



LANDBOUSKRYWERS SA
AGRICULTURAL WRITERS SA

AGR pen

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WORD FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Saying our last goodbye

The death of a friend and colleague is always tough. But, when it is unexpected, it is as if the tragedy hits one even harder.

Recently, one of our long-serving members and colleague in the industry, Derick van der Walt, passed away. There was no warning to prepare any of his family or friends for the fall that led to a severe head injury and, ultimately, his death. Derick was much-loved in the Agricultural Writers Association and industry for his joviality, knowledge, and professional approach to projects. He was not only a publisher in the agricultural media, but also a popular writer of Afrikaans fiction such as *Lien se Lankstaanskoene*.

His passing is a reminder of how fragile life is and how much we should make every day count as if it is our last.

In our little community of Agricultural Writers, it is important to remember that we are very much

like a family. We might know some family members better than others, and we might even have some disagreements amongst ourselves. But, when the “family” gets together, we join as a unit and support each other in our common purpose, and of course enjoy the lighter moments during such events.

Whether it is to join a group visit to a farm, media briefing, or ag event, our time together as Ag Writers is usually filled with that common purpose of shining a light on agriculture.

Derick was a prime example of this. Whenever he joined us for any event, he added to the good vibes and served his readership with top-class publications afterwards.

Let us not forget his example and let us honour the life of Derick van der Walt by emulating his work ethic and ability to not take himself too seriously. May his soul rest in peace. ■

Liza Bohlmann
Chairperson
Agricultural
Writers SA



Uit die argiewe/From the archives



Hierdie knipsel uit Die Volksblad van 7 Maart 1980 kom net ná die stigting van die destydse Landbouers' Vereniging (LSV) van SA se tak in die Vrystaat. Mnr. Ian Barr het in Westdene, Bloemfontein, gewoon ná sy aftrede. Hy het dié gebaar en oorkonde erg waardeer.

Jan Bezuidenhout onthou: “Frikkie Wallis woon in Swakopmund en het ’n interessante rubriek op Facebook, wat hy daagliks bywerk. Dit is feite oor gebeure op hierdie dag in die geskiedenis. BP was destyds ons borg en oorlede Willem van Tonder het ’n groot rol gespeel om ons te help met reëlins vir wat ook al. Ons het ons vergaderings in BP se kantore in die Bloemfonteinse middestad gehou. Willem was ’n dierbare mens wat baie gelag het en die OVS-tak op die regte koers gehou het.”

Jan vertel verder: “In 1987, of dalk 1988, het die destydse Transvaalse tak besluit om vir elke vorige Boer en Landboukundige van die Jaar ’n maroenbaadjie met die LSV-wapen op, te skenk. Die Boer en Landboukundige van die Jaar-onthaal was in ’n hotel naby die middestad, dit lyk asof dit die hedendaagse Manhattan Hotel kan wees. Ewenwel,

die baadjies moes ’n dig-bewaarde geheim wees en ons het elke Boer en Landboukundige se eggenoot gebel (bv. op plaaslyne – die dae vóór selfone) om te verneem watter grootte baadjie die persoon dra.

Dit was 12 jaar se wenners. Ons het die nodige inligting gekry en die 24 baadjies is by een van die mansuitrusters in die middestad bestel. Daarna moes elke wenner se titel, die jaartal, en die LSV-wapen op elke unieke sakwapen geborduur word. ’n Vrou in Johannesburg het die borduurwerk in goue garing gedoen.

Daarna is die voltooide sakwapens terug uitruster toe, wat elkeen op die korrekte baadjie moes aanwerk. Ons het die “deadline” gehaal, met so ’n dag of vier oor!. Die baadjies is uitgedeel tydens daardie jaar se nasionale toekenningsgeleentheid.” ■

Start 2022 on a positive note with these business finance tips

As a small business owner, it is a no-brainer that financial planning is critical for survival. This February, we encourage you to get your financial house in order by preparing a financial road map for the year ahead. COVID-19, looting and unrest, and a sluggish economy have had a devastating impact on many small and medium enterprises (SME). Now is the time to take the reins and relook at your financial priorities, possibly in partnership with a trusted financial adviser or intermediary.

Here are five tips to tighten up your business' finances:

1. It all starts with a plan: A holistic financial plan should include a budget, accounting, tax planning, risk management (including insurance and an emergency fund), and some forecasting for the future. Analyse your accounts for insights into performance and keep abreast with your bookkeeping so you can track progress towards reaching your goals. Consult your intermediary if you feel like you need help coming up with a practical, step-by-step plan for the next 6–12 months. The last 12 months have shown that circumstances can change quickly. Insurance should be a pivotal part of a financial plan as proactive risk management is essential.
2. Wax your tax: Tax season is usually stressful, but it doesn't have to be! Keep your records and bookkeeping tight to avoid unnecessary hassle later. Consider ways to maximise your tax deductions to lower your tax burden. Again, consult your intermediary for the best ways to do this.
3. Win with cash flow: Cash flow is an ongoing issue for most small business owners. Keeping it tight takes time to get right. It's an ongoing exercise of getting a handle on business direct and indirect expenses and overhead costs.

Chart your cash inflows and outflows so you can understand what's happening. What adjustments can you make to increase the inflows and limit the outflows? For example, could you negotiate better rates with your suppliers? Could you invoice earlier? Where can you cut costs? How can you improve your payroll processes to keep cash flow continuity – and happy employees?

4. Ditch the debt: Many businesses rely on some kind of debt. Try to manage this by ensuring that the cost of the capital you borrow is lower than the expected returns. Consider paying off the smallest debts first to free up funds to pay off the next-smallest debt and so on, to create a virtuous cycle of ditching the debt.
5. Keep it separate: It's supposed to be rule number one, but in practice, few people manage to get it right. Try to keep your personal and professional finances apart, with separate cards and accounts for each. This enables you to track your business' goal progression and performance far better.

It is important to remember that every business is unique and requires a custom plan. Consult a professional financial adviser for a holistic roadmap to review your finances right at the start of the new year. ■



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Nampo 2022

Are you ready for the 5-day Nampo experience?

It is with great excitement and a sense of relief that Grain SA took notice of President Cyril Ramaphosa's address announcing the adjusted Level 1 regulations, thereby allowing the 2022 NAMPO Harvest Day to be hosted from 16–20 May 2022 at 50% of NAMPO Park's capacity.



The 54th NAMPO Harvest Day, planned to be presented for the first time over five days to allow for the reduced capacity, will showcase agriculture's latest technology, machinery, innovations, and productivity solutions all on one platform. The 2022 theme, “Experience It!”, is an invitation to the agricultural industry and the public at large to experience the biggest agricultural show in the Southern Hemisphere, first-hand.

