will be allocated towards system enhancements, underscoring the FSA's commitment to continuous improvement and innovation.

Looking ahead, the FSA anticipates seamless integration with a potential national livestock identification and traceability system, ensuring interoperability and compliance with national standards. With FS-AIMS, the FSA is paving the way for a more resilient, efficient, and transparent livestock industry, safeguarding the livelihoods of farmers and the integrity of the province's agricultural sector. 🐏





South Africa's wool and red meat exports ON A PATH TO RECOVERY

■ BY WANDILE SIHLOBO

The past two years posed significant challenges for South Africa's livestock industry, but there are signs of recovery in the wool and beef sectors despite obstacles like foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) and rising feed costs.

As farmers, various feedlots, and the government worked to control the spread of FMD, the impact deepened on farming revenues due to restrictions on animal movement and temporary closure of export markets. In 2022, beef exports dropped below the prior five-year average, totalling 26 881 tonnes, down 16% year-on-year, according to data from Trade Map. However, there was a slight recovery in 2023, with exports rising by 3% year-on-year, to 27 675 tonnes.

Despite these challenges, the beef industry recognised that diversifying export markets would fuel long-term growth. There was evidence of export expansion between 2017 and 2021, with South Africa's overall beef exports averaging 31 169 tonnes, a significant increase compared with previous years. The threat of animal diseases loomed over this growth trajectory.

Diverse export markets

Between 2017 and 2021, exports consisted of, on average, 49% fresh beef and 51% frozen beef, with a variety of destinations. Kuwait, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Mozambique, Lesotho, Qatar, Zimbabwe, Mauritius, and the Netherlands were among the largest markets for fresh beef, while similar markets and new ones topped the list for frozen beef. Fortunately, despite regional market closures, South Africa's beef exports remained resilient in 2022 and 2023.

Wool exports

Challenges extended beyond the cattle industry to the wool sector, where some export markets temporarily closed due to FMD concerns. China, which accounts for over two-thirds of South Africa's wool exports, experienced temporary closures in 2022 and 2023. However, engagements between South Africa and China restored confidence, resulting in a

rebound in wool exports, to 49 715 tonnes in 2023.

Higher feed costs, driven by global factors such as increased Chinese demand for grains, drought in South America, higher shipping costs, and geopolitical tensions, presented additional challenges. South Africa's integration into the global market meant higher international prices affected local farmers, squeezing their margins in export markets.

Inclusion agenda

The wool and beef industries are committed to a transformation and inclusivity agenda, with a significant share of new-entrant black farmers. However, the financial strain of recent years may have hindered progress in driving this forward. National Agricultural Marketing Council statistics reveal that black farmers account for approximately 18%, 13%, and 34% of wool, mohair, and cattle production, respectively.

Broader economic view

Livestock plays a crucial role in the South African economy, contributing nearly half of the gross value added when combined with the poultry and piggery industries. However, challenges like African swine fever and avian influenza have strained these sectors, exposing weaknesses in South Africa's biosecurity system. Despite these challenges, the opening of new export markets like Saudi Arabia, and continued efforts to strengthen biosecurity through collaboration between the government and private sector, offer hope for the future.

In conclusion, while the past two years have been challenging for South Africa's livestock industry, there are promising signs of recovery. By expanding export markets and enhancing biosecurity measures, the industry can continue to thrive, albeit with ongoing challenges such as fluctuating feed prices amid drought conditions. 🐏



Ask the (Afri)VET

This is *Wolboer/Wool Farmer's* veterinary Q&A column, sponsored by Afrivet. Send your questions about animal diseases, biosecurity, and animal health management to info@afrivet.co.za or fanie@agricconnect.co.za, and we will do our best to provide a practical answer.



QUESTION:

My farm is situated between Meyerton and Heidelberg in Gauteng. Should I be worried about Karoo paralysis, and how can I protect my sheep against it?



»» ANSWER:

Karoo paralysis is a clinical condition of especially sheep and Angora goats presenting with incoordination and weakness in the limbs, mostly starting with the hind limbs, and spreading towards the head. In mild cases, animals can be seen lagging behind the flock with a stiff uncoordinated gait that gets worse as they are chased. Appetite is unaffected but the animals can be seen frequenting the water trough. In rare and severe cases, the muscles used for swallowing are affected. Rumen contractions stop and breathing may be laboured. A downed sheep might be found struggling and exhibiting skin abrasions on the extremities.

The condition is caused by a high burden of the adult female Karoo paralysis tick, *Ixodes rubicundus*. Upon attaching, a toxin secreted in

the saliva leads to the clinical signs described above. Clinical cases are seen once enough ticks attach to the host. The clinical signs dissipate the moment the ticks are removed physically or killed via quick-acting acaricides, but large losses have been seen in neglected cases. The prevalence of the condition is closely correlated with the distribution and favourable habitat of the tick as well as their secondary hosts.

Areas affected

Areas in South Africa where the condition is seen are the semi-arid interior associated with the Karoo vegetation biome of the Western and Northern Cape and the interior of the Eastern Cape up to the southern and central parts of the Free State. Areas in Gauteng

include the southern and western parts around the Heidelberg and Bronkhorstspruit districts (Anipedia.org). In the last four years, veterinarians have reported the presence of the ticks in the central and southern Free State, northern parts of the Eastern Cape, and south-eastern parts of the Northern Cape. Most cases were reported in the south-eastern parts of Northwest (Klerksdorp) and on the border between the Free State and Gauteng. An outlier case was reported in northern Mpumalanga in Lydenburg in 2021 and another in 2022 (*disease reporting by RuVASA).

The Karoo paralysis tick is a small hard-body, eyeless tick with no ornate features apart from its rusty brown colour. It has long mouthparts, with those of the female longer than those of the male (sexually dimorphic). It is usually found on the underside of the sheep's body, neck, and the upper parts of the legs. The adult tick also parasitises on cattle and a large variety of wild carnivores and wild hoofed animals like, gemsbok, springbuck, sable, and roan antelope.

The immature stages (larvae and nymphs) enjoy feeding on elephant shrew (*Elephantulus* spp.) and the red rock rabbit (*Pronolagus rupestris*). These ticks favour humid conditions, with the larvae and nymphs found in the deeper layer of dead organic material of less palatable grasses growing on the southern slopes of hilly outcrops. These areas are also an ideal habitat for the small rodents and mammals they prey on.

Late autumn rains

With a sudden increase in humidity and a decrease in temperature, as with late autumn rains or snow, the ticks are stimulated to start questing and move up the vegetation to find a suitable host. Late rainfall and unexpected cold spells will influence the traditional distribution of the tick.

The life cycle takes about two years to complete, with the female taking a blood meal and mating off the host. She lays approximately 2 000 eggs in a span of six weeks about 34 days after her blood meal. The six-legged larvae hatch around March to mid-August and the peak population is reached mid-May. The larvae infest the elephant shrews and rock rabbits and moult into eight-legged nymphs that infect a new host (July to November). It takes a blood meal over a week and then drops off till after summer as an engorged nymph for up to six months before moulting into the adult stage during late autumn. These ticks are known as three-host ticks because each stadium feeds on a new host. Once engorged, they drop off and continue to the next stage of development.

Control is aimed at reducing tick burdens at the height of the tick population as well as reducing exposure to a suitable habitat where immatures and their hosts can thrive. Generally, a contact acaricide like deltamethrin pour-on or dip can be used as the season gets colder around April and May, in the form of dipping, spraying, or pour-on, depending on the acaricide. This can be repeated every two to three weeks, depending on the tick burden on the animals.

Grazing camps with southern slopes should be avoided in late summer to early spring and all dead vegetation under trees and shrubs removed by heavy grazing prior to the peak season, or through cutting or burning. Systemic acaricides injected under the skin are not recommended, given that the speed at which the tick is removed is critical. This will include any of the ivermectin products.

*Thank you to the dedicated vets reporting and contributing to the National Animal Health Forum, as well as the disease-reporting network of the Ruminant Veterinary Association of South Africa (RuVASA). 🐾



IWTO snippet



A quick look at the latest research, events, and news from the International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO.org).

Children in Ireland learn more about the beauty of wool

A member of the International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO), based in County Meath in Ireland, makes it their mission to teach children about the beauty of wool.

The organisation Wool in School is committed to educating children about the many benefits that this natural fibre offers. In addition to their educational outreach programmes, they also offer several opportunities for businesses to involve themselves in wool initiatives.

Wool in School is dedicated to raising awareness of wool, its production, and its sustainable qualities. They work in school, home, and community environments to educate children about the many benefits of wool. Since 2019, they have worked to expand knowledge and appreciation for wool and its uses. In so doing, they also support schools, libraries, family events, and communities with their message and specially designed learning materials.

At the heart of Wool in School's education programmes is the Wool2Ewe box. This educational toolkit features colourful printed displays for use in the classroom, helping educators to teach children about the properties of wool and how they benefit the planet. Using these materials, children can learn why wool matters when it comes to fighting climate change, and how it helps to reduce waste and use more sustainable materials. It traces the entire wool value chain from farm to fabric, and

helps to inspire enthusiasm for genuine, lasting change. Wool2Ewe provides a fun, engaging, hands-on learning experience.

Business opportunities

Wool in School engages in partnerships with businesses to enhance the understanding of wool and engage communities in enriching educational experiences. Through a licensing agreement, companies can advocate the advantages of wool to local children. The corporate social responsibility non-exclusive licence for the Wool2Ewe box and programme empowers companies and charitable organisations to develop and distribute educational resources in schools and various community settings. Furthermore, this licence provides access to an online educational platform and the option to personalise the educational box with their distinctive branding.

The second type of licence available is the non-exclusive licence for the online programme only. This license caters to businesses and educational institutions seeking to integrate the Wool2Ewe online program into their educational offerings. It is designed for businesses/colleges offering high-quality textile and agriculture education that align with Wool in School's fundamental values. Wool in School offers IWTO members a complimentary consultation to explore tailored solutions.

Weaving colours together – history of the Fair Isle knitting pattern

Nobody knows exactly how the distinctive Fair Isle knit pattern came into being, but this unmistakable two-stranded knitting technique remains popular for the creation of woollen garments, especially jumpers and hats. The IWTO delves into the history of the technique and looks at its contemporary relevance.

The Fair Isle knit is a stranded knitting technique native to Fair Isle, one of the Shetland Islands off the coast of Scotland. It is used to create patterns, using two colours a row in multi-coloured woollen garments.

Fair Isle has a signature 'OXO' pattern, with alternating 'O' and 'X' shapes in rows of knitting. Fair Isle traditional motifs tend usually to stay away from being figurative, but occasionally have crosses and snowflake-inspired patterning. The Shetland Textile Museum carries a diverse collection of original Fair Isle caps dating back to 1850.

In the mid to late 19th century, Dutch and Norwegian fishermen would spend summers in the islands so they could fish for herring. They would often take the Fair Isle caps and jumpers they bought there back home with them, and so the style became familiar to people on the European mainland.

The prince

Then in 1920, a portrait of the future King Edward VIII, painted by Sir Henry Lander, became widely printed and distributed – the early 20th century's version of going viral. This famous image shows the Prince of Wales wearing a Fair-knit jumper, having just come off the golf course. So the style began to spread in popularity, now carrying the endorsement of this charismatic and stylish royal. The style has remained in the mainstream ever since.



Today, fashion giants such as Ralph Lauren, Thom Browne, Chanel, Celine, Balenciaga, Raf Simons, Versace, and Dries van Noten have all included their unique takes on the Fair Isle knit among their collections.

