The annual International Federation of Agricultural Journalists conference took place in the Netherlands this year. Our guild was well represented and the fact that more than half of the South Africans were from the “younger generation”, says quite a lot about the future of Agricultural Writers SA!

The conference programme kicked off with the delegate assembly on the 11th of July at the Wageningen University & Research. Eight new countries were formally accepted as IFAJ members during the meeting - namely: Togo, Zanzibar, The Gambia, Cameroon, Liberia, Georgia, Senegal and United Republic of Tanzania. The IFAJ now boasts with 50 member countries from all over the world!

Applications have been received for nearly a dozen more countries, and the organisation aims to actively pursue membership growth in South America and Asia.

The Delegate Assembly voted unanimously to draft bylaws allowing the IFAJ Presidium to start the process of registering a foundation (non-profit organisation with charitable status) in the UK. The UK was chosen for a variety of reasons including a robust regulatory system for charities. The approval of the foundation bylaws, as well as to register IFAJ as a (non-profit) company limited by guarantee, were historic decisions that got the event off to a great start.

The foundation’s main goal will be to advance the practice of good agricultural journalism and communication worldwide in order to improve the flow and quality of information required by the world’s farmers. The main activities of the foundation will be:

- to provide financial assistance, training, support and practical advice relating to agricultural journalism and communication,
- stimulate and support new agricultural information networks,
- provide organisational and financial support for worldwide activities such as conferences, workshops and seminars on agricultural topics for journalists and media workers.

Since the 2015 Congress in New Zealand, where the constitution was amended to accept guilds from countries supporting freedom of the press, rather than having freedom of the press, the IFAJ has accepted 17 new members.
The IFAJ Executive Committee will meet in Ireland in November 2018 where the final procedures for establishing the foundation will be completed.

This was also an election-year for the IFAJ. The presidium was re-elected unopposed for another two years. Adrian Bell from England is once again the treasurer, Steve Werblow from the United States the secretary-general, Lena Johansson from Sweden the vice president and Owen Roberts, our Canadian president.

The plenary programme on the following day focused on various solutions offered by The Netherlands to address global food chain challenges.

One of the solutions suggested by Meiny Prins, of the horticulture and climate technology company Priva, was for the people of the world to stop eating meat. She's convinced that our food problems mainly arise from the choices that are made. “If we only eat vegetable food, we can feed 40 billion people. So, there is no problem,” according to Prins. A totally unacceptable solution in a meat-loving country like South Africa!

Louise Fresco, chairman of the board of Wageningen University suggested that food wastage was the main culprit. Her reasoning was that by preventing food waste, the burden on agriculture and on the climate, would be significantly reduced. The chairman of Rabobank, Wiebe Draijer, sighted the social pressure on agriculture and the worrisome income position of many farmers as huge challenges.

Then there was Martijn Boelens of Lely, who saw robotisation as the solution for labour problems in livestock farming. Not really a fitting solution in a country where
unemployment is of the highest in the world and agriculture is seen to be a major job-creator for the future. Pieter van Geel, chairman of the Climate Table for Agriculture, suggested that farmers should view climate measures in a different light. According to him, climate measures need to act as catalysts for innovations in agriculture.

These solutions and suggestions made me realise once again that there was more to feeding the world than providing the necessary nutrients. Eating is more than just feeding. It is a social and cultural thing. However advanced agriculture in the Netherlands and elsewhere in the world might be, there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ solution for this global problem.

Remembering a former chairman

Ons onthou vir Joël

Joël Kotzé, vir lank nasionale voorsitter van Landbouskrywers SA, is vanjaar reeds tien jaar nie meer met ons nie. Om die geleentheid te gedenk, het Charl van Rooyen Joël se twee seuns, Schalk en Rean, na die plaas De Bad naby Burgersfort geneem waar Joël, die seuns en etlike landbouskrywers jaarliks by die eienaar, Martin Mulder, gaan kuier het. Daar het hulle die hele naweek oor hierdie legende in landboujoernalistiek gesels. Die jaarlikse kuiertjie op De Bad is ná Joël se dood in 2008 voortgesit; soms sommer twee keer per jaar. Die volgende kuier in net na Nuwejaar. Ou vriende van Joël wat wil saamgaan, kan vir Charl kontak by sel 072 874 3222. Hier is van links Rean, Schalk, Martin en Charl.
Landboujoernaliste reis na Nederland

In 28 Augustus 2018 se aflewering van Grootplaas kuier Magda du Toit en Frans van Eden in die ateljee.