“Grain SA is delighted and thankful that the adjusted regulations will enable NAMPO 2022 to be hosted, and furthermore, that we are capable to do it successfully at 50% of the park's capacity under the adjusted regulations,” Dr Dirk Strydom, Grain SA's marketing, NAMPO, and research coordination lead, said. “The NAMPO Harvest Day has always been an asset to agriculture and it's people and it will be good to welcome everyone back to this showcase after the two-year disruption”.

Grain SA is committed to implementing appropriate and necessary measures and action plans in relation to the government's requirements to host this event.

“The health and safety of visitors, exhibitors, staff, sponsors and the entire agricultural community during the NAMPO Harvest Day remain paramount and the organisation will be further guided by current best practice to ensure all appropriate and required health and safety checks are in place facilitating the hosting of a successful and valuable event to all involved,” Dr Pieter Taljaard, CEO of Grain SA, said.

“Adhering to the newly announced regulations, the NAMPO Harvest Day will welcome visitors who comply with the current required regulations of being fully vaccinated and in possession of a valid vaccination certificate or unvaccinated but in possession of a valid certificate of a negative COVID-19 test, obtained not more than 72 hours prior to entering the park”, Toit Wessels, NAMPO assistant manager, confirmed.

A promotional graphic for NAMPO Harvest Day 2022. The background is a collage of green agricultural fields and a busy exhibition site with various farm machinery and structures. Overlaid on the left is a green semi-circle containing the text 'Join us at the NAMPO harvest day!' in white. To the right of this is a white rectangular box with the dates '16-20 May 2022' in green, and a brown paper tag with the text 'Save the date' in black script. At the bottom right is a green rectangular box containing the NAMPO logo, which includes the text 'Graan SA/Grain SA', 'NAMPO', 'OESDAG HARVEST DAY', and 'BOTHAVILLE' in white.

16-20 May 2022

Save the date

Join us
at the NAMPO
harvest day!

Graan SA/Grain SA
NAMPO
OESDAG HARVEST DAY
BOTHAVILLE

Presenting the Harvest Day will provide a much-needed injection to the local economy after its two-year hiatus, with many small business owners relying heavily on the income made possible as a result of this agricultural platform.

Furthermore, the economic importance of NAMPO to the corporate, medium, and small businesses from all over South Africa participating in the show cannot be underestimated.

“While we might have to do some things a little differently, our aim is to still present a diversified agricultural trade exhibition of world standing, benefiting the broader agricultural value chain,” Strydom said.

Even amidst the uncertainty, NAMPO is pleased to announce a full list of exhibitors. This, coupled with the size of the grounds and the infrastructure that is well distributed, promises to provide a safe and peaceful, family-friendly experience offering something for everyone. For those who always wondered, and for every return visitor doubting if they would have forgotten the sights and sounds, you are invited to visit the 2022 NAMPO Harvest Day... and ***Experience It!***

Come and experience an extra day at the 2019 entrance fee. In partnership with TicketPro, only online ticket sales will be provided and available in the first week of April. Reservations for the ever-popular tented hotel on the northern boundary of the park are open and further information regarding the NAMPO Harvest Day can be obtained at www.nampo.co.za. ■



CORPORATE MEMBER NEWS

Grain SA 2022 congress



CORPORATE MEMBER NEWS



SA cheese festival surprises with reduced ticket price and an extra day



The South African Cheese Festival has reacted with joy to President Cyril Ramaphosa's announcement that outdoor venues may now be 50% full and encourages cheese and wine lovers to start celebrating this right away. Festival enthusiasts will immediately benefit from buying a ticket at a reduced price.

"The President has given us a reason to celebrate, so now people can seize it," says Johan Ehlers, CEO of Agri-Expo, the organiser of the award-winning SA Cheese Festival since 2002. "We will welcome these extra festival-goers with open arms, and we are grateful that we can offer this extraordinary experience at a more affordable price."

SIMILAR, BUT ADVENTUROUSLY DIFFERENT

The SA Cheese Festival innovates this year by popping up over two weekends at two different destinations, on the West Coast and in the Winelands: Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 April at Groote Post outside Darling on the West Coast, and Saturday 30 April, Sunday 1 May, and Monday 2 May at Sandringham outside Stellenbosch. Tickets cost R290 p.p. per day. The festival times are from 10:00 to 18:00 daily.

According to Ehlers, they can now increase the capacity of visitors at Sandringham and add an extra festival day on the Workers' Day holiday: "We originally planned the festival with regulations as they were in place, but we are constantly adjusting our offering to accommodate visitors and exhibitors." ■

Ehlers says guests can expect the same unique experience of quality that the SA Cheese Festival has become famous for over two decades.

"Everyone knows Sandringham Estate as the home of the SA Cheese Festival, whilst Groote Post offers an exceptional opportunity to come and enjoy country hospitality on the amazing Pentz family's historic 18th century farm."



Discover a festival of pop-up experiences at the sa cheese festival

The SA Cheese Festival offers a real value for money experience – in fact, your entrance ticket buys you a whole feast of pop-up experiences:

- **‘Cheese it and enjoy it’:** The heart of the SA Cheese Festival remains the unique experience of being able to taste and buy the largest variety of cheeses – old favourites as well as innovative new ones.
- **‘WineFest, BeerFest, Gin’OClock’:** Come and experience a curated collection of award-winning wines, craft beers and gin – after all, your entry fee includes an exclusive stemless SA Cheese Festival wine glass.
- **‘Taste it first’:** Many exhibitors use the SA Cheese Festival as a platform to introduce new products and test the market – discover it here before it even appears on store shelves!
- **‘Standard Bank Travel & Taste’:** Hosted by well-known celebrity chefs and wine connoisseurs, this is where cheese marries wine, beer, and every new trend! Come discover, listen, and taste at no extra cost. Every day at 13:00, chef Tiaan Langenegger will give a sneak-peek of his brand new *Tiaan Proe* television programme together with Ladismith Cheese (joined by his actor friend Neels van Jaarsveld on 23 April and 1 May). Chef Isabella Niehaus, who won an award for her cookbook, *Duinhuis*, in Paris last year, brings along her famous smoked snoek cheesecake. Come and learn more about wine pairing with experts from the Chenin Blanc Association, Groote Post winemaker Lukas Wentzel, as well as everyone’s SA Cheese Festival favourite, the original celeb chef Jenny Morris.
- **‘#SupportSmallCheesemakers’:** Meet cheese entrepreneurs who, despite many challenges, come from all over to introduce their unique handmade cheeses to cheese-lovers, a project made possible in partnership with the Western Cape Department of Agriculture.
- **‘Cape Made: Taste the Alternatives’:** Alternative products, fresh from the farm, such as olives, tapenades, berries, mushrooms, and even buchu water and hydroponic herbs ... with bargains directly from producers thanks to a partnership with the Western Cape Department of Agriculture.
- **‘Artisanal art’:** Support artisanal makers as you learn to appreciate new tasting experiences – from kudu salami to gin with honey, almond, strawberry, or chai.
- **‘The Ladismith Cheese Carving Competition’:** A daily highlight – enter for free at the festival (space is limited). Show your creativity, carve a cheese, and win big prizes!
- **‘The Hollard Band Stand’:** Come and enjoy your purchases to the beat of top artists – such as Die Heuwels Fantasties, Francois van Coke, Watershed, Ard Matthews, Kurt Darren, the rock band Flat Stanley’s first performance in years, the new favourite Will Linley, plus many local musicians throughout the day.
- **‘The Afgri Feeds Milk Factory’:** Visit the friendly cows and goats at the Milk Factory and learn more about these pedigreed dairy animals, the start and the most important part of the production line in the art of