Fair Isle by Marie

French knitwear designer Marie Bruhat is a leading proponent of the Fair Isle style. She has lived on Fair Isle since 2017. There she tends a small croft of around 50 sheep and runs her small knitting studio, where she produces sought-after Fair Isle jumpers.

"I didn't choose this specific knitting technique for design purposes; rather, what drew me to it was the island and its way of life," Marie says. "Being able to care for a flock of sheep, being a part of a close-knit community, and following in the footsteps of generations of incredibly talented women are what captivated me. If I were not living on Fair Isle, I doubt I would be engaged in Fair Isle knitting in the manner I am today."

The Fair Isle knit is a remarkable success story in the world of wool; an eye-catching pattern and a knitting technique that represents the way of life of a tiny island community, but now has universal appeal. 🐏

Die rol wat LAMHOKHIGIËNE speel in biosekuriteit

In 'n intensiewe lamhokstelsel is die risiko vir oordrag van siektes baie hoog, veral vir vatbare lammers. Dus moet goeie higiëne en biosekuriteit gehandhaaf word. Hier is 'n paar wenke wat gevolg kan word om die gesondheid en welsyn van ooie en lammers in die lamhokke te behou.

■ DEUR DR. DANIËL VAN DER MERWE

SINDELIKHEID: Hou die lamhokke skoon, insluitende die grond, beddegoed, die kante, voer- en waterbakke. Dit behels dat mis, urine en nageboorte gereeld verwyder moet word. Waterlekkas moet ook so gou moontlik herstel word om plasse water in die hokke te voorkom. Hierdie maatreëls sal die opbou van skadelike bakterieë verhoed, en ook help met vliegbeheer. Om kontaminasie te verhoed moet organiese vullis soos beddegoed of mis ver weg van die lamhokke verwyder word. Anorganiese vullis soos plastiek, handskoene en naalde moet ná gebruik in dromme met digsluitende deksels geplaas word en dan op die gepaste manier verwyder word.

HIGIËNEPRAKTYKE: Sorg dat enige gereedskap wat gebruik word om die ooie of lammers te hanteer gereeld skoongemaak word. Dit is ook goeie praktyk dat werkers gereeld hande was, veral nadat hulle aan siek/ dooie diere geraak het, of as vuil beddegoed verwyder is. Naalde en spuite moet steriel wees vir gebruik om diere te behandel.

BEDDEGOED: Vir elke ooi wat geplaas word, moet daar vars, skoon beddegoed in die vorm van strooi of saagsels voorsien word. Dit is ook belangrik dat die beddegoed nie sigbare

muf bevat nie. Vervang die beddegoed soos nodig om 'n droë, gemaklike omgewing vir die diere te skep. Nadat 'n ooi uit die lamhok gelaat word, moet die beddegoed verwyder word om die risiko van kontaminasie te verlaag.

ONTSMETTING: Voordat ooie geplaas word, moet die hokke deeglik skoongemaak en ontsmet word om bakterieë en patogene te vernietig. Gebruik 'n geskikte ontsmettingsmiddel vir veefasiliteite en volg die vervaardiger se instruksies vir toediening. Sommige boere strooi kalk in die hokke ná ontsmetting om mikrobiële ladings laag te hou. Kalk help ook om vog en reuke te absorbeer. Voor lamtyd is dit raadsaam om al die fasiliteite en gange rondom die lamhokke ook te ontsmet.

BIOSEKURITEIT: Alle werkers by die lamhokke moet bewus gemaak word van die belangrikheid van biosekuriteit en hoe om dit te handhaaf. Kontak met ander diere wat patogene kan oordra, moet gekeer word. Werksklere moet ook skoongehou word en skoene ontsmet word wanneer mense die fasiliteite betree. Om siekte-uitbrekings te voorkom, is dit ook goed om toegang tot die lamhokke te beperk sodat die skape nie blootgestel word aan eksterne patogene nie.



AFSONDERING: Daar moet spasie in die lamhokstelsel wees om diere wat siektetekens toon, af te skort van die res van die kudde om die risiko van kontaminasie te verlaag. Hou veeartsenymiddels naby hierdie hokke om behandeling te vergemaklik. Daar moet ook biosekuriteitsmaatreëls ingestel word vir werkers wat tussen die siek en gesonde skape beweeg.

VENTILASIE: Goeie ventilasie deur die stelsel help nie net vir temperatuurbeheer nie, maar verhoed ook die opbou van ammoniak en ander skadelike gasse. So word 'n gesonde omgewing behou met minder stres op die diere se longe. Sorg dat ventilasie deur die hele stelsel sirkuleer en dat daar nie lug in hoeke vasgevang word nie.



Vliegbeheer: Vlieë kan 'n groot rol speel in die oordrag van siektes, en kan ook verdere infeksies veroorsaak as hulle eiers lê in oop wonde. Vlieë moet dus beheer word by die lamhokke. Higiëne, sindelikeid en ventilasie speel alreeds 'n belangrike rol om vlieggetalle te beheer. Voor lamtyd kan daar rondom die fasiliteite en op nabye vullishope gespuit word. Vliegvalle kan ook opgehang word om vlakke te beheer. Sien toe dat vullis en vuil beddegoed gereeld verwyder word.

VOEDING: Voer en waterbakke moet ten alle tye skoongehou word, en moet ook voor plasing ontsmet word. Skoon, vars water moet ten alle tye beskikbaar wees. Goeiegehalte-

ruvoer en -konsentraat moet daaglik voorsien word. Die voere moet vars en smaaklik wees en ook nie tekens van sigbare muf bevat nie. Sorg dat die ooie goed aangepas is by die lamhokkrantsoen en dat daar nie 'n oormaat van die konsentraat gevoer word nie – dit kan lei tot suurpens en diarree.

GEREELDE MONITERING: Tydens lamtyd moet daar deurnag iemand teenwoordig wees om ooie te monitor en in te gryp as daar 'n ooi is wat sukkel om geboorte te gee. Ooie en lammers moet gereeld deur die dag gemonitor word vir enige siektetekens, asook om die fasiliteite spoedig in gereedheid te kry. Indien omstandighede verander, wat die welsyn van die diere benadeel, moet daar so gou moontlik ingespring word om die veiligheid en gesondheid van die diere te verseker.

REKORDDOUDING: By alle boerdery-praktyke is rekordhouding belangrik, met maatstafmeting om potensieële probleme te identifiseer en daarop te reageer. In 'n lamhokstelsel moet daar nie net aandag gegee word aan die lamproduksiesyfers nie, maar die siektegevalle en behandelings moet ook aangeteken word. Vir biosekuriteitsdoeleindes moet daar ook rekord gehou word van alle werkers en besoekers wat die fasiliteite binnegaan. Sodoende kan die oorsprong van enige uitbrekings beter vasgestel word.

Slotgedagtes

Lamhokstelsels is intensiewe stelsels wat hoë bakteriese ladinge kan bevat indien dit nie reg bestuur word nie. In so 'n intensiewe stelsel kan patogene vinnig vermeerder en versprei, en so lei tot ernstige siekte-uitbrekings met groot ekonomiese verliese. Biosekuriteit en higiëne is van die uiterste belang om die gesondheid en welsyn van ooie en lammers te verseker. 🐏



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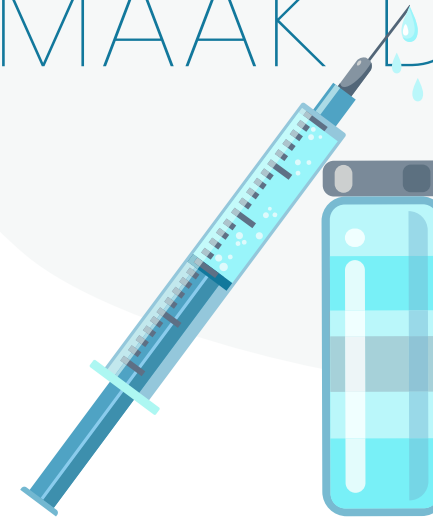
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PRIVATE ENTSTOFVERVAARDIGER MAAK DEURBRAAK



■ DEUR RENÉ VAN DER VYVER

Design Biologix, 'n private entstofvervaardiger van Pretoria, het 'n nuwe entstof ontwikkel om longontsteking by skape en bokke te voorkom. Gevolglik kan boere meer doeltreffend optree om een van die grootste gesondheidsprobleme by kleinvee, naamlik asemhalingsiektes, te sistap.

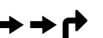
Dit is 'n deurbraak wat van groot waarde is, want hierdie Suid-Afrikaans-vervaardigde produk is die enigste geregistreeerde entstof wat volledige beskerming vir skape en bokke bied, siende dat dit virus-asemhalingssiektes asook bakteriële asemhalingsiektes voorkom.

Dr. Angela Buys, uitvoerende hoof van Design Biologix, sê dat hulle formulering ontwikkel is om virusbesmetting (wat eerste kom) te keer en die toename van bakterieë (wat volg) ook hok te slaan. Hierdie entstof moet dus voorkomend gebruik word om die diere te beskerm en die risiko vir produksieverliese te verlaag.

Ovivax is 'n geïnaktiveerde kombinasie-entstof en moet teen 2 ml per dier onderhuids aan die nek ingespuut word. Drie tot vier weke later moet nog 'n skraagdosies volg, en diere moet jaarliks ingeënt word.

Die Departement van Landbou, Grondhervorming en Landelike Ontwikkeling het in Augustus 2023 die nuwe entstof (Ovivax, reg. nr. G4552) goedgekeur. Dit het Design Biologix in staat gestel om die entstof te vervaardig en te bemark. Hierdie maatskappy het die entstof in Desember verlede jaar bekendgestel, maar eers vanaf Januarie self begin bemark.

Buys vertel dat Design Biologix vanjaar op 1 Maart 30 jaar oud geword het, maar dat hulle eers vanaf 2024 begin het om hul eie produkte te bemark. In die voorafgaande jare het die maatskappy 45 miljoen dosisse nasionaal sowel as internasionaal versprei. "Wat Design Biologix uniek maak, is die feit dat ons bereikbaar is. Indien iemand vrae het, kan hulle ons skakel en ons sal hulle met tegniese kennis toerus," sluit Buys af. 🗨️



PREDATION MANAGEMENT - THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY



The annual livestock and predation management report written by Niel Viljoen was recently released. Since the establishment of the initiative in 2008, the goal of project was to find effective and practical predation management strategies under the guidance of the National Wool Growers' Association (NWGA). The research platform involves various farms distributed throughout the country, including most of the provinces, and covering different ecological areas in different rainfall regions.

This project is managed and implemented in partnership with Predation Management South Africa (PMSA) and the report (the longest continuous predator research and monitored project in South Africa's history) aims to provide feedback on the findings and results formulated over the past sixteen years. It is funded mainly by the Red Meat Producers' Organisation (RPO) and the NWGA.

Monitor farms

In South Africa, the total land use for commercial agriculture is approximately 46,4 million hectares, which represents 37,9% of the total land area of the country. In 2008, a total area of 136 214 hectares (27 farms) was identified for evaluating adaptive management strategies, which should be sustainable and workable under the unique South African commercial farming conditions.

The reasoning behind this is to let the farm talk, as there are various parameters that influence the management of predation – and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Thus, the 27 different monitor farms represent 27 different ecosystems, managed by 27 different livestock producers, and influenced by 27 different mindsets, and on this basis, provide the foundation of the report over the past 16 years. The monitor farms are perfectly positioned to gain more experience and to inform farmers on new and workable livestock predation management strategies. In 2022, the first communal monitor farm was established, which brought about a new challenge, but also new opportunities.

