



# DAFFnews

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Official newsletter of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

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Editor-in-Chief: Reggie Ngcobo, Email: [MLO.Minister@dalrrd.gov.za](mailto:MLO.Minister@dalrrd.gov.za),  
Cell number: 082 883 2458

Editor: Piwe Mbiko, Email: [PiweM@daff.gov.za](mailto:PiweM@daff.gov.za), Celnr: 072 937 2337



Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries



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# Agriculture Development Agency will help drive land reform

The Agriculture Development Agency (AGDA) was launched on 18 February in Pretoria. AGDA is part of the Public Private Growth Initiative (PPGI).

The specific aims of AGDA are intended to promote greater social justice by creating enablers that will help drive sustainable land reform programmes. Only a limited number of black farmers have made meaningful progress towards commercialisation. The biggest barriers towards commercialisation for these farmers are the lack of capacity and the inability to access affordable capital.

In a recorded message played at the event, Ms Thoko Didiza, Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural

Development, expressed her and government's support for AGDA. She said lack of support to assist those who receive land in farming hampered further growth in the sector.

AGDA, which is an entirely private sector initiative falling under the PPGI framework, will work together on an agreed project basis with government to achieve the common national goal of sustainable and accelerated land reform.

Mr Roelf Meyer of In Transformation Initiative is one of the main drivers of this project. Ms Leona Archary is the acting CEO of AGDA. Core concepts

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**Mr Chris Burgess, Editor of Landbouweekblad speaking at the Africa Agri Tech Conference where the Agriculture Development Agency was launched.**



# Agriculture Development Agency will help drive land reform

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of the agency have been developed in the past two years through engagement with agricultural commodity sectors and stakeholders throughout the value chains. This includes the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, the Department of Trade and Industry, emerging and small-scale farmers, commercial farmers and government agencies.

AGDA has the specific purpose to also ensure the provision of appropriate training, as well as support and assistance to emerging farmers to improve capacity and access to agricultural markets in particular.

AGDA IFDP

The AGDA Integrated Farmer Development Programme will provide participating emerging smallholder farmers with development services such as whole farm assessments, development plans, skill transfer, partnership, accounting services, orthomapping and project management services.

AGDA RLF

The Revolving Loan Fund will raise capital from various sources and on-lend it to commercialising farmers in a defined value chain. Capital will be recycled to enhance the reach of the fund. The three sources of funding will be private equity, impact capital and commercial debt.



*Part of the Expo of Africa Agri Tech Conference held in Pretoria at Sun Arena, Time Square.*

# DAFF enlightens EC farmers with Producer Farmer Register

*By Samuel Kgatla*

The Eastern Cape farmers around the Queenstown and OR Tambo district areas were given enough information about the Producer/Farmer Register campaign. This happened during the PFR stakeholders' engagement workshops held in Queenstown on 17 January and Mthatha on 28 January. Furthermore, the team also hosted another fruitful workshop at Rocky Ridge Conference in Kokstad in the Harry Gwala District Municipality on 7 February 2020. Farmers were informed about the informative presentation on the PFR and how to fill in the campaign's questionnaire.

The DAFF team working on the PFR has been working hard in the past few months to make sure that all the stakeholders are well informed about the campaign. The PFR working team comprises of officials from different directorates of the department such as Communication Services, Intergovernmental Relations and Stakeholders Relations.

One of the farmers who attended the workshop in Kokstad, Ms Nonzwakazi Mayapi of Mcepheni Woolgrowers in

the Ntabankulu Municipality, saluted DAFF for thinking about them with the PFR campaign. She continued that the department was taking farmers and other stakeholders seriously. "We thank the department for coming up with the PFR because the information about it is very useful. From 1994, government has been spending money on farmers without much information about them. I hope that with the registering of farmers, we will get the necessary assistance. I deal with livestock (sheep) and we really need assistance. We want to grow as farmers and government must assist us," she concluded.

Timothy Mathibela from the Directorate: Stakeholder Relations at DAFF said that he was very impressed with the attendance and engagement with the farmers on the PFR. He mentioned this in one of the three workshops held in two provinces. "We are excited about the level of participation from the farmers and this shows that they are on board and want to hear about the PFR. Without your say, there will not be a PFR and that is why we appreciate your presence," he said.