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cheese-making. A well-known and enjoyable experience at the annual SA Cheese Festival!

- **'Foodies #GoingPlaces'**: Artisanal food stands serve mouth-watering food with just more cheese!
- **'Be safe'**: The SA Cheese Festival promotes the responsible use of alcohol. Make use of shuttle services and taxis for a party full of peace of mind.
- **'Make it a weekend celebration'**: Sandringham is conveniently located next to the N1, Stellenbosch turn-off (exit 39), between Cape Town and Paarl. Groote Post is located between Darling and Yzerfontein. Contact www.yzerfonteinaccommodation.co.za or www.visitstellenbosch.org.
- **'Be responsible'**: A Covid-19 access policy of proof of vaccination, or a negative test result will apply. ■

BUY TICKETS HERE

Tickets are available at Webtickets (bit.ly/sacheesefest-popuppics) and Pick n Pay. Only a limited number of tickets are available, and no tickets will be sold at the gates.

The 2022 SA Cheese Festival is supported by platinum partners, the Western Cape Department of Agriculture and Standard Bank, as well as other partners.

For more information visit,
www.cheesefestival.co.za,
Twitter @SACheeseFest,
Facebook @SACheeseFestival or
Instagram @sacheesefest,
or contact,
Agri-Expo at 021 975 4440 or
admin@agriexpo.co.za.



Agbiz welcomes new manager of Agbiz Fruit Desk

Agbiz is delighted to announce that Wolfe Braude will be joining the Agbiz team from April 2022 as manager of the Agbiz Fruit Desk, a joint initiative between Agbiz and Fruit SA.

The fruit desk is funded jointly by the South African Table Grape Industry (SATI), Citrus Growers' Association (CGA), Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum (FPEF), and Hortgro. "We are excited to welcome Wolfe to our team at Agbiz.

He brings with him expertise and experience on, amongst others, trade and agricultural policy and international governance," says Agbiz CEO Theo Boshoff. "Wolfe's experience will greatly contribute to strengthening the role of the Agbiz Fruit Desk in establishing effective partnerships with government and other interest groups to ensure that opportunities in the fruit industry are maximised."

Wolfe previously worked at the National Labour and Economic Development Institute, the South African Sugar Association, and Emet Consulting as an analyst. His experience includes work on sugarcane-derived ethanol markets, support for the development of the South African chemicals sector strategy, new business and stakeholder management at the South African Institute of International Affairs, and research on Agribusiness Chambers of Commerce in Africa for GIZ and Nepad.



"It is with great pleasure that I am joining the team at Agbiz," says Wolfe. "I welcome the opportunity to add both continuity and value to the efforts of Agbiz to support and strengthen members, and specifically the fruit sector. I firmly believe the dynamic South African agricultural sector retains the potential for further growth and I look forward to supporting the realisation of this." "The Fruit Desk is an important resource for Fruit SA, and we look forward to benefiting from Wolfe's expertise to ensure that our industry continues to grow and thrive," says Fhumulani Ratshitanga, Fruit SA CEO. "On behalf of Fruit SA, I also wish him success in his role" ■

Woolworths Mature Cheddar triumphs as South Africa's Dairy Product of the Year



A CELEBRATION OF INNOVATION

The SA Dairy Championships has been presented by Agri-Expo with great success since 1834. According to Johan Ehlers, CEO of Agri-Expo, it is an exceptional privilege to present the championships for the 189th year, as Agri-Expo, the oldest agricultural society in South Africa, also celebrates 190 years of heritage and 25 years of innovation.

"Innovation this prestigious flagship project over many years," says Ehlers. "In 2001, we created the Qualité logo as the only mark of excellence for South African dairy products. We hosted the very first virtual awards event in the South African agricultural sector in 2020. Moreover, we are the only organisation in the world that could present a major dairy championships continuously over the past three years, paving the way for the successful new concept of a hybrid SA Dairy Awards, hosted for the second year at Cavalli Estate as well as on our website."

According to Ehlers, the high number of entries and the extraordinary products entered this year are

reasons to be optimistic about the future of the dairy industry: "This year's results testify to an innovative industry and healthy competition between larger manufacturers and smaller entrepreneurs, with a total of five Qualités awarded to Lactalis South Africa, three to Fairview, two each to Clover SA, De Pekelaar Boerenkaas, Belnori Boutique Cheesery, Klein River Cheese, and Rhodes Food Group, and a good distribution among the other winners."

Agri-Expo would like to thank the Platinum partner, Synercore, as well as all the other partners of the SA Dairy Championships for their commitment to the development of the dairy industry, namely Chr.Hansen, AECI Food & Beverage, the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, Woolworths, IMCD SA, Condio, Hollard, Orchem, Mane, Polyoak Packaging, and *The Dairy Mail*.



CORPORATE MEMBER NEWS

Lactalis South Africa's 18-months Mature Cheddar, made especially for Woolworths, was crowned the Dairy Product of the Year at the 189th South African Dairy Awards on Friday 25 March 2022 at Cavalli Estate outside Stellenbosch.

The Cheddar, a full-rounded cheese with a nutty and slightly piquant flavour, was one of 920 dairy products from 68 producers that vied for the attention of a team of 60 judges.

From the high number of entries, a total of 26 were honoured with the *Qualité mark of excellence* (full list of the *crème de la crème* below) and 105 – the winners in each championships class – were named SA Champion.