National results

Considering the different provinces, with varying rainfall seasons, lambing seasons, and the vast array of vegetation and topographic combinations involved, all these factors do have a significant influence on management

strategies and their successful implementation.

However, progress has been made by livestock farmers during the last sixteen years to secure a solid, financially viable production environment within a healthy biodiversity. In the diagram below (Figure 1), the preference of livestock of the two main damage-causing predators, black-backed jackal and caracal, is clearly visible.

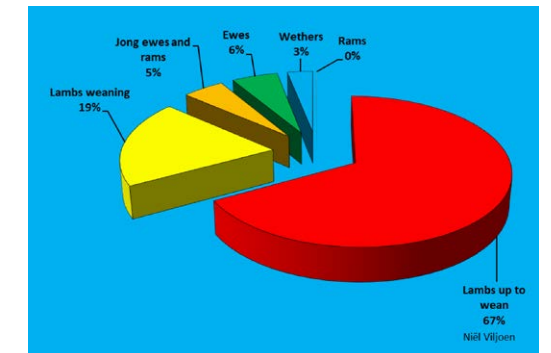
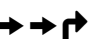


Figure 1 National distribution of livestock losses (2008–2023)

Newborn lambs, weighing approximately up to 35 kg, are the most common targets of these predators. As indicated in Figure 1, 67% of all livestock losses fall into this category. As lambs grow bigger and heavier, the tendency to fall prey to jackal and caracal decreases, although weaners stand second in line with 19% losses due to predators. Figure 1 confirms that lamb losses up to weaning amount to 67%. Adding weaned lamb losses of 19% equals a total of 86% of young sheep lost due to predators.

Once adulthood has been reached, losses due to predation are 5% for young ewes and rams, 6% for adult ewes, and 3% for fully grown wethers, respectively. Notably, predator numbers play a significant role and must be managed, with a specific emphasis on the black-back jackal in this case.

Now, let us delve into the progress made on the communal farm recently included in the research.



Communal farm

The second-year assistance, support, monitoring, and training on a communal farm in the Mount Fletcher area poses challenges, as new obstacles emerge over time. Training these farmers to understand predators and predator behaviour is a focal point. Once the predators responsible for livestock losses are accurately identified, the implementation of a proper predator management programme is proposed and implemented.

Working among these farmers daily, experiencing their struggles, and understanding crucial factors undermining their livelihoods, financial progress, and their ability to grow to their full potential settled and respected livestock farmers, is a major challenge. Available data recently gathered shows that it is not wild predators causing so many losses among livestock, but domestic and stray dogs that are undoubtedly the main cause of livestock losses on the communal farm.

Stray dogs

The usual threat of predators such as black-backed jackals and caracals, commonly found on South African commercial farms, is not at all applicable to these communal farmlands. Overwhelming human activity, population density, and food scarcity for predators compel them to move to areas with more preferred ecosystems and healthier biodiversity. Instead, it is free-roaming and stray dogs that are abundant and pose a threat to livestock and human health.

It appears that the issue of stray dogs in communal areas is being greatly underestimated, and urgent attention should be given to this problem as soon as possible. If these dogs continue to breed in the wild (which seems to be happening already) and raise pups in the field, the threat will escalate beyond easy resolution.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO MANAGE STRAY DOG POPULATIONS?

- ✘ All dog owners must understand and adhere to responsible ownership practices regarding dogs.
- ✘ Farmers should receive assistance and training to capture stray dogs.
- ✘ Local police must assist in locating and removing these dogs.
- ✘ Funds are required to assist local veterinarians in spaying these dogs.
- ✘ The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals should return to these areas to provide support.
- ✘ Prioritising the separation of dogs and livestock from national roads is essential (shocking scenes of dead dogs, cattle, and horses lying next to the roads are evident). Disturbing scenes of people (alongside dogs) helping themselves to some of the meat from these road kills pose a risk to human health.
- ✘ The Department of Health should be contacted to urgently educate people on the health risks of consuming meat from road kills.
- ✘ Helplines should be advertised alongside roads to immediately report any roadkill.
- ✘ Municipalities should be responsible for the immediate removal of dead carcasses alongside roads.
- ✘ To improve health and wealth on communal farmland, issues regarding stray dogs must be addressed.

Another 'dingo' looms on the horizon, reminiscent of the same man-made predator created in Australia. When stray dogs evolve into wild dogs, control becomes elusive, and

vaccinating against serious diseases like rabies becomes nearly impossible. This scenario opens the door to life-threatening situations, with dogs attacking humans, especially children, and exacerbating outbreaks of rabies.

For communal producers to achieve financial independence, they require more lambs and must successfully rear them for sale. It serves no purpose to invest millions of rands in improving wool quality and production without addressing the prevention of predation on their lambs.

The results of the past sixteen years of intensive livestock predation management are clearly visible when livestock losses are considered. Livestock losses due to predators were drastically reduced. During 2008, the total number of losses on all the monitor farms were 3 311.

Over the sixteen-year period, these losses were reduced to 1 004 during the last year recorded. This indicates a decline of 2 307 less livestock lost due to predators, a decline of 70% compared with 2008. Extreme weather conditions, including above-average rainfall, had an impact on the effectiveness of control methods such as trapping cages, leg-holding devices, and the most trustworthy and widely used, call and shoot. 🐾

Acknowledgements

- All 27 monitor farms, farmers, managers as well as their co-workers
- The communal monitor farm in Mount Fletcher
- Agricultural Sector Education Training Authority
- Predation Management South Africa (PMSA) (project support)
- NWGA and RPO (funding)

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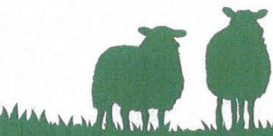
Use your creativity and engineering know-how to conserve wildlife and help us to find a practical solution for farmers suffering stock losses.

WHEN TO ENTER

Submit your design for a mobile, predator-proof, affordable and durable kraal to the Conservation Kraal Challenge from **1 February to 30 June 2024**.

WHO CAN ENTER

- South African citizens, or permanent residents of South Africa, who are 18 years or older
- Individuals or teams of up to 5 people, from any discipline (engineering, agricultural and/or conservation experience is beneficial) and degree of qualification, including students, professionals and amateurs



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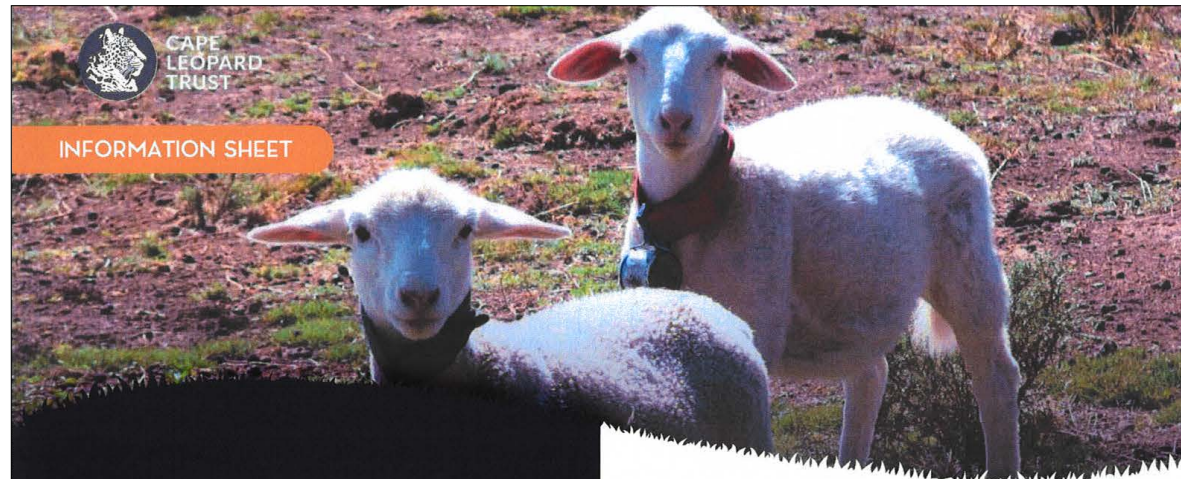
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INFORMATION SHEET



HOW TO ENTER

1. READ THROUGH THE CONSERVATION KRAAL CHALLENGE COMPETITION GUIDE

The Competition Guide outlines all the necessary details and rules on the competition entry requirements and submission process, competition framework, design criteria and judging process.

2. PREPARE YOUR ENTRY

Download the [Entry Questions](#) to prepare your answers offline and get designing.

3. SUBMIT YOUR ENTRY THROUGH THE ENTRY PORTAL

Create a profile for your individual or team entry, accept the [Terms and Conditions](#), answer the entry questions, upload your design and click submit.

4. WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED 10 AUGUST 2024

The panel of judges will evaluate all entries.

YOU COULD BE A WINNER!



WHY MOBI-KRAAL?

Living in shared agricultural spaces presents challenges, both for predators and for people. Predators may opportunistically hunt livestock, causing significant economic damage.

The reduction or outright removal of large predators from an area reduces both competition and predation for smaller predators and prey species, resulting in an imbalance of ecosystem structure that may have knock-on effects for biodiversity and ecosystem services relied upon by humans (e.g. crop pollination, water retention, etc.). The best solution in many cases is to secure livestock in a predator-proof kraal (protective enclosure) overnight, but for many farmers a permanent structure is not a viable option.

The Mobi-Kraal initiative aims to design and trial a mobile kraal to better protect livestock from predation, to safeguard environmental integrity and to improve food security and farmer predator interactions

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Management practices for winter

BY NWGA PRODUCTION ADVISORY SERVICES

Every second month, the production advisory service publishes a list of management practices that are deemed important to assist producers in managing their flocks. The following practices should be finalised in the summer rainfall areas by **June/July**.



Lambs (born in March/April)

- + Dose all lambs older than 12 weeks against tapeworm and roundworm. Administer vitamin A and minerals (either by injection or orally).
- + Dose lambs younger than three months against milk tapeworm.
- + Vaccinate all lambs (especially ewe lambs) older than 12 weeks against diseases such as bluetongue, Rift Valley fever, pulpy kidney, and *Pasteurella*-related diseases.
- + Vaccinate all replacement ewe lambs against enzootic abortion (if the disease is prevalent in your flock).
- + If possible, use combination vaccines.
- + Do not vaccinate lambs before they are at least 12 weeks old, as they are unable to build up immunity while the antibodies in the colostrum are still present in their bodies.
- + Select replacement ewe lambs at weaning.
- + Creep feeding can be stopped as soon as the lambs are three months old. This must be replaced with a good protein lick containing enough bypass protein – which is especially important in the case of the replacement ewe lambs.

Ewes (mated in March/April)

- + Conduct a pregnancy test between five to six weeks after the rams have been removed. Sell all dry ewes, provided the pregnancy rate is above 90% for adult ewes and above 70% for replacement ewes. Use this money to buy in pregnant ewes, preferably two-tooth ewes.
- + Vaccinate ewes against *Pasteurella*-related diseases and pulpy kidney. Vaccination against blue udder, red gut, and blood gut is optional.
- + Look out for liver fluke and conical fluke infestations as both parasites can cause major production losses in winter. These parasites are particularly prevalent in groundwater dams. Typical symptoms of liver fluke and conical fluke are bottle jaw and diarrhoea.
- + Dose with vitamin A and minerals.
- + Monitor the condition of ewes weekly during the final eight weeks of pregnancy. A thin, underweight ewe will have insufficient body reserves to produce enough milk to rear her lamb properly. Her conception rate in the next season will also be lower. If necessary, start feeding the ewes well in advance and ensure that these ewes do not lose condition. Condition score the ewes every week and provide feed or lick as soon as their condition starts deteriorating. Take particular note of the condition of both the ewes carrying twins and the two-tooth ewes. Although the ewes may appear to be in good condition, as their abdomens expand rapidly during the last trimester of pregnancy, they can easily lose condition without this being detected.
- + This is the best time of the year to treat against nasal worm.
- + Scan and monitor the camps where ewes are about to lamb for unwanted predators. Put precautionary measures in place by plugging holes underneath fences. Do not postpone this until ewes start lambing, because then they will require your full attention.