# Alert: Brown locust (*Locustana pardalina*) outbreak in South Africa

Following interaction with the South African Resource Conservation Directorate of the Department of Agriculture, South African farmers, authorities in Namibia and other resources, CropLife SA can confirm that there is an outbreak of brown locusts (*Locustana pardalina*) in Namibia and the Karoo region of South Africa, specifically in the De Aar area.

This outbreak is not in any way linked to the massive outbreak of desert locust (*Schistocerca gregaria*) in East Africa the brown locust in South Africa is a locust that becomes a major pest when there are sporadic outbreaks, as a result of conducive climatic conditions, with outbreaks often originating in areas such as southern Namibia, middle Botswana and the Karoo itself.

There are currently at least six pesticides registered for locust control in South Africa. The currently registered pesticides are already available in emergency volumes with the main locust depot in DeAar having ample supply of approved pesticides on hand.

The aim is to control the locust outbreak soon after hatching of individuals or when the locusts are still in the so-called hopper stage and to prevent the development of flying swarms.

Many Karoo farmers are already primed to provide information on the status of the outbreak. Any person who notices locust outbreaks on their farms or in their area are encouraged to supply location information and photos of the outbreak to the CropLife SA emergency number via WhatsApp 082 446 8946.

Local agricultural departments and resource conservation centres in De Aar and Upington should also be informed CropLife SA is confident that the Resource Conservation Directorate of the Department of Agriculture is capable of effectively managing the locust situation in South Africa in an ecologically sensible manner.

Based on the above, CropLife SA encourages all parties to remain vigilant, but also to remain calm as we believe the locust control teams of the Resource Conservation Department have the necessary tools at hand to respond to

# Coronavirus epidemic have slowed down transport of pigs in China

Despite current challenges in China, demand for pork is not suffering. China's pork prices are staying close to 2019's record after efforts to halt the coronavirus epidemic have slowed down transport of pigs and delayed the restart of slaughtering plants, crimping the already tight supplies of the popular meat, Reuters reports.

Coronavirus, which has killed more than 1 000 people and infected more than 40 000, has caused many provinces to extend the Lunar New Year holiday by at least a week and clamp down on the movement of people in many regions.

The road transport restrictions make

purchasing hogs quite difficult, an analyst told Reuters. Because live hog stocks are low, hog prices are being pushed up. The lockdown on many cities and counties has left too few staff to operate the slaughterhouses, too.

Workers returning from areas struck by coronavirus must be in quarantine two weeks before they can resume work. These challenges come on top of a shortage of pork caused by African swine fever, a deadly disease of pigs only. Although this disease poses no risk to human health or food safety, it has significantly curbed the pork supply in the largest pork consuming country.

## *Traceability for pigs in the spotlight*

SAPO wants the pork industry to become a more prominent player in the value chain. To this end, the organisation is investigating the possibility of registering geographical location load\* for all pig farms. This will make the traceability of all pork possible by means of for instance a QR code on all packaged pork. It will also limit possible fraud.

\*Geographic load balancing redistributes application traffic across data centres in different locations for maximum efficiency and security. While local load balancing happens within a single data centre, geographic load balancing uses multiple data centres in many locations.

# Nobody here is hungry

**N**o one in this community goes to bed hungry”. So said Mavis Hlatshwayo, talking about the success of a programme to empower smallscale farmers to yield a better harvest – and thus escape poverty.

Mavis is one of the beneficiaries of the Farmer Development Programme (FDP), initiated by Grain SA in partnership with private companies and several other sponsors, which is aimed at developing sustainable black farmers, including black commercial farmers, so that they can contribute to food security.

“I am so grateful for the programme because in a country where millions of people go to bed hungry, I’m able to produce enough maize to feed my family. I can then sell the surplus to make some money for myself,” she said.

The programme aims to provide all farmers in rural South Africa with agricultural knowledge regarding good planting practices, sustainable farming, business plans, planting techniques and the use biotechnology to achieve top yield.

The Agricultural Research Council (ARC), and helped farmers with the

latest technology in high quality seed and chemical input.

Much of the success of the programme is due to demonstration trials which provide farmers with practical training and a step-by-step approach to crop production.

This includes how to select the correct seed to plant and advice on the right time to plant, how to take soil samples to determine which fertilisers to use for the type of soil, how to plant the correct plant population and to spray the correct amount of water and chemicals to control worms from damaging the crop.