“For a product to be chosen as Product of the Year in a competition of this nature is the dream of every dairy producer,” says dairy expert and chief judge Alan Fourie. “The Woolworths 18-months Mature Cheddar truly is an exceptional product worthy of this accolade.” Alban Damour, general manager at Lactalis Southern Africa, says his cheese team is delighted at having the quality of their products recognised for the third year running. “Our cheese team is once again credited for their expertise and passion and for their products that are on par with the best across the world and loved by South African consumers.

“We are proud of our long-standing business partnership with Woolworths, a business that values quality as much as we do. Lactalis SA also appreciates the work Agri-Expo does to recognise and celebrate the local dairy industry.”

The SA Dairy Awards can still be viewed at www.cheesesa.co.za/sa-dairy-awards.

For the full SA Dairy Championships results please visit

www.cheesesa.co.za

or contact

Agri-Expo at 021 975 4440 or
cheese@agriexpo.co.za.

Founding future food security

We often hear politicians suggesting from their podiums: “Let’s make agriculture sexy in order to attract the youth”. I for one, do not believe that agriculture is necessarily supposed to be “sexy” to attract the youth.

For the sake of our food security, I do agree, we need young farmers to take over the reins in an agricultural sector where the average age of our farmers is estimated to be 62.

Agricultural schools are doing an excellent job, despite the fact that the Department of Education seriously lacks resources. The realisation that it is our duty, as a sector, to provide the next generation with the best possible chance of success, led to the establishment of the Agri Youth Foundation (AYF).



The main aim of the foundation is to support the training and education of the agricultural youth by empowering agricultural schools. The AYF enriches and supports academic training while facilitating industry engagement. In the process, a close collaboration between various breeders’ societies, commodity organisations, agricultural schools, and other important role players in agriculture are developing.

The foundation was formerly founded in late 2017, but many of the projects started as early as 2014. These initial projects provided schools with

access to different livestock species and breeds. Over the years, a need for diversification emerged and projects in other production areas such as aquaponics, crops- and lucerne production, silage, poultry, and viticulture are being rolled out.

The current focus is on children and young people who are already part of the agricultural community. This includes learners in agricultural schools and academic schools offering an agricultural curriculum.

By the end of 2021, the Agri Youth Foundation could proudly boast with:

- 12 beef cattle herds;
- 4 sheep herds;
- 1 goat herd;
- 2 horse projects;
- 1 pig project; and
- 5 rabbit projects.

This is a total of 24 herds at 16 schools with a total commercial value of well over R5 million. The schools represent seven provinces, several official languages, different cultural groups, and varying socio-economic conditions.

The foundation is a non-profit organisation that adheres to all registrations and accreditations. It is managed by a full-time manager and governed by a members council consisting of a representative of each of its corporate members, as well as three co-opted members from the Friends of the Foundation group.

Should you wish to join as a corporate member, a Friend of the Foundation, wish to offer your expertise, or have identified a possible future educational project, please contact me at hanlie@agricconnect.co.za or 083 296 8007. ■

Archbishop Desmond Tutu said: “Do your little bit of good where you are; it’s those little bits of good that overwhelm the world.” (and, in this case, ensures our future food security!)

South Africa well-represented on international seed body

After a restructuring process, the International Seed Federation (ISF), recently announced the members that will serve on the new committees. These members were selected according to nominations.

The expertise and knowledge of South African members of the South African National Seed Organisation (SANSOR) have been duly recognised and Dr Lukeshni Chetty, general manager of SANSOR, has been elected on the extended board of the ISF, and SANSOR or board members of SANSOR has been elected on all but one of the committees.

The representation is as follows:

Advisory Group National Seed Association

Vice-chair, Dr Lukeshni Chetty – general manager SANSOR SANSOR

Advisory Group Crops – Chairs

Nick Goble – Pannar Seeds

Coordination groups

Plant breeding innovation

Dr Magdeleen Cilliers – SANSOR

Intellectual property

Dr Magdeleen Cilliers – SANSOR

Genetic resources

Dr Magdeleen Cilliers – SANSOR

Phytosanitary

Isabel Bezuidenhout – SANSOR

Seed health

Isabel Bezuidenhout – SANSOR

Seed marketing

Dr Lukeshni Chetty, Vice-chair – SANSOR

Value chain

Dr David Malan – Klein Karoo Seed Production

Arbitration

Brian Lever – AGT Food Africa

Illegal seed practices

Brian Lever – AGT Food Africa

Environment, ethical & social responsibility

Riaan Roselt – DLF

Advisory Groups

Vegetable & ornamentals

Dr David Malan – Klein Karoo Seed Production

Field crops

Nick Goble – Chair (Pannar Seed)

Forage & turf

Brian Lever – AGT Food Africa

More about ISF

ISF is a non-governmental, non-profit making organisation that represents the interests of the seed industry at a global level. ISF's mission is to create the best environment for the global movement of seed and promote plant breeding and innovation in seed.

ISF represents the seed industry at international and inter-governmental organisations including:

- OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development)
- UPOV (International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants)
- IPPC (International Plant Protection Convention)
- FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization)
- CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity)
- WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization)

More about SANSOR

In 1989, the South African National Seed Organization (SANSOR) was established to provide role players in the local seed industry with a formal and strategic body to protect and further the interests of the seed trade. ■

SACOTA flying solo



As of 1 January 2022, the South African Cereals and Oilseeds Trade Association (SACOTA) is a fully independent association catering for its trading members' needs.

Since 2010, SACOTA'S secretariat has been managed by the Animal Feed Manufacturers Association (AFMA). During this period, SACOTA has grown from a relatively informal gathering of traders to a full-blown association with a vision and mission, a constitution, a budget and a board of directors.



The time has now come for SACOTA to function independently. This was confirmed by the feedback received from SACOTA members. Traders have some unique challenges that a more focused approach can address.

With their move towards an independent trading association, the Board also resolved to appoint Dr André van der Vyver as the executive director of SACOTA. Dr van der Vyver has vast experience in the trading environment, having owned his own JSE broking and trading company and working in the milling industry, the banking sector, and the Department of Agriculture. ■

Avocado production in the Western Cape

Jacques Burger

The Western Cape Province is known to produce a wide range of fresh produce, but avocados have not historically been one of those. Avocados have traditionally been produced in the hot and humid northern provinces of South Africa such as Mpumalanga, Limpopo, and KwaZulu-Natal, but market demand, improved varieties and agricultural practices have seen the spread of this subtropical fruit to South Africa's Western Cape Province.

Although the Western Cape's climate was previously considered to be too cold for avocado production, the region has a Mediterranean climate much like the avocado-production regions in California and Spain, and some pioneering growers have recognised this potential. The new technologies that are an integral part of modern agricultural practices

have made it easier for farmers to identify and define specific low-frost or frost-free microclimates and soils where avocado production is possible.