Ewes with lambs

- + Dose with vitamin A and minerals. Blindness is a typical consequence of vitamin A deficiency.

Rams

- + This is a good time to vaccinate rams against bluetongue as they normally do not mate at this point.




IMPORTANT

- Read the pamphlets of all animal health products carefully to ensure that they are safe to use with pregnant ewes.
- Do not vaccinate pregnant ewes with live vaccines, such as vaccines against bluetongue and Rift Valley fever. Among other things, this can cause abortions.
- Read the pamphlets of all vaccinations, dosing remedies, and feeds to familiarise yourself with how to use them responsibly.
- Contact your local veterinarian if you are unsure about any of the animal health recommendations.

Skandeer hierdie QR-kode vir die Afrikaanse bestuurskalender.



The NWGA offers a production advisory service to all wool producers on contract with Cape Wools SA (CWSA), funded by the Wool Trust. Should you require more information, please contact your nearest NWGA office. 



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- Ooie verloor minder gewig wat konsepsie- en lampersentasies verhoog.
- Optimale lamsgroei en speengewigte.
- Voldoende wolfollikelontwikkeling by lammers om gehalte wolproduksie gedurende die skaap se leeftyd te verseker.
- Optimale ontwikkeling van lammers se reproduksiepotensiaal.
- Verseker die geboorte van lewenskragtige lammers.
- Voorsien die ooi van die nodige minerale, spoorminerale en vitamien.



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Predasiebestuur



INDUSTRY GOODBYES

- ➔ The industry recently bid farewell to Dr Quinette Kruger, who has been leading the Predation Management Centre (PMC) at the University of the Free State since 2017. On 1 March, Dr Beanétri Janecke from the Department of Animal Sciences at the university assumed the role of managing the PMC.
- ➔ During Predation Management South Africa's most recent executive meeting, we said goodbye to Mr Leon de Beer, general manager of the National Wool Growers' Association (NWGA), as he attended his final meeting. De Beer will retire from the NWGA at the end of April. PMSA chairperson Niel du Preez expressed his gratitude for Du Preez's invaluable contributions over the past 20 years and highlighted the supportive role he played within the PMSA Secretariat during his two-year chairpersonship. Enjoy your retirement, Leon; we wish you all the best for this exciting new phase of your life!

VEEDIEFSTAL PATRONE: 'n dieper blik op dié misdaad

■ DEUR WILLIE CLACK

Veediefstal, 'n langdurige probleem, is meer as net 'n kriminele aktiwiteit; dit is 'n verskynsel met vele fasette wat onlosmaaklik verbind is met historiese, geopolitieke en kulturele faktore. Binne hierdie konteks dien die grense wat plase en provinsies aandui as fisiese afbakenings en simboliese verteenwoordiging van sosio-politieke dinamika.

Hierdie kompleksiteit is veral duidelik in Suid-Afrika se provinsies, waar geografiese terreinvorms soos byvoorbeeld die Karoo

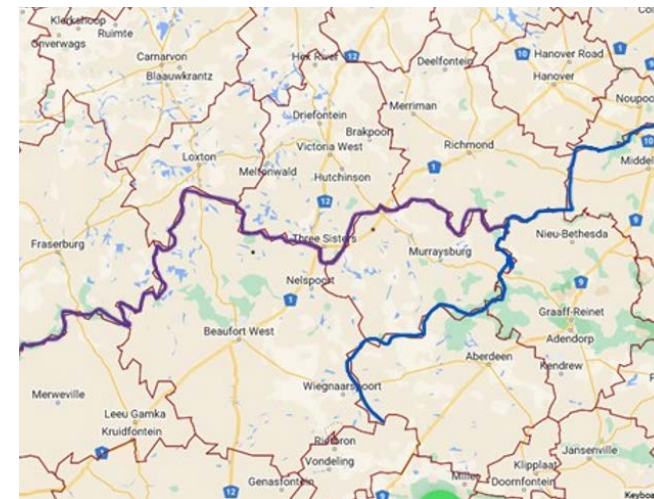
saamwerk om misdaadpatrone – insluitende veediefstal – te vorm, soos in die geval van die Wes- en Noord-Kaap. Ten spyte daarvan dat hierdie provinsies histories die laagste aantal van veediefstalsake gehad het, is die provinsies nie immuun teen die kompleksiteit van veediefstal asook misdaad oor provinsiale grense heen nie.

'n Dieper analise van die brandpuntstasies in die provinsies onthul verskuilde patrone en werp lig op gelokaliseerde uitdagings

en geleentheid vir ingryping. Begrip van die verspreiding van veediefstalgevalle oor provinsies heen bied waardevolle insigte in die groter patrone en uitdagings.

Hierdie artikel ontleed kortliks die kompleksiteit van oorgrens-veediefstal, met die fokus op brandpuntstasies in die Wes- en Noord-Kaap. Ons wil beter begrip verkry van die subtiliteite wat misdaadpatrone en wetstoepassing beïnvloed, soos geografie, vervoer, herhaalde oortreding, asook die invloed van arrestasies.

Figuur 1: 'n Geografiese kaart wat die grens tussen die Noord- en Wes-Kaapse veediefstal-brandpuntstasies aandui



Bron: Aangepas uit MisdaadstatistiekSA <https://www.crimestatssa.com/>

Veediefstal-brandpuntstasies

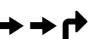
Tabel 1 ontleed die brandpuntstasies in beide provinsies, naamlik in Victoria-Wes en Murraysburg. Verder is dit belangrik om die nommer 2-stasie in die Wes-Kaap, naamlik Beaufort-Wes, in te sluit. Figuur 1 toon die geografiese verhouding tussen hierdie brandpuntstasies. Beaufort-Wes se posisie as die tweede-gerangskikte stasie in die Wes-Kaap dui op sy belangrikheid in die streek, moontlik as 'n kritieke skakel vir vervoer, handel of ander essensiële dienste. Dit word verder hieronder bespreek.

Vervoer en paaie in die omgewing van Beaufort-Wes en Victoria-Wes het 'n belangrike rol gespeel in die geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika gedurende die laat 19de en vroeë 20ste eeu. Beaufort-Wes, geleë in die Wes-Kaap, het gedien as 'n noodsaaklike kruispunt wat die hawe van Kaapstad met die binneland verbind het en wat die vervoer van goedere soos wol en volstruisprodukte vanuit die Karoo gefasiliteer het.

Op soortgelyke wyse was Victoria-Wes, geleë in die Noord-Kaap, 'n kritieke skakel tussen die diamantryke areas van Kimberley en die hawens aan die kus. Die aanlê van spoorweë tussen hierdie dorpe

Tabel 1: Veediefstal-brandpuntstasies in die Noord- en Wes-Kaap

Provinsiale posisie	RSA posisie	Polisiestasie	Provinsie	Oktober tot Desember				
				2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1	90	Victoria-Wes	Noord-Kaap	10	11	4	14	18
1	94	Murraysburg	Wes-Kaap	16	16	11	19	18
2	153	Beaufort-Wes	Wes-Kaap	17	16	11	15	14





het ekonomiese ontwikkeling gestimuleer, nedersettings aangemoedig, en die sosiale interaksies en infrastruktuur groei van die omliggende areas gestimuleer. Alhoewel hul prominensie as spoorwegstasies afgeneem het met tegnologiese vordering, bly hulle strategies belangrik, veral in die bestuur van veiligheid en misdaad in hierdie streek.

Vandag word die strategiese belangrikheid van Beaufort-Wes en Victoria-Wes weereens beklemtoon as veediefstal-brandpunstasies binne aangrensende provinsies. Hierdie belang word geïllustreer deur die teenwoordigheid van belangrike nasionale paaie, spesifiek die N1 en N12 (Sien Figuur 1), wat deur hierdie distrikte vleg en as noodsaaklike kanale vir vervoer regoor die land dien.

Die strategiese ligging van hierdie hoofweë bied ook sekuriteitsuitdagings, insluitende die potensiaal vir georganiseerde misdaadaktiwiteite soos smokkel, onwettige handel en veediefstal. Gegewe die kritieke rol van hierdie vervoerrotetes is doeltreffende wetstoepassing noodsaaklik om die veiligheid en sekuriteit van landbouprodusente te verseker.

Kriminele aktiwiteit

Wanneer die data in Tabel 1 ontleed word, is dit noodsaaklik om nie bloot in ag te neem dat hierdie brandpunstasies nommer 1 in die

provinsie is nie; daar moet verder na die res van die inligting gekyk te word. Ons sien dat hulle, wat veediefstal aanbetref, relatief laag in die rangorde van brandpunstasie in die land gerangskik word, maar in ag geneem dat Suid-Afrika 1155 polisieareas het, is die rangorde wel betekenisvol. Die aantal veediefstalgevallen wat gerapporteer word, vertel ook 'n verhaal van belangrikheid, soos aangedui in Figuur 2 hieronder.

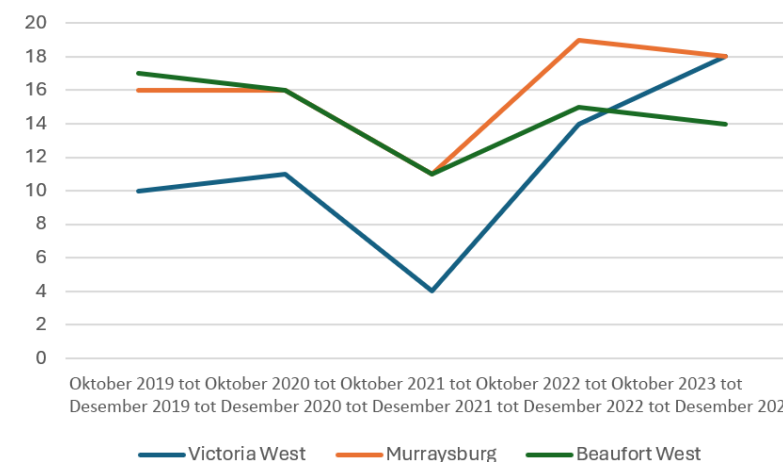
Die afname in die aantal aangemelde sake in 2021 in die drie polisieareas is opvallend. In 2021 was COVID iets van die verlede, so die enigste geldige gevolgtrekking kan wees dat 'n oortreder of sommige oortreders in 2021 gearresteer is vir veediefstal en hul aktiwiteite aan bande gelê is. 'n Nuusberig op 4 Augustus 2023 (OFM 2023) mag direk verband hou met hierdie waarneming. In die berig word gerapporteer dat die eenheid vir veediefstal en bedreigde spesies in De Aar en Beaufort-Wes 'n 45-jarige man in Victoria-Wes in hegtenis geneem het. Hierdie inhegtenisname het plaasgevind te midde van ondersoek na oorgrens-veediefstalsindikate wat tussen Beaufort-Wes en Victoria-Wes opereer. Timothy Sam, polisiewoordvoerder, het gerapporteer dat die man, wat op parool was ná gevangenisstraf vir veediefstal, in hegtenis geneem is terwyl hy skape op die plaas Kookfontein by Victoria-Wes versamel het.

