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CREDITS

Editor	Greg Penfold
Art Director	Brent Meder
Project Manager	Terrence Damster
Advertising Executives	Wendy Bresler, Gordon Campbell, Thaakirah Julies, Roger B. Buchanan
Distribution Manager	Edward MacDonald
Circulation	Lee-Ann Lawrence
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Client Liaison	Lizel Olivier and Linda Tom
Accountant	Chevonne Ismail
Accounts Department	Brigitte Eberbach
Debtors Department	Nadeema Abdullah
Managing Director	Robert Arendse, robert@capemedia.co.za
Financial Director	Andrew Brading, andrewb@capemedia.co.za
Printers	FA Print



On the cover

CAPE MEDIA HOUSE

28 Main Road Rondebosch 7700 • Tel: 021 681 7000 • Fax: 021 685 4448

E-mail: info@capemedia.co.za
www.capemedia.co.za

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EDS NOTE



GREG PENFOLD
greg@capemedia.co.za

Harvesting the dream

Welcome to the 40th issue of Harvest SA, South Africa's magazine for everyone in agriculture. Although the land is often the site of terribly divisive polemics, it also has the potential to unite us all. That is the perspective we prefer to adopt. Food security is an impossible dream without a sustainable and growing agriculture sector. This much is common knowledge.

All it takes is a little common sense to see that for this to be realised, a sense of urgency and common purpose is required. The fact of the matter, as Nick Serfontein pointed out during his well received presentation during Laeveld Agrochem's recent Seil-Safari 2019 experience, is that the future of agriculture lies in the emerging agriculture space. That is where the opportunity for growth lies, not to mention reconciliation, transformation, sustainability and food security. By helping grow the emerging space, commercial farmers are helping secure the industry as a whole. At the same, enterprising new entrants must not hesitate to seek out mentorship and support from those whose roots in farming go back generations. Ultimately, it is a win-win situation.

One of the highlights of the agricultural calendar is Grain SA's NAMPO show. Last year, Nasie in Gesprek did the important service of publicising the vital role that agriculture plays as well as the plain facts of farming; that a successful agriculture sector cannot be produced by political fiat but requires the cooperation of all stakeholders working to a common goal. We look forward to seeing what progress has been made, as well as the opportunities that have emerged for all South Africans to pitch in for national harvest.



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Leonel Rebelo: 071 331 1997 (Packaging/ Sales) • **Richard Rule:** 072 525 9047 (Machinery/ Sales)

Sergio Biallo: 079 513 5157 (Parts and Services) • **Senzo Mavundla:** 078 785 2217 (Machinery/ Technician)

FOREWORD

Towards a smarter, more efficient future



WILLIE HUMAN
*Manager,
Rovic Leers Johannesburg*

As a farmer, are you mechanically equipped for the future? Is conservation farming part of your vision? Better, faster and more accurate agricultural production in conjunction with the conservation and protection of our natural resources has always been part of our focus at Rovic Leers when it comes to mechanical solutions. We have been involved in every sector of agriculture for 92 years and have adapted to all the changes along the way.

Today, agriculture faces its biggest challenge ever—the combined challenge of feeding a growing population in a world where climate change is continually increasing the pressure on dwindling natural resources. Our response to this challenge is to produce better and smarter designs, as evident in the latest irrigation and planting innovations from our factory in Kuilsrivier, which are on display at NAMPO 2019. Like all our mechanical solutions, they have been developed and manufactured with pride in South Africa.

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the University of Stellenbosch have gone into the development of the Rovic Evenflow® orchard and citrus range. Efficiency is achieved thanks to patented Syncroflow® technology, while monitoring is made easy by the smart EASS® design. This year marks the debut of the citrus nozzle, ideal for low-volume drenching applications.

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During NAMPO 2019, farmers are welcome to visit us at stands B15, B16 and B17 to talk to our enthusiastic, professional and hospitable personnel about the various mechanical solutions available for their needs. We also welcome your insights and feedback as part of the ever-evolving conversation about how, as an industry, we go about solving the challenges facing agriculture today.



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The power of one

Somewhere amid the chaos in Zimbabwe, a green patch of hope

Agriculture in Africa remains mired in controversy: large-scale commercial versus small-scale; genetically modified seed versus open-pollinated varieties; chemical fertilizers versus conservation agriculture methods and expropriation without compensation. While the arguments rage, food insecurity is rising, exacerbated by climate change.

Despite this, the continent's population explosion clock is ticking relentlessly. In 1900 the population of Africa was 133 million – about a third of Europe's population (408 million) at the time; by the year 2000 it was over 800 million and had exceeded Europe's population. Now it is more than 1 billion and by 2100, it is projected to rise to around 4 billion, more than 6 times that of Europe.*

Although half of the world's fertile but unused land is in Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa has the highest proportion of agricultural land relative to total land area of any continent, Africa's farm yields are the lowest in the world. In view of this, it's not surprising that the highest proportion of world food aid cereals go to Africa.