During the past few years, productions have been growing in the milder coastal climates of the Southern Cape in the regions between Swellendam, Heidelberg, and George.

This exciting new development in the Western Cape is attracting attention at government level, as Western Cape Minister of Agriculture Dr Ivan Meyer referred to this development in a speech recently, with specific reference to the additional jobs that these developments were creating



within the agricultural sector. Derek Donkin, chief executive officer of the South African Growers' Association explained that, while production in the region still represents a small percentage of South Africa's total production, he pointed out that this is growing steadily. "At present, the area under avocado orchards in the Western Cape is around 300 ha, and further expansion is planned for the next few years," says Donkin. He added that the total avocado plantings in South Africa were currently at approximately 15 000 ha.

Although cold weather during August flowering and ineffective root drainage both remain challenges to avocado production in the Western Cape, the timing of entry of fruit produced in this region into domestic markets remains a strong incentive. As this fruit is harvested between October and December, later than production in the country's traditional northern production regions, the domestic market is undersupplied during this time and most of the avocado production is sold locally.

While export markets do exist for avocados produced in the Western Cape region, the timing of this production tends to compete on export markets with the early Northern Hemisphere avocado offerings from Spain and Israel.

One of the Western Cape fruit production companies that has diversified into avocado production is Lucerne Agri Investments. The company has developed an avocado project in the Overberg region over the past three years. "While we are excited about the potential of avocados in the Western Cape, we are approaching this initiative with caution as the rapid expansion of any commodity can lead to rapid market saturation," explains Juan-Ivan Smuts, chief operations officer at Lucerne. "It is important for sustainability that this new development in the avocado industry is well managed and protected," he added. ■



Foreign workers: state and employers have a responsibility

Adele Chauvignon, Agri Western Cape

The situation that took place in Robertson between seasonal workers from Zimbabwe and Lesotho is an issue that needs to be addressed by the Departments of Labour and Employment and Home Affairs and cannot be placed on the shoulders of agriculture.

“The appointment of illegal workers cannot be justified, but agriculture is not responsible for the policing of illegal workers. The draconian legislation implemented is not contributing to the solution,” says Jannie Strydom, CEO of Agri Western Cape.

According to legislation, all foreign employees must have the necessary, legal documentation and Agri Western Cape asks that all employers stay on the right side of the law.

Strydom says the scale of the problem is much greater than the employment of illegal workers, and actually starts with illegal foreigners moving

freely through South Africa’s borders and settling themselves in the country.

“As an organisation, we ask for guidance regarding the verification of documentation, but that these solutions be practical in order for agriculture production to continue. The agricultural sector has been asking for guidance for the past two years, and there is still no workable solution.”

Agri Western Cape once again requests that all relevant role-players work side-by-side to address this enormous problem. ■



Waste litters the Jukskei as it runs through the Alexandra Township, a few miles from its source. Photographer: Gulshan Khan/AFP.

Hope for South Africa's polluted water bodies

René Viviers

*Municipalities across South Africa have been hit with a series of water crises in the past few months, from spiraling counts of *Escherichia coli* at Zeekoevlei, Zandvlei, Rietvlei, and Milnerton Lagoon in Cape Town, in the Touw River in Wilderness, and the drinking water at Nelson Mandela Bay, to the outbreak of typhoid in three provinces and a massive acid mine leak in Mpumalanga.*

This, as South Africa celebrated National Water Week from 20 to 26 March 2022 with the theme, “Groundwater – making the invisible, visible”, to highlight the importance of groundwater as a primary source of drinking water.

While the World Health Organisation ranks South Africa among the top six African countries with “safely managed drinking water sources”, the country’s steadily increasing population, ageing water treatment infrastructure, lack of access to proper sanitation in rural areas, and climate change are severely impacting water quality in South Africa.

“The country’s growing population is stressing wastewater treatment facilities due to inadequate

infrastructure capacity. Developing industries aggravate the situation through effluent discharge which is rarely policed.” says Jurgens van Loggerenberg, general manager of BlueGreen Water Technologies in South Africa.

“In addition, very little budget is set aside to develop and expand existing infrastructure, a situation compounded by severely challenged procurement processes. Collectively, these factors are contributing to the devastation of invaluable water resources and as a result, our environment. Future generations will be forced to pay disproportionate sums of money to have access to clean water.”

Water quality does not just refer to the quality of the water coming from a tap; it refers to all water sources across the country, including dams, lakes, rivers, streams, and vleis, which supports millions of people and animals every day.

In 2020, a *Mail and Guardian* report showed that 5,3 million households lacked access to clean drinking water or to water completely, equating to roughly 21 million South Africans. Additionally, around 14 million people did not have access to safe sanitation.

Large, critical water sources like the Vaal River are being choked by raw sewerage. In February 2022, the SA Human Rights Commission said that the river was “polluted beyond acceptable levels”. There are an estimated 19 million people who rely on the Vaal River as a primary water source, emphasising just how potentially devastating further deterioration of water quality in the river could be.

Some important water sources have been under threat for years – a situation compounded by increasing, unaddressed threats to water quality.

Loskop Dam, for instance, has been consistently in the spotlight since 2008 for its poor water quality. In 2011, the CSIR reported that permanent cyanobacteria or blue-green algae was visible on the surface of the dam’s water. Cyanobacteria turns infected waterbodies into dead aquatic zones. It creates hostile living conditions in the water, releasing potent, and offensive taste and odour metabolites and toxins, which present an immediate health risk to local communities. Both direct contact with, and breathing in the aerosol from, infested waters is dangerous.

Loskop Dam is considered a strategically important water source, as it hosts around 480 km of irrigation channels, which provide water to a R1 billion export industry of citrus fruits to the European Union.

In February 2022, a massive mine acid leak upstream affected the Wilge and Olifants rivers and eventually reached the dam, threatening the irrigation scheme. Agri Limpopo described the dam as “toxic, polluted water, containing highly

concentrated levels of radioactive metals and salts which are hazardous to all forms of life”.

Francois Roux, an aquatic scientist at the Mpumalanga Parks and Tourism Agency, was quoted as saying that all life had been killed in the 58 km of river affected by the spill, and that the pollution would end up in the Loskop Dam Nature Reserve, renowned for its high species diversity.

While BlueGreen Water Technologies focuses on monitoring and treating harmful algal blooms in water bodies – such as that originally found in Loskop Dam and believed to be present in over 50% of South Africa’s biggest dams – the company is now looking to develop an entire arsenal of tools to help combat cyanobacterial blooms in the country.

This will include developing software to analyse and interpret cyanobacterial density and cyanotoxin concentrations in real time, and a platform where clients can upload their own footage for feedback on the condition of their water resources.