Wat die algemene tendens en veral hierdie spesifieke oortreder aanbetref, moet meer gedetailleerde inligting bekom word, soos vorige vonnisse, parool ensovoorts, ten einde sinvolle, geldige afleidings te kan maak. In die lig van hierdie en soortgelyke gevalle kan die doeltreffendheid van die strafregstelsel in die rehabilitasie van oortreders bevestig word.

Gevolgtrekking

Die probleem van veediefstal in die Wes- en Noord-Kaap bied 'n komplekse uitdaging wat

Figuur 2: Aantal gerapporteerde gevalle



diep gewortel is in 'n verskeidenheid faktore, byvoorbeeld geografie. Ten spyte van 'n historiese lae aantal gevalle van veediefstal in hierdie provinsies, blyk die kompleksiteit van oorgrensmisdaad duidelik binne die gebied van brandpunstasies soos Victoria-Wes, Murraysburg en Beaufort-Wes.

Die strategiese belangrikheid van hierdie areas, voorheen veral in hul historiese rolle as spoorwegskakels en hul nabyheid aan belangrike nasionale paaie, beklemtoon die belang van doeltreffende wetstoepassings- en noodrespons pogings. Die afname in gerapporteerde gevalle in 2021, toegeskryf aan die inhegtenisname van 'n herhalingsoortreder betrokke by oorgrens-veediefstalsindikate, beklemtoon die impak van geteikende ingrypings en wetstoepassingstrategieë.

Verder beklemtoon die inhegtenisname van die oortreder, op parool vir veediefstal, die belangrikheid van vonnisse en paroolmonitering in die hantering van herhaalde misdaad en die voorkoming van verdere kriminele aktiwiteit. Die inhegtenisname van die oortreder terwyl hy op parool was vir 'n soortgelyke oortreding, dui op die behoefte aan strengere monitering

en rehabilitasieprogramme om herhaalde oortredings te voorkom en georganiseerde misdaadnetwerke te ontstig.

Voortgesette samewerking tussen die SAPD, gemeenskappe en belanghebbendes is noodsaaklik om werk te maak van die onderliggende motivering vir veediefstal en te verseker dat doeltreffende verslagdoening, ondersoek en vervolging van oortreders plaasvind. Deur aandag te gee aan die grondoorsake van hierdie misdaad, geteikende ingrypings te implementeer, en vonnisse en paroolmaatreëls te versterk, kan Suid-Afrika werk om veediefstal te verminder en die veiligheid en sekuriteit van landelike gemeenskappe en landboulewensbestaan te bevorder. 

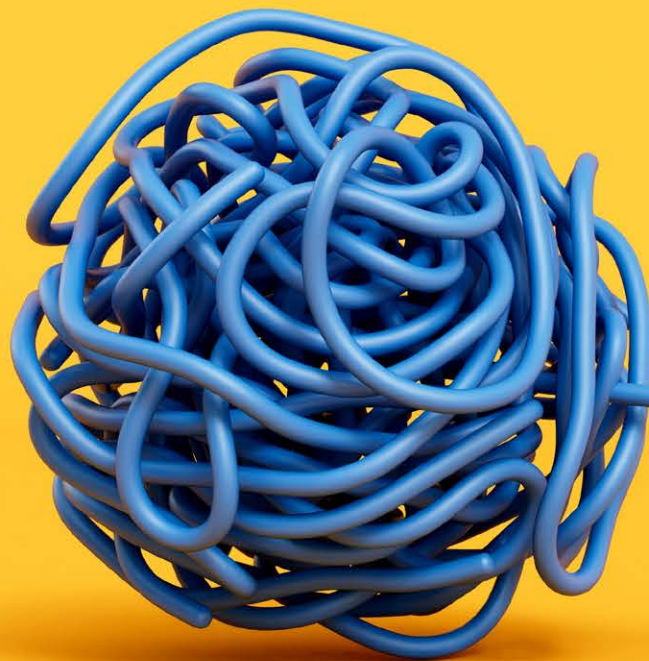
Bronne geraadpleeg

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Change a challenge into an opportunity

■ BY FIDELIS ZVOMUYA



Despite the risk of being labelled the proverbial hammer, farmers perceive the slow pace of structural reform in agriculture as the proverbial nail. Challenges often bring opportunities, and the agricultural sector has faced hurdles on its path towards growth.

However, stakeholders remain steadfast in their commitment to overcoming obstacles and unlocking the sector's full potential. Wandile Sihlobo, chief economist at the Agricultural Business Chamber of South Africa (Agbiz), emphasised that despite commendable strides in opening export markets and bolstering support for smallholder farmers, the sector finds itself at a crossroads, grappling with the lingering menace of sluggish structural reform.

"The slow pace of structural reform in agriculture has been a recurring theme, with commendable government efforts often

overshadowed by persistent crises. From the impact of load-shedding on agricultural production to widespread animal diseases and logistical bottlenecks, the sector has navigated through a myriad of challenges," Sihlobo said.

Long-term vision

He said despite these setbacks, the long-term vision outlined in the Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan remains a beacon of hope, albeit with limited implementation thus far. "One crucial initiative, the launch of the Land Reform Agency, holds the promise of releasing government-owned land to new entrant farmers, providing a vital catalyst for sector expansion."

However, delays in its implementation have fuelled concerns among stakeholders, underscoring the need for swift action to realise this vision, Sihlobo explained.

Johannes Bezuidenhout, one of the three owners of Nuveld Farming Empowerment Enterprise (Pty) Ltd in the Central Karoo area of the Western Cape, shared his perspective on navigating challenges and embracing opportunities in the sector.

Bezuidenhout remarked that despite the challenges wool farmers face, there is a sense of resilience among them. He stated,

"By adopting innovative practices, leveraging technology, and fostering collaboration, we can overcome obstacles and drive sustainable growth."

While challenges may abound, Bezuidenhout emphasised that resilience and innovation must be farmers' allies in overcoming obstacles. He highlighted the need for collaboration and support from both government and industry players, underlining the importance of proactive measures to mitigate risks and foster growth.

Investment in infrastructure

Bezuidenhout expressed his frustration with the slow pace of reform and the need for more support for upcoming farmers, stating, "We need more support and investment in infrastructure, such as improved roads and railway systems, and access to markets. The delays in implementing these reforms have hindered our ability to fully capitalise on our potential."

"By adopting innovative practices, leveraging technology, and fostering collaboration, we can overcome obstacles and drive sustainable growth."

As highlighted in a recent *Agbiz Weekly Market Viewpoint* published in March, Sihlobo said the delayed implementation of government programmes and the awaited launch of the Agriculture and Land Reform Development Agency underscore the pressing need to expedite reform efforts.

"Despite all the commendable government work in opening up export markets, helping to control the spread of animal diseases, and supporting smallholder farmers over the

recent past, South Africa's agriculture has been operating from one crisis to another," he explained.

"This has limited the sector's full potential growth," Sihlobo added. "Last year, the big challenge was load-shedding and its effects on agricultural production. Later in the year, there were widespread animal diseases and crises at ports, railway lines, and on roads. This means many government programmes aimed at addressing the sector's long-term growth remain on the periphery, as government officials and the private sector focus their attention on the present issues. For example, the interventions needed for the long-term expansion of the sector contained in the Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan have seen limited implementation thus far."

Land Reform Agency

Moreover, the launch of the Land Reform Agency, aimed at releasing government-owned land to carefully selected beneficiaries with title deeds, has been delayed. Sihlobo believes that this agency, and the deliberate release of land, are vital catalysts for the expansion of South Africa's agricultural sector.

"The government has roughly 2,5 million hectares under its Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy that could be transferred to new entrant farmers to boost production in various value chains. President Cyril Ramaphosa has mentioned the establishment of this agency in various State of the Nation addresses. However, there has been limited progress in delivering these promises to the nation," he said.

Adding depth to the discourse, expert and president of the Agricultural Economics Association of South Africa Sifiso Ntombela sheds light on the path forward for South Africa's agricultural sector.

"Amid challenges, lie opportunities for innovation and sustainable practices," noted Ntombela. Addressing key policy considerations, he underscored the significance of modernising regulations, clarifying land reform initiatives, and fostering dialogue to drive implementation post elections.

Modernising agricultural law

Ntombela emphasised the importance of focusing on key policy considerations, such as modernising agricultural laws and addressing land reform issues, to drive growth and innovation in the sector. He highlighted the potential of the Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan in shaping the future of agriculture in South Africa.

"By working collaboratively and proactively addressing policy challenges, we can create a

more sustainable and prosperous agricultural sector that benefits all stakeholders," said Ntombela.

While challenges such as dry conditions and crop failures pose immediate threats to agricultural production, there is a sense of resilience and determination among farmers and experts to overcome these obstacles and build a brighter future for the sector.

As South Africa's agricultural sector continues to navigate through various challenges, there is hope that with concerted efforts and strategic interventions, the industry will emerge stronger and more resilient than ever before. By fostering a culture of collaboration, innovation, and sustainability, the agricultural sector in South Africa can overcome obstacles and thrive in the years to come. 🌱



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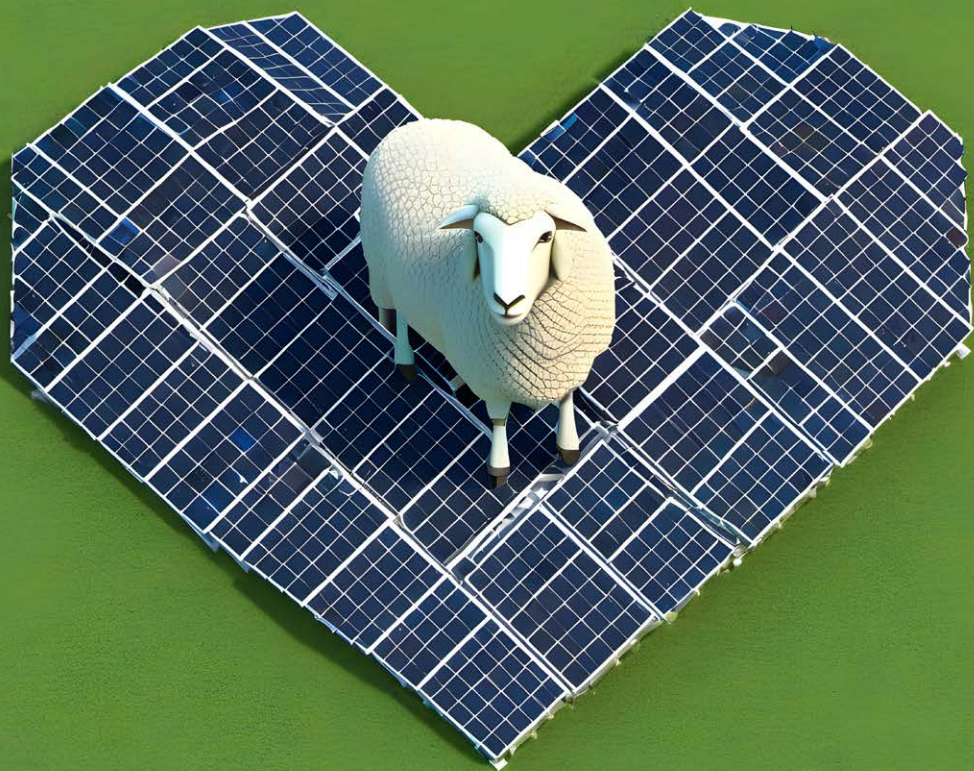


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SOLAR PANELS AND SHEEP

– a match made in heaven

Solar panels are being promoted as one of the best methods to produce green energy. As a result, in addition to wind energy facilities, solar panels are starting to take up residence in open spaces across the world. How will this affect the grazing patterns of livestock – in particular, sheep?