'n Bekende gesig in landboukringe en die voorsitter van Landbouskrywers Suid-Afrika, Magda du Toit, was onlangs by die Internasionale Federasie vir Landboujoernaliste se jaarkongres in Nederland. Sy gee terugvoer daaroor en 'n blik op landbou in dié land. Daarna kuier ons gereelde gas, Frans van Eden, by ons in die ateljee. Hy gesels met Elsa Esterhuizen oor opvolgbeplanning in 'n boerdery.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>10 – 15 Sept</td>
<td>FW and Egypt Western Cape Tour from 10 – 15 September 2018</td>
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<td>1 – 5 Oct</td>
<td>FW Livestock Tour to SOMMET DE L’ELEVAGE show 1 – 5 October 2018  Clermont Ferrand, South of France (Deadline 4 September)</td>
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<td>19 Oct</td>
<td>Agricultural Writers SA North – Farmer of the Year awards event 19 October</td>
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<td>16 Nov</td>
<td>2018 Agricultural Writers SA Farmer, Agriculturist and New Entrant into Commercial Agriculture Gala event 16 November at Anura Vineyards, Simondium Road, Klapmuts at 18:30</td>
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<td>17 Nov</td>
<td>The annual meeting for members of the Agricultural Writers SA at Anura in the Western Cape. 17 November 2018</td>
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<td>19 Nov</td>
<td>2018 Landbouskrywers SA se Boer, Landboukundige en Nuwe Toetreder tot Kommersiële Landbou Gala geleentheid 16 November by Anura Vineyards, Simondiumweg, Klapmuts om 18:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 Nov</td>
<td>Die jaarvergadering vir lede van Landbouskrywers SA by Anura in die Wes-Kaap. 17 November 2018</td>
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In remembrance: Henk van Wyk

It is with great sadness that Agri SA takes note of the death of Henk van Wyk.

Henk was a great/big man – in the agricultural sector and in the hearts of those who knew him. He was the president of Agri Northern Cape for the past seven years and was also closely involved with Agri SA.

Henk represented farmers from the Northern Cape at Agri SA’s general council and later members of the general business council at Agri SA’s board. He was also the chairman of Agri SA’s general business chamber and until his death the chairman of the Agri SA Centre of Excellence: Economics and Trade.

Henk farmed with sheep on his farm Vondelingsfontein in the Calvinia-district. He was also a breeder of Dorper sheep.

"Henk left his mark and contagious optimism at every meeting and every event," said Omri van Zyl, Agri SA Executive Director.

Henk unwaveringly believed in the future of agriculture in South Africa.

"His pragmatic approach to the agricultural sector, the person that he is, his jokes and his stories will be sorely missed,” said Dan Kriek, Agri SA President.

The Agri SA management and personnel extends their best wishes to Henk’s family in these difficult times.

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Media Skakelbeampte/ Media Liaison Officer
082 388 0008
The Produce Marketing Association (PMA) hosted its 8th annual Fresh Connections: Southern Africa conference and tradeshow at the CSIR Convention Centre in Pretoria, South Africa on 15-16 August 2018.

Themed “Connect Local, Grow Global” the conference and trade show attracted close to 500 supply chain participants from 16 countries. The event featured 26 speakers, of which 12 were international speakers; and 32 exhibitors showcased their brands, new technology, products and services.