These innovations will complement BlueGreen Water Technologies’ existing ground-breaking Lake Guard™ offering, which was introduced to South Africa in 2020. This product range has been successfully used in Roodeplaat Dam in Pretoria and Setumo Dam in the North West for the management of harmful algal blooms.

“There are a plethora of underlying issues with the water bodies in South Africa where water quality remains adversely affected. Potentially toxic cyanobacterial species are thriving in these water bodies, and while we can help manage the bloom as it exists, these underlying issues won’t simply vanish,” explains Van Loggerenberg.

“Ultimately, the issue of water quality lies in the hands of the government. With stricter management and impartial selection processes, scientifically proven solutions can remedy some of the damage that has been – and continues to be – done to our water systems.” ■

Trae sojaboonproduksie kan 'n hupstoot kry

Engela Duvenage

Die Suid-Afrikaanse sojaboonbedryf het broodnodige impetus nodig – maar om opbrengste wesenlik te verbeter sal boere 'n paar kopskuiwe moet maak oor hoe hulle hul gewasproduksiestelsels en grond hanteer. Dis die boodskap in 'n onlangse artikel in die vaktydskrif Agronomy Journal, geskryf deur dr. Stephano Haarhoff, 'n agronoom werksaam vir Yara Africa Fertilizer, en dr. Pieter Swanepoel van die Departement van Agronomie aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch (US).

Die artikel is deel van 'n spesiale afdeling in die internasionale vaktydskrif waarin kenners besin oor die kort- tot medium-termyn probleme wat 'n stokkie voor voedselsekerheid op 'n streeksvlak kan steek. Daarin bied die twee agronome 'n oorsig oor hoe die Suid-Afrikaanse sojaboonbedryf tans daaruit sien, die praktyke wat in plek is en tekortkominge rondom navorsing.

Sojaboonproduksie het oor die afgelope twee dekades wêreldwyd gestyg – maar nie in Suid-Afrika nie. Dis ten spyte van die vrystelling van verbeterde sojaboonkiemplasma en modern onkruidodder in onlangse jare. Plaaslik word sojabone onder droëland-toestande verbou.

Volgens die Voedsel en Landbou-organisasie (FAO) se 2020-statistieke het die totale sojaboonproduksie in Suid-Afrika wel van 1 680 kg per hektaar tussen 2001–2010 tot 1 730 kg per hektaar tussen 2011 en 2019 gestyg. Hierdie verbetering word egter toegeskryf aan die gebruik van meer grondgebied, eerder as aan groter opbrengste.

“Moderne agronomiese praktyke word nog nie tot dieselfde mate in Suid-Afrika gebruik as wat dit in talle van die wêreld se beste sojaboonproduserende lande die geval is nie. Dis jammer, want die land het die potensiaal om wesenlike, volhoubare opbrengste te kan lewer. Dit sal van waarde vir plaaslike produsente wees as hulle oorweeg om hul grond minder te bewerk, die gebruik van voedingstowwe slimmer te bestuur, en 'n verskeidenheid van opsies rondom gewasrotasie te oorweeg,” reken dr. Haarhoff en dr. Swanepoel.

Regoor Suid-Afrika se grootste sojaboonproduksiegebiede word opbrengste belemmer deur afwisselende reënvalpatrone, hoë temperature, grootskaalse verdamping en die verdigting van grond.



Dr. Pieter Swanepoel van die Departement Agronomie aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch.



Dr. Stephano Haarhoff van Yara Fertilizer.

Maniere om opbrengs en produksie te verbeter

In *Agronomy Journal* wys die twee kenners dat opbrengste en produksie verbeter kan word deur:

- Stikstofbemesting reeds vroeg in die seisoen toe te dien indien die stikstofinhoud van grond laag is.
- Sojabone in te sluit by boerderystelsels waarin mielies primêr verbou word. Dit moet verkieslik afgewissel word met ander gewasse of dekgewasse wat vir weiding gebruik kan word. Sodoende brei die verskeidenheid van gewasse wat in wisselboustelsels uit.
- Gewasproduksiepraktyke te gebruik wat hoë volumes afloopwater en verdamping beperk. Dit sal byvoorbeeld baat om meer oesreste op die lande te los nadat mielies geoes is, of om vee toe te laat om slegs gedeeltelik te beweï aan die oesreste.
- Grond minder intensief te bewerk, byvoorbeeld eerder minimum- of geenbewerking te gebruik. Sodoende kan die grondstruktuur en volume van organiese materiaal daarin verbeter, wat positiewe gevolge kan inhou wanneer droogtes, hittegolwe en ander omgewingstressors voorkom.

- Gediversifiseerde produksiestelsels te oorweeg, en vee te gebruik om onkruid en die voorkoms van siektes op 'n geïntegreerde manier te beheer;
- Die beweging van voertuie oor 'n stuk land te beperk, en waar moontlik die verdigting van grond te beperk. Oorweeg die gebruik van moderne planters en/of presisiestegnologie wat die uniforme saad- en voedingstofplasing verbeter.
- Sanderige grond wat reeds etlike jare geensins of minimaal bewerk word, strategies te bewerk. Sodoende kan die verdigting van grond teengewerk word. Die strategiese gebruik daarvan sal nie noodwendig lei tot verlaagde produksie nie. Hou egter sekondêre gevolge soos erosie weens wind en water in gedagte nadat grond bewerk is.

Meer plaaslike data en navorsing nodig

“Juis omdat hulle oor die jare heen wisselvallige opbrengste gekry het, is boere skrikkerig oor hoeveel stikstofbemesting om te gebruik, en wanneer om dit toe te dien. 'n Groot probleem is die gebrek aan plaaslike wetenskaplike kennis wat lig hierop kan werp. As ons dit kan aanspreek, kan ons begin om baie onsekerhede hieroor by boere en

agronome uit die weg te ruim,” reken dr. Haarhoff. “Ons kort pasklaar bestuurspraktyke en riglyne wat aangepas kan word tot 'n spesifieke boerderystelsel se behoeftes. So kan ons uitdagings wat elke plaas ervaar afsonderlik aanspreek, en help om grond te verbeter en die toestande waaronder gewasse groei.”

Elke boerderystelsel is uniek, met die heersende grond- en klimaatstoestande en die behoeftes van die produsent wat bepalend is. Daarom moet studies gedoen word wat die voor- en nadele van verskillende agnomiese beginsels en stelsels (byvoorbeeld bewaringsboerdery teenoor konvensionele grondbewerking) opweeg in verskillende produksiestreke in Suid-Afrika.