The International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO) invited Emma Kampherbeek to talk about the research she and a team of researchers, Dr Zachary McFarlane, Dr Laura Webb, and Dr Seeta Sistla, did to answer this question. Kampherbeek gave a presentation on this topic at the recent IWTO Wool Round Table, which was held in Canada last year.

Effects of solar panels

The research project undertaken by Kampherbeek, McFarlane, and Sistla aimed to investigate the effects of solar panels on sheep grazing behaviour. Two types of grazing management strategy were proposed – intensive rotational grazing or rotational grazing. The research was also intended to determine which of the two would be most suitable.

Working on the Gold Tree Solar Farm in San Luis Obispo County, California, the researchers observed the grazing behaviour of sheep on and around the solar facility. Four flocks of sheep were selected and tagged – two solar groups and two control groups. The control groups were sent out to graze on native rangelands. The solar group were confined to the land on which the solar facility had been set up. However, since the solar farm had little available forage, it had to be supplemented with alfalfa hay.

The overall result of the study was that sheep on the solar farm preferred to graze underneath the solar panels, rather than in the alleys between them. Additionally, it was conclusively observed that sheep on the solar farm spent more time grazing than those on the rangelands.

It was also found that sheep in four-day rotations grazed more than sheep in one-day rotations. The conclusion is that animals that rotate less can often spend more time browsing or selecting preferred plant species.

This indicates that sheep can provide excellent vegetation management on solar farms. Depending on forage conditions, a mix of rotational and continuous grazing can be employed.

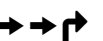
Connection between wool production and energy production

Nick Armantrout, from the American Solar Grazing Association is excited about the connection between wool production and energy production. He says sheep grazing in combination with solar energy production could be a match made in heaven.

Sheep grazing underneath solar panels to control vegetation growth, while simultaneously producing wool and energy, is a symbiotic relationship that can be beneficial to various parties involved.

According to Armantrout, maintenance of vegetation under and around solar panels can be time consuming and costly, but it must be done as vegetation under solar panels is risky and can even cause fires. “Trimming under panels is time consuming, mechanical controls like lawn mowers are expensive and ineffective, and then there is also the problem of preserving the land on which the solar panels are built by protecting the soil underneath,” he says.

Choosing animals as a vegetation management strategy – instead of a lawn mower or other means like using chemicals, seems to be a win-win strategy. “Sheep are effectively a natural solution for solar companies to utilise to help manage their solar facilities – sheep are excellent, as a flock of sheep can reduce the maintenance and production costs of the site. When solar developers employ this strategy, they can even maintain agricultural land use, thus further lowering operational costs.”



Improved soil

Another benefit to consider is the actual production of wool. "There is increasing research that shows wool to be highly effective in maintaining soil stability and even improving it." Armantrout suggests that solar developers and farmers work together to use some of the wool produced by the sheep to also maintain soil stability of the land. "This will further benefit the solar developer as soil stability also plays a part in the sustainability of the project."

Armantrout says there is a growing presence of solar sites around the world, thus, the grazing of sheep for vegetation management could be a great opportunity for the wool industry. "A partnership between farmers and the solar developers could mean that farmers have valuable land for grazing at their disposal. The grasslands will already be fenced, thereby protecting sheep from predators."

He says sheep fare well when grazing under solar panels. "Grazing under the shade of solar panels decreases heat stress, lowers water consumption, and it is even suggested

that this grazing strategy has a positive impact on wool production as a greater number of pounds of wool are produced. It is also in line with the global push for better animal welfare conditions not to mention the benefit of generating green/sustainable power."

Conclusion

Solar grazing in the United States is a fast-growing industry and currently an established activity. "Because sites need vegetative maintenance, solar developers are actively searching for grazers. Solar facilities also present an opportunity for wool products, such as soil rehabilitation products made from wool. We all know that wool is a great medium to use for growing vegetation and, thus, is a wonderful by-product to rehabilitate the soil of solar farms damaged by the construction of the sites and the soil erosion that solar panels might cause. So, wool-based fertilisers can be used to revegetate these sites. We need to partner with various industry role players to further the development of these products," Armantrout concludes. 🌱



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Africa boasts various traceability systems, with southern African countries like Botswana and Namibia leading the way with their well-established systems. The Namibian Livestock Identification and Traceability System (NamLITS) has evolved over the years, facing challenges, and learning valuable lessons along the way.

■ BY FIDELIS ZVOMUYA

Dr Jannett-Star Erastus, chief veterinarian in the Directorate of Veterinary Services, sub-division: Traceability, Medicine Control and Advisory Services, under the Namibian Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, sheds light on the journey and key insights gained.

During the recent Livestock Identification and Traceability System webinar, hosted by the LITS-SA committee (LITS-SA being livestock identification and traceability system of South Africa), Dr Erastus said NamLITS processes began as early as 1995 with a manual system that involved branding of livestock and eventually identification using approved devices – single-ear tagging versus double-ear tagging.

“In 2006, we implemented a computerised system south of the veterinary cordon fence. This is a ‘red line’, a pest-exclusion fence separating northern Namibia from the central and southern regions. Seven years later, we expanded it to the northern areas to trace the cattle of communal farmers. Their cattle were ear-tagged and

captured on NamLITS, ensuring that full traceability was in place,” she said.

Importance of NamLITS

The importance of NamLITS includes issuing livestock movement permits for animals moving from farm to farm, gathering at events like auctions, and being transported to abattoirs for slaughter. It also provides reports such as herd statements, which are a summary of all the livestock registered on a livestock keeper’s stock brand, and 90/40-day reports for animals moving to an export abattoir for slaughter, such as Meatco and Beefcor.

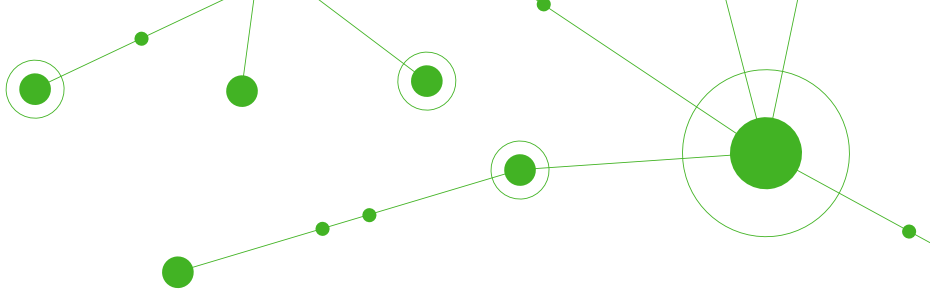
Challenges

According to Dr Erastus, notwithstanding the advantages of traceability systems, challenges persist in their implementation.

“Namibia’s experience highlights several hurdles, including compliance and enforcement. Ensuring adherence to regulations poses a significant challenge, requiring robust enforcement

TRACEABILITY:

Valuable lessons to be learned from our neighbours



mechanisms. High capital and maintenance costs are another issue faced in Namibia. Establishing and maintaining traceability systems demand substantial financial investment, posing financial strains. The shortage of skilled personnel, such as statisticians and software engineers, impedes the effective operation of the system," she explained.

Remote areas encounter connectivity challenges, impeding data transmission and system functionality. Additionally, inadequate staffing levels further strain the system's efficacy, requiring enhanced recruitment and training efforts. "Continuous monitoring and evaluation are crucial for system optimisation, yet pose logistical challenges in practice. Ensuring alignment with existing legislation and adapting to evolving regulatory requirements presents ongoing challenges," Dr Erastus explained.

Amid these challenges, Namibia has garnered invaluable lessons. Collaboration and engagement have proven essential, involving stakeholders and leveraging partnerships for the system's success and sustainability.

Quality and reputation

In the same webinar, Jane Rindfleish, manager of traceability and biosecurity programmes at the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries, highlighted the significance of the national livestock identification system (NLIS) in protecting and enhancing Australia's reputation as a producer of quality beef and sheep meat.

Rindfleish said the NLIS is a permanent lifetime traceability system that incorporates visual or electronic ear tags, a property

identification code (PIC) for physical location identification, and an online database to store and correlate data.

"The NLIS is a key partnership between the industry and the government across Australia. It underpins access to international markets for Australian livestock products and plays a crucial role in ensuring the quality and safety of our beef and sheep meat," stated Rindfleish.

The system allows for the traceability of livestock using permanent identifiers, movement documents, and database records. This comprehensive approach ensures that Australia's animal products are free from chemical residues and exotic diseases.

Detail

The NLIS database holds detailed information on livestock movements from birth to slaughter, providing valuable insights to protect and enhance Australia's reputation as a producer of high-quality animal products. In New South Wales, the NLIS is supported by the Biosecurity (National Livestock Identification System) Regulation 2017, further reinforcing its importance in the region.

Rindfleish also highlighted that the NLIS serves as a critical tool in responding swiftly to major food safety or disease incidents. By utilising the NLIS database, Australia can effectively trace and manage any potential risks, safeguarding both consumers and the livestock industry. The NLIS is a testament to the strong collaboration between industry stakeholders and government agencies across the country.

"The NLIS for cattle was introduced in New South Wales on 1 July 2004, with electronic identification and recording of all cattle



movements in the NLIS database. Cattle are identified using approved NLIS ear devices or rumen boluses, along with a matching ear tag. All cattle movements, whether for sale, slaughter, or relocation, are meticulously recorded in the NLIS database," she told the online seminar.

Sheep and goats

For sheep and goats, the NLIS was introduced on 1 January 2006, and currently operates as a mob-based system in New South Wales. It involves visually readable ear tags printed with a PIC, accompanied by an NLIS movement document for every mob of sheep or goats. All movements of these animals are recorded in the NLIS database, ensuring traceability.

"In February 2018, the NLIS for pigs was introduced, also utilising a mob-based tracing approach. Individual pigs are identified with a tattoo or tag and recorded as a group, ensuring efficient and effective traceability," Rindfleish added.

Looking ahead, she mentioned that individual electronic identification (eID) for sheep and managed goats will commence on 1 January 2025, as part of a national initiative. Farmers may be eligible for funding to support the implementation of the eID system.


The success of Australia's agricultural

industries and their communities heavily relies on the red meat integrity system, which encompasses biosecurity, food safety, product integrity, international market access, and other industry-related purposes. The comprehensive traceability measures in place ensure that Australia maintains its position as a trusted and reliable source of high-quality red meat products.

Review and auditing

Australia's NLIS plays a vital role in safeguarding the quality and reputation of the country's beef and sheep meat.

"Regular review and auditing of the system help identify gaps and areas for improvement, ensuring ongoing efficacy. Also investing in training programmes and raising awareness among stakeholders enhances system understanding and compliance. The embracing of technological advancements has widened the system's scope and improved functionality over time," said Rindfleish.

Dr Erastus emphasised the importance of continuous improvement and adaptation in overcoming implementation challenges. She underscored the pivotal role of collaboration, technology, and stakeholder engagement in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of livestock traceability systems. 



THE ROADMAP TO TRACEABILITY IN SOUTH AFRICA



Dr Kudakwashe Magwedere, national coordinator for livestock identification and traceability systems (LITS) at the Chief Directorate of Animal Production and Health in the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development (DALRRD), revealed during a recently held webinar that the complete implementation of the LITS South Africa (LITS-SA) programme for cattle is estimated to have cost government between R900 million and R1,3 billion over a period ranging between one and five years.