***Mavis Hlatshwayo is a beneficiary of the Grain SA Farmer Development Programme.***

# Agricultural sector's answer to power supply

Agri SA welcomes the attention President Cyril Ramaphosa gave to the Eskom crisis in his State of the Nation Address. It was heartening to see that Agri SA's prior discussions with Minister Pravin Gordhan concerning the energy crisis and agriculture's role in addressing power shortages had been incorporated into the president's address.

Agriculture can provide the network with energy within 12 months after approval of project registrations to help alleviate the pressure off Eskom, which the president referred to as a priority. Agri SA has already developed a product in collaboration with top financial institutions that offer off-balance sheet finance for installing solar systems. Agri SA believes it is important that the agricultural industry forms part of the solution to sustainable energy supply within the renewable energy framework, without forfeiting the security needed for agricultural development for energy generation purposes. In this way, both types of development can take place while available capital is used optimally.

Agri SA will study the president's announcements closely and exert pressure on the Department of Energy

(DoE), Eskom and NERSA to develop the policy and products as soon as possible to give effect to the president's objectives. It is also important to expedite the process from application to NERSA registration for units under 1 MW, and not only for those above 1 MW as referred to in the state of the nation address. It is in fact in this respect that Agri SA acknowledges the agricultural industry's role in energy generation and intends to negotiate acceptable time frames for the sector.

Agri SA's Centre of Excellence: Economics & Trade will serve as the engine room to give effect to these objectives, which will include inclusive participation by commodity as well as corporate members. Agri SA and its affiliates are currently actively involved in NERSA's public hearings regarding Eskom's RCA application to recover R27,323 billion of the 2018/19 financial year income deficit. Tariff increases alone are not the answer to Eskom's problems.

For further information contact Nicol Jansen, Chair: Agri SA's Centre of Excellence – Economics & Trade on Cellphone 082 948 2629.

# School Cook competition winners

The first local television cooking programme to focus on Grade 11 school learners with the opportunity to win professional culinary tuition after school has finished.

Skole Kook, (Schools Cook in Afrikaans) broadcast on VIA Channel 147 on DSTV, South Africa's satellite TV provider, saw 22 schools take part: six from the Western Cape, six from Gauteng, six from the Free State and four from the Northern Cape. The winners, an enthusiastic duo from CBC Mount Edmund in Pretoria, are Solly

Bergman and Lusani Nevhutalu. The main prize is a bursary to the Institute of Culinary Arts in Stellenbosch.



*The winners. Solly Bergman and Lusani Nevhutalu.*

## 2020 Feedlot Challenge at Onderstepoort

The 2020 Onderstepoort Feedlot Challenge at the Onderstepoort veterinary campus of the University of Pretoria offers fifth-year veterinary students a chance to manage and care for their own cattle in a simulated feedlot environment, thereby giving them the chance to gain invaluable experience when it comes to bunk management, production monitoring and biosecurity. Through hands-on learning and collaborating with experienced veterinarians and experts in the feedlot industry, all 180 veterinary students participating in the challenge

will get the chance to design feed formulations, determine their production budget and decide on a marketing and processing strategy. As part of the challenge, the students divide into groups and all the different feedlot tasks are equally distributed. Important dates on the Feedlot Challenge calendar are:

14 May: On the hoof evaluation.

15 May: Slaughter at Chamdor Meat Market abattoir.

22 May: Prize-giving.



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Editor-in-Chief	Reggie Ngcobo	082 883 2458	MLO.Minister@dalrrd.gov.za
Editor	Piwe Mbiko	072 937 2337	piwem@daff.gov.za
Subeditor	Lerato Mofokeng	012 319 7927	leratomof@daff.gov.za
Reporters	Samuel Kgatla	066 084 6653	samuelt@daff.gov.za
	Innocent Mhlanga	063 693 0353	innocentm@daff.gov.za
	Rony Moremi	066 084 6192	rincertm@daff.gov.za
	Jamela Nkanyane	066 084 6355	jamelan@daff.gov.za
	Mercia Smith	060 973 3816	mercias@daff.gov.za
Intern	Khauhelo Lerata	012 319 7819	khauhelol@daff.gov.za