Meer studies is byvoorbeeld nodig om:

- Vas te stel wat die optimale peil en tydsberekening vir die gebruik van stikstof, kalium, en fosfaat as bemesting is, en hoe dit sou verskil tussen die oostelike en westelike sojaboonproduksiegebiede van Suid-Afrika.
- Te verstaan hoe bewaringslandboupraktyke (byvoorbeeld geenbewerking, permanente grondbedekking en 'n gediversifiseerde gewasproduksiestelsel met of sonder vee) versus konvensionele bewerking (waarin die grond versteur word deur tandoopmakers op planters te gebruik en baie min grondbedekking) die potensiaal van 'n bemestingsprogram in die wiele kan ry. Studies moet ook gedoen word om te bepaal watter invloed die chemiese samestelling van grond, die wedersydse interaksie en funksionering tussen mikrobies, grond en plante en die grond-water verhouding het op die sukses van elkeen van hierdie praktyke; en
- Te bepaal hoe bemestingsbestuursprogramme aangepas moet word volgens die behoeftes van verskillende boerderystelsels.

Uitdagings

'n Groot uitdaging vir boere in die westelike produksiegebied is om grondbedekking te verseker om die grond te bewaar, en ook verdamping sover moontlik te keer.

“Hierdie gebied, wat noordelike dele van Noord-

Wes en sentraal-Vrystaat insluit, ontvang 90% van sy jaarlikse reën tussen Oktober en Maart. Dié somermaande oorvleuel met die groeiseisoen van sojabone. Water is seker die mees beperkende faktor as dit by sojaboonopbrengste kom,” sê drs Haarhoff en Swanepoel.

Hael bly 'n probleem vir die oostelike produksiestreek, wat Gauteng, die oostelike dele van die Vrystaat, en groot dele van Mpumalanga en Limpopo insluit. Vroeë ryp plaas ook 'n demper op opbrengste in die oostelike gebiede, asook die KwaZulu-Natalse streek.

Drs Haarhoff en Swanepoel reken boere wat oorwegend met mielies boer kan nie verkeerd gaan om ook sojabone by hul produksiestelsels te voeg nie. Dit doen meer as net om gewasopbrengste te verhoog. Sodoende kan produsente ook die maniere wat hulle gebruik om onkruid te beheer afwissel, byvoorbeeld die gebruik van onkruidodder en die tydsberekening van grondbewerking. Dit gooi siekte- en pessiklusse om. Danksy biologiese stikstofbinding verbeter die stikstofinhoud van grond. Die gebruik van dekgewasse in mielie-sojaboonrotasiestelsels verbeter die opbou van organiese materiaal in die grond. Dit verskaf meer as genoeg plantmateriaal as veevoer. Dit kan ook as grondbedekking tussen-in kontantgewasse gebruik word.

“'n Verskeidenheid van aanpasbare opsies is nodig om boere, gewaskundiges en navorsers te kan lei om alternatiewe agnomiese bestuursopsies te oorweeg sodat sojaboonopbrengste op die lange duur kan verbeter en stabiliseer. Ons het sulke opsies nodige om moeilike groeitoestande, soos langdurige droogtes, hoë temperature en ons arm grond wat so maklik kompakteer die hoof te kan bied,” sê drs Haarhoff en Swanepoel. ■

Verwysing: Haarhoff, S. & Swanepoel, P.A., 2021. Current and future agronomic perspectives on rainfed soybean production systems in South Africa, *Agronomy Journal* 113 (6), 4527–4540.

Derick van der Walt



Uit sy pen:

Lien se Lankstaanskoene (2008, Tafelberg) is bekroon met 'n Sanlam- en MER-prys, en het eervolle vermelding op die loby-erol ontvang.

Willem Poprok (2010, Tafelberg) is bekroon met 'n Sanlam- en MER-prys, sowel as die Scheepersprys vir Jeuglektuur.

Hoopvol (2012, Tafelberg) is bekroon met 'n Sanlamprys en 'n ATKV Veertjie.

Daan Dreyer se blou geranium (2012, Kwela)

Bambaduze (2015, Tafelberg)

Tussen vriende (2018, Quellerie)

Toring van Jasmyn (2019, Tafelberg)

Dit is met leedwese wat ons die afsterwe van een van ons lede, Derick van der Walt, aankondig. Derick is op 24 Maart in Montana Hospitaal oorlede na 'n ernstige val by hulle huis. Ons gedagtes is met Derick se gesin, familie en vriende.

Derick is op 14 Julie 1958 op Virginia in die Vrystaat gebore. Hy matrikuleer in 1976 aan die Afrikaanse Hoër Seunskool in Pretoria. Hy behaal 'n B.A. Honneursgraad in Kommunikasiekunde aan Unisa en 'n meestersgraad in kreatiewe skryfkuns aan die Universiteit van Pretoria.

Derick was gek oor alle soorte musiek, het graag vaan flik en was baie lief vir lees. Dan soos enige landboujoernalis, was Derick lief vir wyn en lekker kos. Derick was 'n lojale Blou Bul-ondersteuner.

Derick was die eienaar van Greenpepper Communication in Pretoria, 'n firma wat in die produksie van korporatiewe publikasies spesialiseer. Hy was getroud met Lenie en hulle het drie seuns, Tjaart, Werner en André.

Derick was 'n bekroonde skrywer van jeugverhale en van sy boeke is as voorgeskrewe boeke by skole gebruik. ■

In die landbou was Derick ook baie bekend. Hy was vir jare redakteur van Porcus, die tydskrif wat deur SAPPO uitgegee is. Hy was ook vir 'n tyd betrokke by AGRI SA se tydskrif.

Our members remember Derick

Herrinneringe aan Derick

Jennifer Roets

My eerste kennismaking met Derick was 28 jaar gelede toe ek by Agri SA begin werk het. Sedertdien was hy net altyd daar. Hy was saam my opgewonde in goeie tye en steunpilaar in onseker tye.

Hy het heeltemal te gou gegaan. Daar was nog so baie wat hy wou doen en so baie wat ons by hom kon leer.

Derick het alles voluit gedoen. As hy gewerk het het hy dit behoorlik gedoen en een na die ander pryse ingepalm. Wanneer hy 'n blaaskans gevat het het hy dit ook behoorlik gedoen en aan elkeen sy stukkies aandag gegee.

Dit was 'n voorreg om Derick te ken. Hy sal vir ewig in my herinneringe voortleef. Hy was my mentor en een van beste vriende. ■



I wish we had more time...

Magda du Toit

I've known Derick van der Walt for many years. I actually cannot even remember when we first met – it just feels that I have known him for most of my adult life.