The LITS-SA committee organised the webinar, held on 28 February 2024, with financial support from the European Union–Southern African Development Community (SADC) Economic Partnership Agreement. Dr Magwedere highlighted key cost drivers, including resources, personnel expenses for recording sanitary events for traceability activities, and the procurement of identification technology such as tags. He underscored the importance of establishing a sustainable funding arrangement, distributed among farmers, value chain actors, and the government, aiming to alleviate the financial burden on the state while ensuring affordability and effectiveness.

Dr Magwedere emphasised, “Implementing a sustainable funding arrangement, one that does not strain the state and remains affordable for value chain actors, is of utmost

importance. The cost should be shared among farmers, value chain actors, as well as national and provincial governments.”

The importance of effective traceability cannot be overstated, especially in light of challenges related to market access and recurring disease outbreaks like as foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), brucella, and tuberculosis. Tackling these issues necessitates stringent animal movement controls, resilient identification technology, and thorough record-keeping practices.

Developed over six years

The LITS-SA, developed over the course of six years, aligns with the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH, founded as OIE) traceability guidelines and the standards of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures Agreement (SPS Agreement) of the World



Photo taken by Willie van Heerden

Farmers may be required to report certain information to government agencies or industry organisations as part of traceability efforts.

Trade Organization, making it a crucial step towards meeting the biosecurity task team's recommendations.

To ensure their products are traceable and meet the required animal health and trade standards, producers are strongly advised to utilise the South African government-developed livestock identification and traceability system instead of investing in systems that may not comply with necessary guidelines.

Effective animal identification and traceability are integral to the vision of Red Meat Strategy 2030, which aims to position South Africa's red meat industry as a leading player in local and international markets. By implementing a robust animal identification and traceability system, South Africa can demonstrate its commitment to meeting the necessary standards and guidelines for animal health and trade, ultimately contributing to the success of the long-term strategy document.

Map and action plan

Dr Magwedere, outlining the LITS-SA road map and action plan, highlighted the meticulous steps and stakeholder consultations necessary for the successful implementation of the systems. These include the signing of implementation protocols, WOAHA evaluations, gazetting for public consultations, and approval of policies and legal frameworks.

"Through the collaboration of government and industry stakeholders over the past six

years, components of LITS have successfully undergone testing in communal and freehold areas, including FMD-infected areas. These tests have demonstrated the system's potential to greatly enhance animal health, food safety, and trade through effective identification and traceability measures," he said.

The consultations on LITS started with the signing of the Implementation Protocol for Veterinary Services between DALRRD and all the provincial departments of agriculture in September 2008.

"Then WOAHA evaluated the performance of veterinary services in South Africa. In November 2015, it was then gazetted for public consultations, followed by an animal disease management plan, and the approval of the veterinary strategy. In February 2018, the draft LITS-SA policy was gazetted for public consultations, which was then followed by the socio-economic impact assessment and quality assurance certification on the LITS policy with the presidency," explained Dr Magwedere.

LITS Bill

Request for the introduction of the LITS Bill, which is an amendment/repeal of the Animal Identification Act (6 of 2002) by Cabinet for public consultation was withdrawn and expected to be tabled again in June 2022. It was then referred back to the LITS committee for reprogramming and the process is still underway.

"The next phase is the official launch of LITS-SA, which will include the official opening of the information system database for use by farmers. Registration of animals on the system and, as far as possible, information from other commercial management tools developed in the private industry will be linked to the same system," added Dr Magwedere.

He also stressed the importance of stakeholder consultations and the timeline for implementing LITS-SA for sanitary purposes and disease control, underscoring the need for clear roles and responsibilities among government agencies, private industry, and farmers.

Why the need for effective traceability?

Dr Magwedere said the importance of effective traceability in the livestock industry cannot be overstated. "It serves as a crucial tool for market access, disease control, and ensuring the integrity of the agricultural supply chain. South Africa faces various challenges, including periodic outbreaks of diseases such as FMD, transboundary animal diseases, and the undetermined bovine spongiform encephalopathy status. Furthermore, the use of growth stimulants, the sale of veterinary medicinal products, and the compounding of medicines all require stringent traceability measures to safeguard animal health and public safety," he added.

Chairperson of the SADC epidemiology and informatics subcommittee Dr Sihle Mdluli said farmers have several responsibilities when it comes to livestock identification and traceability.

According to law, farmers must properly identify each animal on their farm using approved methods such as ear tags, tattoos, or electronic identification devices. "They also need to maintain accurate records of all livestock movements, births, deaths, and any treatments or medications administered to the animals."

She said farmers may be required to report certain information to government agencies or industry organisations as part of traceability efforts. "This could include information on

livestock movements, disease outbreaks, or other relevant events. They must comply with local, national, and international regulations related to livestock identification and traceability. This may involve following specific protocols for tagging animals, reporting movements, or participating in disease surveillance programmes. Implementing biosecurity measures to prevent the spread of diseases among livestock is also a crucial responsibility, including controlling access to the farm, practising proper sanitation, and minimising contact with other farms or wild animals.

"Overall, farmers play a critical role in ensuring the effectiveness of livestock identification and traceability systems, which are essential for safeguarding animal health, food safety, and the integrity of the agricultural supply chain," Dr Mdluli added.

Identification technology

Dr Magwedere said the official primary LITS-SA cattle tag, recommended by the LITS-SA committee, is a two-piece, low-frequency, single-use ear tag. "This tag, in conjunction with a secondary high-frequency radio tag, provides a robust identification system for cattle. However, future advancements may see the utilisation of innovative technologies such as cattle identification through muzzle images and deep-learning techniques. These technologies have the potential to enhance traceability and improve efficiency in the system."

Looking ahead, the next phases of the LITS-SA implementation will involve official launches, database openings, and the integration of commercial management tools with the LITS system, ultimately culminating in enhanced animal health, food safety, and trade opportunities for South Africa. 🗣️

DISCOVER A NEW WAY OF SLEEPING WITH WOOL

Wool is an incredibly versatile and multifunctional natural fibre, as evidenced by the latest trend of using it in mattresses. One example is Black Sheep Mattress Company, owned by Christian Schmidt, who is a bit of a maverick in the mattress industry.

■ BY NICHELLE STEYN



It is a premium mattress brand based in Calgary that recently opened its second location in Toronto and aims to expand to four or more stores in Canada within the next five years.

Christian wanted to make a statement with his business, demonstrating to the mattress sector that it is possible to make affordable, high-quality mattresses from sustainable and recyclable material, thereby supporting the concept of sustainable sleep. Naturally wool is a great fibre choice for achieving his goals.

“We are passionate about natural materials and prioritise them for use. Our mattresses feature wool springs and natural latex from the rubber tree.

They are non-toxic and handcrafted. Operating for twelve years solely in Calgary, expanding to Toronto was the logical next step for us, as it is our second largest market,” he explains.

As an environmental consultant for many years, Christian views mattresses through a different lens. When he sought to purchase a new mattress, he found none on the market that met his personal standards of quality, sustainability, and recyclability.

“The mattresses available were all made from substances that were neither recyclable nor sustainable. This inspired me to seek alternatives, and out of this need, my business was born,” he said in a podcast interview





Christian Schmidt



with Ed Paget. According to him, a mattress should be comfortable and it customisable.

Embracing sustainability

According to Schmidt, the word ‘sustainability’ is not often associated with the mattress industry, but their commitment to sustainability runs deep. “Here at Black Sheep Mattress, we invest in non-toxic, natural, and organic materials, sourced responsibly and locally whenever possible. Our products are built for longevity, for health, for all of us. We believe that investing in eco-friendly, non-toxic mattresses and accessories doesn’t just contribute to our individual health, but also to the wellness of the entire planet.”

Schmidt explains that they strive to prioritise wool as the primary natural fibre source for their products, although it is not always

achievable. “Customers sometimes prefer an all-natural option, in which case we use 100% wool. However, in most cases, we utilise a mixture containing about 10% polyester to enhance the mattress’s durability.”

In mattresses, wool not only provides comfort but also regulates a sleeper’s temperature more effectively than synthetic, manufactured fibres. Wool can be utilised as a top comfort layer or further down the mattress layers to create a softer support layer. This versatility is one of the reasons why Schmidt predominantly uses wool in the production of his custom-made, handcrafted mattresses and bedding.

Good qualities

Wool is also known for its anti-allergenic properties. It absorbs moisture from its

surroundings and disperses it through the wool fibres until it evaporates quickly. Some fabric experts argue that this moisture-wicking ability reduces fungal growth, as fungi typically thrive in stagnant moisture.


The removal of moisture by wool disrupts the food chain, as fungus forms a significant part of the dust mites upon which house mites rely. In contrast, synthetic fibres such as polyester struggle to wick away moisture.

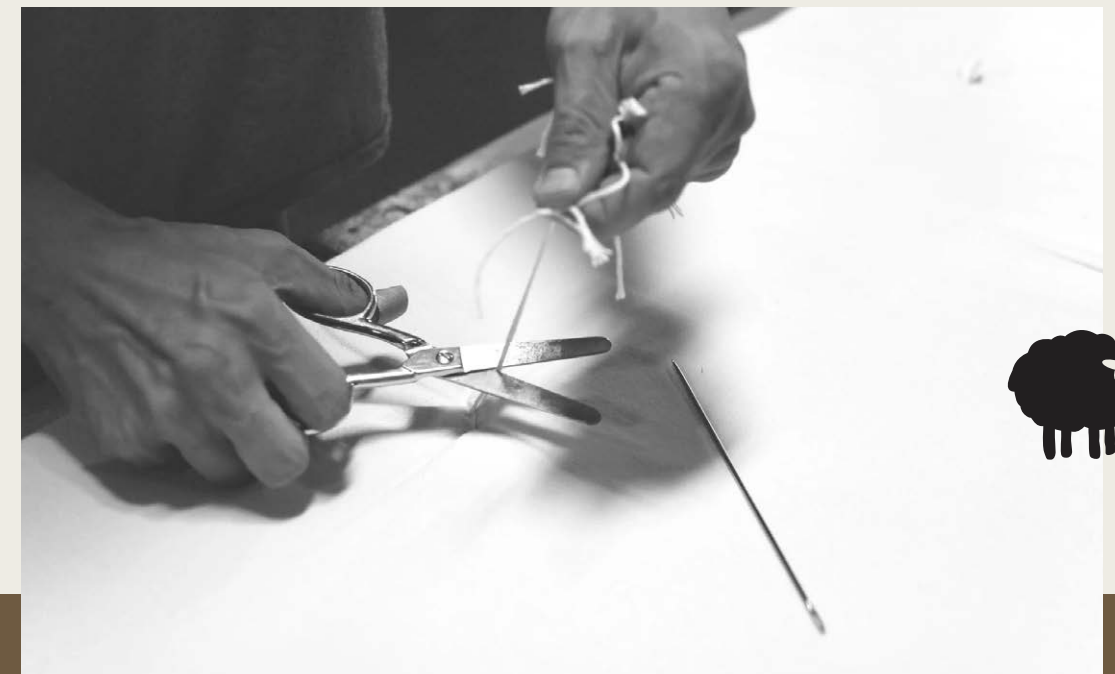
Wool is naturally fire retardant, eliminating the need for chemical treatments in mattress production. Upon contact with fire, wool simply singes and does not propagate naked flames. It can act as a barrier, preventing flames from reaching layers beneath it. For years, wool has been used to wrap non-fire-retardant materials like coir or synthetic latex.

Wool is also hydrophilic, meaning it readily absorbs water. This property makes it easy to dye, resulting in the vibrant colours seen in knitting shops. Additionally, wool’s main benefit lies in its breathability. When placed

against a warmer sleeper, it wicks away moisture and excessive heat, keeping them comfortable. Conversely, in colder conditions, wool traps warm air and release heat against a colder body, providing insulation.