Brian Coppin, Chair of the PMA Southern Africa Country Council, co-founder and CEO of Food Lover’s Market, PMA Board Chair Jin Ju Wilder, director of marketing, LA&SF Specialty, and Lauren Scott, PMA chief marketing officer. Avocados, in her opinion, broke out of the health space to become part of popular culture.

Brian Coppin, Chair of the PMA Southern Africa Country Council, co-founder and CEO of Food Lover’s Market, PMA Board Chair Jin Ju Wilder, director of marketing, LA&SF Specialty, and Lauren Scott, PMA chief marketing officer.

The PMA team from left to right Lindie Stroebel, Lauren M Scott, Margi Prueitt, Anouk Sijmonisma, Sarahi Dominguez, Richard Owen and Alicia Calhoun.
Industry insights
Wilder captivated delegates with her focus on trends in agriculture, such as social media interactions, breeding plants for robotic agriculture, the growth in popularity of meal kits, cashier-less stores, e-commerce, and direct delivery of fresh produce to customers.

The results of a large qualitative study among consumers conducted by the PMA in the US and South Africa led them to create a taxonomy of food association for fresh produce with segments like ‘revitalising’ or ‘dependable’, apart from the expected ‘healthy’. The fresh produce industry has to think wider than just the health benefits when branding food, said Lauren M Scott, PMA chief marketing officer. Avocados, in her opinion, broke out of the health space to become part of popular culture.

Future of fresh in retail
James Lonsdale, national fresh produce manager for SPAR told delegates that SPAR in South Africa recognises the importance of working in partnership with local, smallholder farmers and making the supply chain more accessible to them. One of the ways they are doing this is through the SPAR Rural Hubs initiative that focuses on improving rural community access to fresh vegetables from smallholder farmers. This sustainable business model delivers fresh, affordable food to supermarkets by connecting them with local smallholder farmers.

With high percentages of obesity, high blood pressure, under-nutrition and over-nutrition a strong need exists for retailers to take the nutrition high ground for all South Africans and lead a healthier eating culture, said Frikkie van Niekerk, head of fresh development at Pick n Pay. Retailers need to drive affordable health solutions to all South Africans through increased consumption of fruit and vegetables, educate consumers about healthier options; and take responsibility to reformulate all foods under all brands to be healthier (sugar and salt reduction).

Dr Johan van Deventer, managing director at Freshmark (Shoprite’s fruit and vegetable procurement and distribution arm) highlighted the importance of long-term...
supplier relations based on truth and trust; strict product specifications and food safety regulations according to LSM group preferences; cold chain maintenance through supply chain; sophisticated stock inventory and replenish systems; refrigerated fleets; daily deliveries to supermarkets (freshness); as well as happy and loyal “Madam” Customers.

Role of fresh produce industry in South Africa’s economic future

Tommie van Zyl, CEO of agribusiness ZZ2 said South Africa is very well-positioned towards new growing markets in the East, such as South East Asia, India, and the rest of Africa. “The food we produce makes us internationally very competitive, specifically vegetable and horticultural crops, which include the superfoods and vegetables.”

Thabi Nkosi, executive director of research business development and investment at AFGRI, said agriculture is the most labour-intensive sector of the economy, which presents an opportunity for economic growth. “Horticulture and the fresh produce sector are able to absorb large numbers of unskilled labour and they’re therefore drivers of employment. Economic growth is not going to come from poultry or beef production.”

Growth of new markets in China

George Liu of Frutacloud, a company that sources, markets and distributes fresh produce in China said although Chinese consumers have traditional tastes, they are not impervious to persuasion. Retailers are always on the lookout for something new or unusual to surprise their customers. They look at appearance, taste, size, packaging and the story behind a product. “I think South Africa has a lot of potential because South Africa’s image is still a blank canvas and you can create anything you want, like a really good country image that places a premium on your product,” he said.