One specific encounter with Derick will always remain with me. We were in Istanbul after the IFAJ congress in Germany. Hanlie du Plessis and I stayed over on our way back to South Africa for a couple of days. It was the day after the attempted coup in Ankara, Turkey. We went to the Hagia Sophia and suddenly I heard a familiar voice speaking in Afrikaans – it was Derick and his wife Lenie. Derick was visiting Istanbul with a view of writing a book – *Die Toring van Jasmyn*.



IN MEMORIAM



At the end of 2012, Derick came to this particular event dressed as Austin Powers, although everybody thought he was Elton John.

We told Derick about the Basilica Cistern not far from the Hagia Sofia (the one that also features in one of Dan Brown's books) and after visiting the cistern, Derick was so impressed that it also featured in his book.

I will miss Derick's keen sense of humour, his way with words and the way he always worried a bit about everything. I wish I had could have had the opportunity to enjoy one more glass of wine with Derick. ■



2022 IFAJ International Congress Denmark

The IFAJ 2022 congress will take place in Denmark from 27 June to 3 July.



Quick guide to excursions and fees

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Tuesday, June 28, A1 | 09: The Danish way of handling challenges |
| A2 | 10: Farming is part of the solution |
| A3 | 11: Milk production with focus on climate and welfare |
| A4 | 12: More than 30 million Danish pigs |
| A5 | 13: New plant-based proteins |

Fees:

Main congress 27 June to 3 July 2022 (5 days, 6 nights)

Single room: €1 075

Double room: €975

Room with 3–4 beds: €900

Pre-congress tour to Copenhagen and Zealand: 24–27 June

Single room: €440

Double room: €380

Post-congress tour to Faroe Islands

Single room: €1 750

Double room: €1 500

Link to registration for main congress and post-congress tour:

<https://quanglo.wufoo.com/forms/registration-for-ifaj-2022-congress-in-denmark/>



CALENDER OF EVENTS

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 12 May 2022 | North AGM, 17:30 AgriSA and Zoom. For more information, contact petrie@abevents.co.za . |
| 24 May 2022 | !Xhariep AGM, 16:00. For more information contact eunice@agriexpo.co.za |
| 16–20 May 2022 | NAMPO Bothaville |

Upcoming IFAJ congresses

2022 – Denmark

2023 – Canada

2024 – Switzerland

2025 – Israel

2026 – Kenya

2027 – Croatia

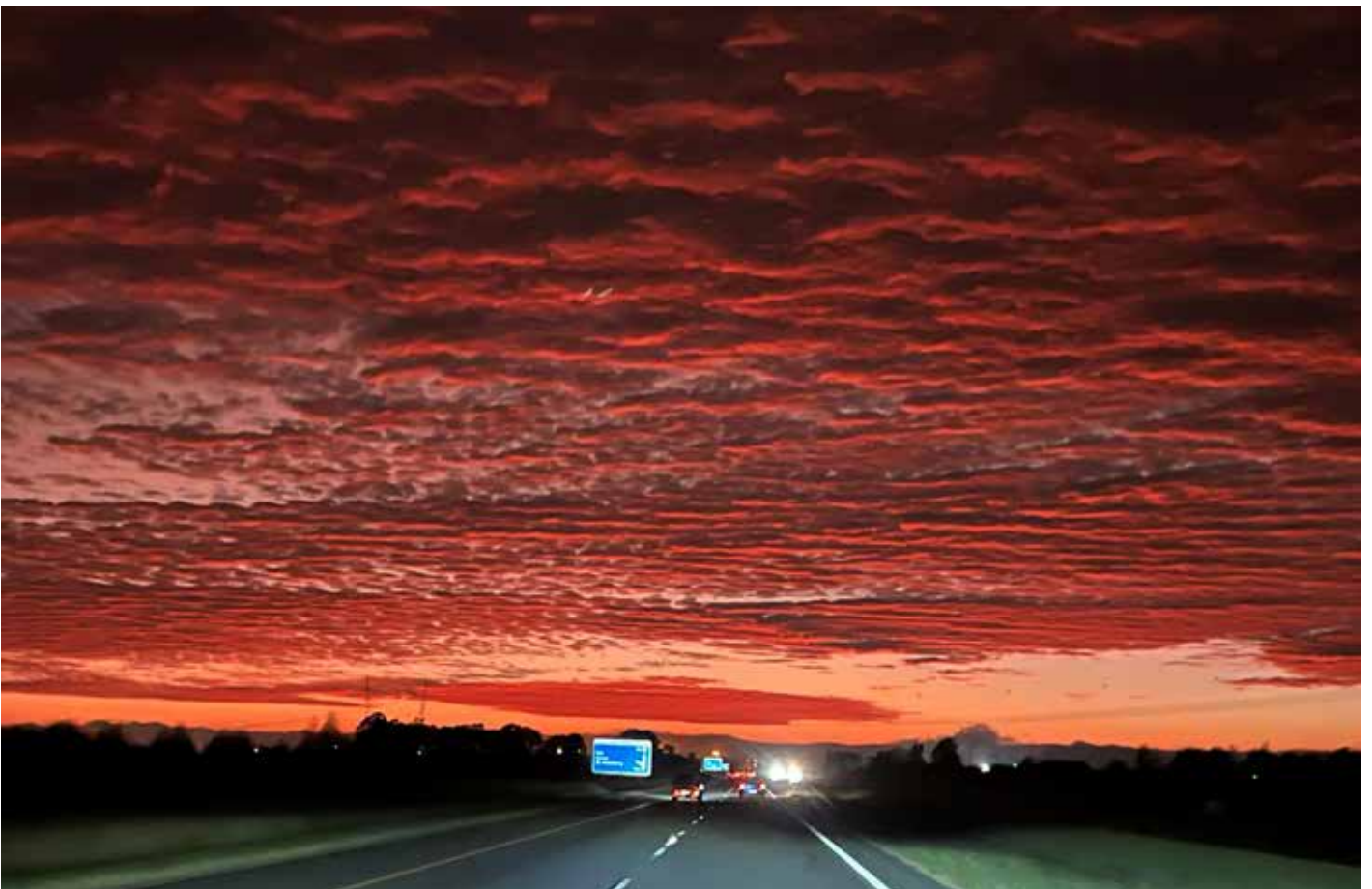
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PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Vaal river near Parys: Charl van Rooyen



Early morning drive towards the easter horizon rewarded us with these spectacular colours: Magda du Toit

Stuur vir ons jou stories

Alle lede word uitgenooi om voor die 15de van elke maand bydraes vir *Agripen* te stuur aan

Magda Du Toit by magda.du.toit@outlook.com of
Petrie Vogel by petrie@abevents.co.za.

Send us your stories

All members are invited to send contributions to *Agripen* before the 15th of each month to

Magda Du Toit at magda.du.toit@outlook.com or
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