Given its ability to absorb and disperse moisture, wool stands out from synthetic fibres, which tend to trap moisture and heat. This makes wool an excellent mattress component, regulating temperature by keeping the mattress cool in the summer and warmer in the winter.

With its excellent heat-regulating properties and loft, wool is often used in the top comfort layers of a mattress. It provides a softer top feel, allowing for a slight sink into the mattress. Furthermore, wool’s durability ensures that it lasts for years compared to synthetic fibres, which can break down relatively quickly and flatten over time. Unlike memory foam, wool does not trap heat, enabling sleepers to regulate their body temperature more easily. For warm sleepers, this is a godsend! 



Lamb pastitsio

A flavourful Greek inspired lamb and pasta dish made with a rich flavourful lamb Bolognese infused with cinnamon, organum, thyme and mint covered with a bechamel and baked in the oven.



YIELDS: 4-6 servings
COOKING TIME: 15 minutes



PREP TIME: 60 minutes
TOTAL TIME: 75 minutes

- LAMB -

- ▶ 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ▶ 2 medium onions, finely chopped
- ▶ 3 cloves garlic, finely minced
- ▶ 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- ▶ 1 kg lamb mince
- ▶ ½ teaspoon salt
- ▶ ¾ cup dry red wine
- ▶ 2 tins (400g) tomatoes, crushed
- ▶ 2 lamb/chicken stock cubes
- ▶ 1 teaspoon sugar
- ▶ 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ▶ ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ▶ 3 sprigs fresh organum (1 teaspoon dried)
- ▶ ½ teaspoon black pepper, freshly ground

- BECHAMEL -

- ▶ 7 tablespoons butter
- ▶ ¾ cup flour
- ▶ ½ teaspoon salt
- ▶ salt 4 cups
- ▶ milk ½ teaspoon
- ▶ nutmeg ½ cup
- ▶ Pecorino cheese, finely grated
- ▶ 2 egg yolks

- PASTA -

- ▶ 400 g Bucatini (short macaroni)
- ▶ 2 teaspoons salt
- ▶ 100 g feta, crumbled
- ▶ 2 egg whites
- ▶ ½ cup Pecorino cheese grated (for the topping)

- PREPARE THE LAMB -

1. Set the Instant pot on the sauté function. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 2-3 minutes until onion is softened.
2. Add the tomato paste, stir until the paste sticks to the base of the pot (1-2 minutes).
3. Add the mince, breaking it up into smaller bits and cook until it changes from pink to brown. Season the meat with the salt and let it brown in the pot on the highest setting.
4. Add the wine and deglaze the pot, loosening all the bits that have stuck to the base of the pot. Cook for 2-3 minutes. Add the tomatoes, stock cubes sugar, cinnamon, cloves, organum and pepper. Bring the sauce to the boil. Secure the lid and move vent up to sealing position. Select meat/stew function set timer to 30 minutes. Allow manual release for 20 minutes, then carefully turn the sealing vent down to release any remaining steam. The meat sauce should be thick but juicy with a little liquid. Transfer the meat from the Instapot to another bowl. Leave the meat to cool to room temperature.

- PREPARE THE BECHAMEL -

5. Set the Instant Pot on the Sauté function. Add the butter to the Instapot and melt. Add the flour and stir for 1 minute until blended and starts to bubble. Add the salt and blend with the roux. Cook for 2-3 minutes.
6. Add half the milk and mix until it forms a wet paste. Add the remaining milk and using a whisk blend the paste and milk. Cook, stirring continuously until the sauce has thickened. Cook for a further 5 minutes.
7. Stir in the nutmeg and cheese. Leave the sauce to cool for 5 minutes then stir in the egg yolks and blend well.

- PREPARE THE PASTA -

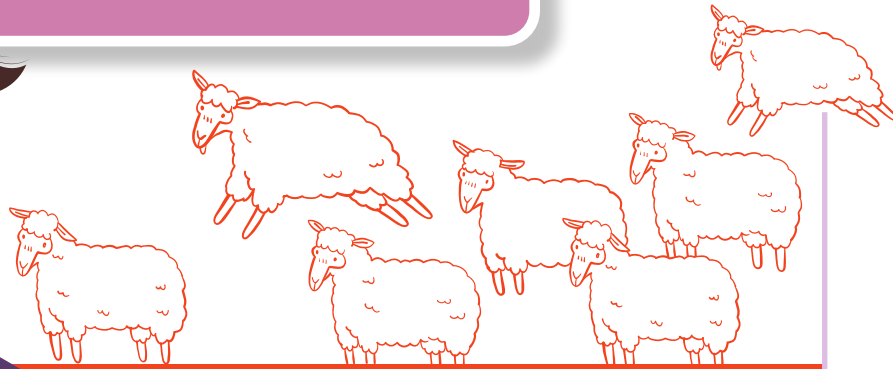
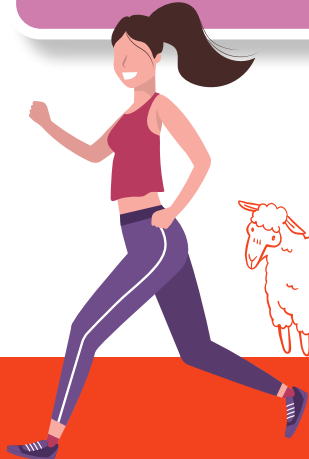
8. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil, add salt. Cook the pasta according to the packet instructions minus 1 minute.
9. Drain the pasta and return to the saucepan in which it was cooked. Leave to cool for 3 minutes, then stir through the lightly beaten egg whites. Add the crumbled feta and stir through.

- ASSEMBLE AND BAKE -

10. Preheat the Instant Vortex Plus VersaZone air fryer. Select the bake program and adjust the time setting to 15 minutes.
14. Use a rectangular baking dish that will fit into the air fryer when using the large single zone (20 cm by 30 cm). Spray the dish with a cooking spray or olive oil.
15. Place pasta in the baking dish arranging the pasta all in the same direction to create a wow visual effect when serving the dish. Level the layer of pasta.
16. Top with the meat sauce and smooth the surface. Pour over the bechamel sauce and sprinkle over the cheese.
17. Bake for 15 minutes in the preheated air fryer, until the crust is crispy and golden brown.
18. Remove the dish from the air fryer and cool for at least 10 minutes so that you can cut neat slices and see each of the layers. Serve with a fresh Greek salad.

Watch the clip here:

About 100 sheep follow a runner closely behind them on the trails in Central France. #runner #sheep - YouTube



Lead the way

Runners often encounter animals while out on the trails, and occasionally, these animals even make their way into races, which can pose potential dangers. However, during one runner's encounter with a flock of sheep, nothing baaa-d happened, fortunately.

Runner's World, a South African magazine, recently shared a video on their YouTube page showcasing artist Eleanor Scholz's encounter with a flock of sheep during her trail run. She stumbled upon a fellow runner and approximately 100 new woolly companions while hiking in central France, near Puy de Dôme. Eleanor, from California, was exploring France with her boyfriend when she captured the chance meeting on camera.

Encountering a flock of sheep while out on a run is a rare occurrence, so Eleanor seized the opportunity to document this unique experience. With her camera in hand, she perfectly captured the moment when the unsuspecting runner unintentionally assumed the role of shepherd, and the flock of sheep obediently trailed behind. Even when the runner paused to chat with Eleanor, the

patient sheep waited, eager for their new leader to resume running.

Eleanor paused her run to offer assistance to the runner she encountered. The anonymous runner explained that the sheep likely strayed from their flock, having spotted her running in vibrant, reflective clothing and decided to follow.

As the two women conversed, some of the curious sheep approached Eleanor. Reflecting on the moment, Eleanor shared, "Some of them immediately walked over to me, and I was worried they'd start following me instead. But they stood there patiently while she and I talked. They didn't seem particularly stressed, it was the funniest thing."

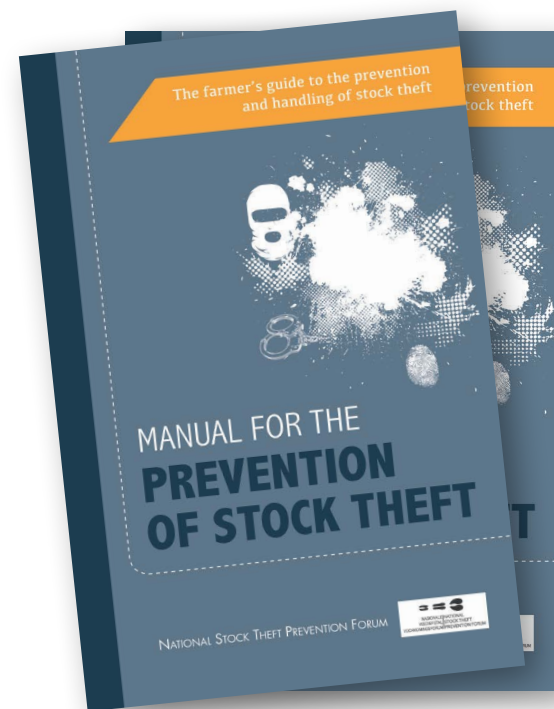
According to Sheep 101, sheep instinctually exhibit flocking behaviour, seeking safety in numbers when confronted with potential threats. As stated by the source, "They will run from what frightens them and band together in large groups for protection. This is the only protection they have from predators."

– Source: *Runner's World* 🐏

The farmer's one-stop guide to the prevention and handling of stock theft.

A comprehensive publication, *Manual for the prevention of stock theft*, was released by the National Stock Theft Prevention Forum. The manual is endorsed and sponsored by the RPO and the Directorate: Animal Production of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

The manual covers all aspects of stock theft and its prevention.



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The electronic format of the manual is available on the website of the National Stock Theft Prevention Forum –
www.stocktheftprevent.co.za

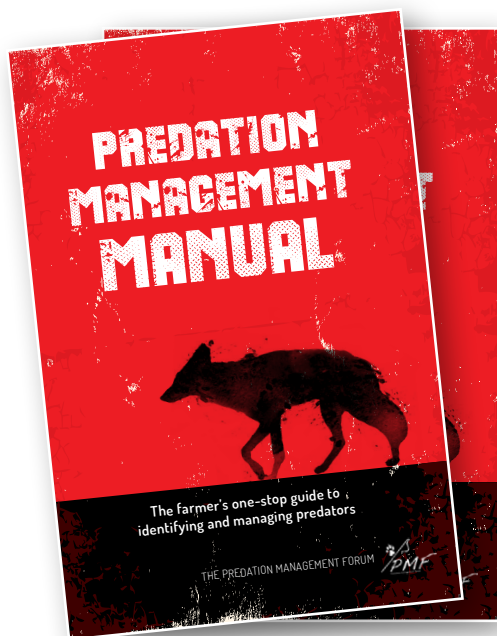


USEFUL MANUAL ON PREDATION MANAGEMENT

The Predation Management Forum (PMF) has released a comprehensive manual on integrated predation management.

This manual is a one-stop guide that will help producers to identify the predator problem on their farms, and find the best method of managing it, within the framework of provincial and national legislation.

Integrated predation management – a comprehensive toolbox consisting of preventive and remedial control measures – is essential. Farmers should take note of all the legal methods of controlling predation. There is no single technique that will solve the whole predation problem, but by combining all the possible methods the farmer can achieve success.



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The manual is available in electronic format at http://www.pmf.co.za/images/news/Manual_Engels.pdf. For more information on the manual, contact Bonita Francis at the NWGA Head Office in Port Elizabeth: 041 365 5030.