Fresh produce potential in Africa

“The amount of fresh products consumed by South Africans is synonymous with availability,” said Jaco Oosthuizen, RSA Group CEO. The informal food sector, which mostly comprised of small unregistered businesses that sell grocery products, makes up at least 40% of the food market, and is valued at about R404 billion. “Entrepreneurs looking to open small businesses lean toward food because everyone needs to eat. For the majority of South Africa’s poverty stricken population, the informal food sector offers affordability and accessibility when it comes to food.”

The head of agribusiness at FNB Zambia, Cheyo Mwenechanya shared his view...
on growth prospects for fresh produce in Zambia. Coillard Hamusimbi, an independent consultant in food, agriculture, agribusiness and rural development said in Zambia, low income households doubled their expenditure on fresh fruit and vegetables, while consumption by medium income and wealthier households increased by 11% and 5% respectively. On the downside, he said, the sector is hampered by structural challenges such as unregulated informal open air markets, supply inconsistencies, post-harvest losses and food safety concerns.

Future of technology and digital transformation
Ed Treacy, vice president, supply chain efficiencies for the PMA foresees that blockchain-based solutions will be adopted across a wide range of industries, and will be transformational for the grocery industry, including growers and suppliers of fresh produce. He described blockchain as a unique type of ledger where you cannot change the data and you cannot delete the data. Treacy’s advised companies to discuss what information they are willing to share, and to determine their own rules on the data they are willing to give and to whom.

Statistics shows that every third apple, orange and walnut end up in the garbage or in a landfill. Of this waste, 54 percent is lost in upstream processes, including agricultural production and post-harvest handling. The other 46 percent is wasted in processing, distribution and consumption. Chris Komatas, vice-president of product management at Compac, which has been part of TOMRA Food since 2017, shared insights into how sensor-based sorting equipment provides solutions for food waste in order to feed a growing world populations, and also to improve margins of growers, processors, shippers, traders and the retail community.

Centre for Growing Talent by PMA
The Center for Growing Talent (CGT) once again hosted a very successful Career Pathways programme and Young Professionals Breakfast. At the Women’s Fresh Perspectives event, attendees learnt how to set goals for a balanced career and personal life. The Women’s Fresh Perspectives luncheon with Adv. Thuli Madonsela sell-out event hosted a record of 260 attendees.

PMA’s Fresh Summit Convention and Expo
PMA’s Fresh Summit Convention and Expo gets underway in Orlando, Florida, USA on 18-20 October 2018.

This is the global produce and floral industry’s largest gathering in the Americas. This year is expected to be the largest Fresh Summit expo on record with over 1200 exhibiting companies.

For more information and to register, visit www.FreshSummit.com

Enquiries:
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lstroebel@pma.com
Agriculture coming together today in SA - historical moment

“Today is an historical day in SA - I am privileged to attend the signing of the declaration of intent to work together to develop a national development strategy for the agricultural sector from the perspective of organised agriculture - AFASA, NAFU, Agri SA, TAU-SA - in Pretoria today.” Magda du Toit

In November an ASUF indaba (workshop/meeting) will be help with the aim of coming up with this plan.

You can follow on #ASUFMediaConference

The event was also attended by the SA Deputy President, Mr David Mabuza.
PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY DR CHRIS VAN DIJK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE MILK PRODUCERS ORGANISATION (MPO)

Concern over the sharp drop in producer prices

The Milk Producers Organisation (MPO) is concerned about the negative effect that the sharp drop in producer prices since March this year could have on the sustainability of milk production. Official figures supplied by Statistics South Africa indicate that producer prices have dropped by 5.5% since March 2018 although ex-factory prices of dairy products have risen by 2.2%. Retail prices of milk, cheese and eggs remained more or less constant over the same period.

Dr Chris van Dijk, CEO of the Milk Producers Organisation, has appealed to milk processors and distributors to manage producer prices responsibly after the sharp countercyclical reductions in producer prices this year caused milk producers to experience such a severe cost squeeze that a number of producers have already left the industry. Milk buyers are reminded of the negative effect of similar price signals in the past and the high cost of correcting the milk supply after such drastic price reductions. The drop in producer prices cannot be justified on the basis of the movement in ex-factory prices.

