

## NEWS RELEASE

### NATIONAL FARMER OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCED

Agriucultural Writers SA's national Farmer, Agriculturalist and Emerging Farmer of the Year for 2009 have been announced.

Bernhardt du Toit of the Langrivier Farm in the Western Cape is the national Farmer of the Year. He boasts the largest agricultural Black Economic Empowerment transaction in the Western Cape to date, where 242 farm workers were made co-owners of the company. In the R50 million transaction a third of this business now belongs to full-time and seasonal workers.

Prof Hennie Snyman, head of Pasture Science at the University of the Free State is the national Agriculturalist of the Year. He enjoys international recognition for his encompassing contribution to pasture and agricultural science. His broad research theme is the sustainable use of the pasture eco system, in particular more arid areas.

The Luthando Farmers Trust in the Sondags River Valley in the Eastern Cape is the national Emerging Farmer of the Year. The trust is one of the most successful Black Economic Empowerment projects in agriculture. Altogether 59 citrus farmers paid off a 25-year loan of R2,8 million from the Land Bank in five years.

The annual awards were made in Gauteng this evening and the sponsors are Mutual & Federal Agri, Nedbank and Old Mutual.

Nine versatile farmers with vast farming enterprises - regional winners in the nine provinces - completed. They are Ludwig Taschner of Gauteng, John Jackson of KwaZulu-Natal, André Tonkin of Mpumalanga, Josua van der Walt of North-West, Tian Kruger of Limpopo, Clan Leslie Estates of the Free State, Frank Lawrence of the Northern Cape, Hannes Joubert of the Eastern Cape and Bernhardt du Toit of the Western Cape.

Nine agriculturalists who made considerable contributions to agriculture in South Africa competed. They are Hans van der Merwe of Gauteng, Prof Albert Modi of KwaZulu-Natal, Johan Roos of Mpumalanga, Prof Alex McDonald of North-West, Nico le Roux of Limpopo, Prof Hennie Snyman of the Free State, Phil van der Merwe of the Northern Cape, Prof Lawrence Hunter of the Eastern Cape and Prof Chrisjan Cruywagen of the Western Cape.

The competing emerging farmers were Peter Nyathi of North-West, the Kobo family of the Free State, the Luthando Farm Workers Trust of the Eastern Cape and Wadea Jappie of the Western Cape.

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