Lower producer prices have already had a negative effect on the growth in milk production and figures supplied by Milk SA indicate that the total milk intake since May 2018 has grown at a far slower rate than in previous months. Milk intake figures indicate that producers have already started curtailling production. There are several factors that could contribute to further cuts in production in the coming months. The drought in certain parts of the Eastern and Western Cape, together with the rise in the prices of farming requisites such as fuel and energy, has also had a negative effect on milk production. Good rainfall in the drier pasture areas could also have a negative effect on production if producers cut back even further on concentrates.

If you have any queries or require further information, contact Dr Chris van Dijk at 082 789 4499
28 Augustus 2018
Vir onmiddellijke vrystelling

PERSVRYSTELLING UITGEREIK DEUR DR. CHRIS VAN DIJK, UITVOERENDE HOOF VAN DIE MELKPRODUSENTE-ORGANISASIE (MPO)

Kommer oor skerp daling in produsentepryse

Die Melkprodusente-organisasie (MPO) is bekommend oor die negatiewe effek wat die skerp daling in produsentepryse sedert Maart vanjaar op die volhoubaarheid van melkproduksie kan hê. Amtelike syfers verskaf deur Statistiek Suid Afrika dui aan dat produsentepryse sedert Maart 2018 met 5,5% gedaal het terwyl ex-fabriekpryse van suiwelprodukte met 2,2% gestyg het. Kleinhandelpryse van melk, kaas en eiers het oor dieselfde tydperk bykans konstant gebly.

Dr. Chris van Dijk, HUB van die Melkprodusente-organisasie, doen 'n beroep op melkkweerkers en verspreiders om produsentepryse verantwoordelik te bestuur nadat die skerp kontrasilliese verlagings in produsentepryse vanjaar veroorsaak het dat melkprodusente tans 'n ernstige kostekrytang ondervind; in so 'n mate dat verskeie reeds die bedryf verlaat het. Melkkopers word gewys op die negatiewe effek van soortgelyke prysseine in die verleda en die hoë koste verbonde daaraan om melkvoorsiening reg te stel na sulke drastiese prysverlagings. Die daling in produsentepryse kan nie aan die hand van die beweging in ex-fabriekpryse geregverdig word nie.

Laar produsentepryse het reeds die groei in melkproduksie negatief beïnvloed en syfers vanaf Melk SA dui daarop dat die totale melkinnome sedert Mei 2018 teen 'n veel stadiger koers groei as in vorige maande. Melkinnamesyfers dui daarop dat produsente reeds begin het om produksie in te kort. Verskeie faktore kan bydra tot 'n verdere inkorting van produksie in die komende maande. Die droogte in sekere dele van die Oos- en Wes-Kaap, asook die styting in die pryse van boerderybenodigdhede soos brandstof en energie, het ook 'n negatiewe effek op melkproduksie. Goeie reën in die droë weidingstreke sal produksie ook negatief beïnvloed as produsente verder terugsny op kragvoer.

Vr meer inligting en navrae kontak dr, Chris van Dijk by 082 789 4499
Final year students in agriculture are invited to enter the Old Mutual Agricultural Student of the Year Competition 2018.

How to qualify for entry:
Pre-graduate students must be in their final year of study.

Categories
Students can enter in three categories:
- Animal science
- Agricultural economics
- Crop production

Enter now

Themes and subjects
- Students who enter will receive their themes from the Head of the Department.
- All universities will address the same subjects/themes.
- Each essay entered must be 5,000 words long.
- Adjudication will be done during a special faculty day to be held at each participating university.
- Finalists from each university in each of the categories will compete in the finals at ALFA 2018 in September 2018 at the Afridome in Parys.
- Final participation will require submission of an updated essay, a poster presentation, a panel interview and participation in a public debate.
- The judging panel will consist of representatives from Old Mutual, Plaas Media, industry representatives and lecturers.

Semi-finalists and winners will receive prizes including unique Old Mutual jackets and a cash prize.