What can one man do to make a difference in the face of such overwhelming odds?

For Brian Oldreive, a successful commercial tobacco farmer in Zimbabwe, the seed for change was planted in his mind back in 1978 with the realisation that growing a crop which was in effect poisoning people was in conflict with his Christian ethics. Using traditional tobacco farming methodologies, he changed over to maize, soya and wheat,



Gift Konjana, co-ordinator of the Mike Campbell Foundation's conservation agriculture training programme, adds materials collected from the environment to a compost heap

but was unsuccessful and found himself in serious financial difficulties.

One day, while walking in a wooded area on his farm during a drought, the idea came to him that he should start digging. As he dug, he noticed that a blanket of leaves was covering the earth and that, less than 2.5cm below this, the earth was still moist. Below this, the organic matter was increasingly broken down as it decayed, providing the nutrients for new seeds to grow.

He realised then that it is not necessary for the soil to be turned over, as is the case with conventional ploughing, which leads to destruction of the soil structure, soil degradation and erosion.

From this encounter with the natural order of growth, decay and new growth, Oldreive developed his highly successful Foundations

for Farming conservation agriculture /zero tillage training model. The training is now available in other countries, including Malawi, South Africa, Zambia and Mozambique, as well as in Mexico, India, the USA, Canada, Austria, Holland and the UK.

In the wake of the Zimbabwean farm invasions, which began in 2000 and have left hundreds of thousands of farm workers and their families destitute and facing starvation, Ben Freeth, previously a regional director of the Commercial Farmers' Union and currently the executive director of the Mike Campbell Foundation, sought solutions to alleviate their plight.

In 2012, in association with Foundations for Farming, Freeth set up a monthly training programme in central Zimbabwe for destitute farm workers and others in their



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A healthy maize crop grown on the Mike Campbell Foundation's conservation agriculture training plot in central Zimbabwe

struggling communities. The 5-day live-in courses, sponsored by donors and provided to 12 trainees at a time, follow the highly successful Foundations for Farming model.

The Foundations for Farming head office in Harare provides two highly experienced trainers per course, coordinated by the Mike Campbell Foundation's national co-ordinator, who is also a trained pastor.

Where possible, training is provided to community leaders as well, notably church leaders who play a vital role in their struggling communities. Their buy-in to conservation agriculture is invaluable because it helps to promote the training and to spread the vital CA message.

If the training is followed faithfully, it enables the trainees to feed their families throughout the year from a small, manageable plot, just one sixteenth of a hectare.

The training focuses on no-till agriculture and comprises: compost production (utilising materials from the surrounding environment), land preparation (including mulching to retain moisture in the soil), liming, composting (instead of using expensive chemical fertilizers which are harmful to the environment), planting, weed control, thinning, top dressing and harvesting. Crop rotation is also taught and encouraged, notably cow peas which put nitrogen back into the soil.

After each course, the coordinator visits the trainees on an ongoing basis to provide mentorship and to monitor their progress. The trainees are also encouraged to pass on the training to between 5 and 10 people within their communities, creating a significant multiplier effect. Only open-pollinated seed is used because it remains true, so the farmers can retain seed from each crop and

replant it the following year. Hybrid varieties are unsuitable for the programme because they are expensive to buy and will yield very little if the seed is kept and replanted.

Freeth has also set up a sponsored open-pollinated seed production project and last year was able to provide free seed packs to 8,000 destitute rural families across Zimbabwe.

In addition to promoting the conservation agriculture model, Freeth is committed to the concept of providing individual property rights and title to the land throughout Zimbabwe.

"Security of tenure will encourage title deed owners to look after the land instead of chopping down the trees to sell for firewood, for example, and not replenishing them because the land is communally or government-owned," said Freeth. "The same applies to overgrazing."

"Land ownership will also enable farmers to take out bank loans and invest in the land and infrastructure, such as vitally needed irrigation equipment," he explained. "It will also enable wives to inherit the property instead of being left destitute when their husbands die because the land reverts to another male in the family, as is so often the case."

"Conservation agriculture and the granting of land title are therefore vital for the advancement of agriculture throughout Africa," concludes Freeth.

*Glyn Hunter,
Mike Campbell Foundation*

29 African countries need food aid: FAO report

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said 29 African countries out of 37 are currently in need of external food assistance, unchanged from November 2017.

The UN food agency listed the countries as Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea and Kenya. Others are Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Afghanistan, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Haiti, Iraq, Myanmar, Syria, Pakistan and Yemen were also listed among the countries....



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Spreading the load

To achieve food security, the agricultural risk model must be re-examined

In South Africa a plate of food is a given to many, but high unemployment and poverty rates mean that for some, it is a luxury they don't receive each day. South Africa's economy is not what it should or could be: reasons include uncertainty around policy, immigrants putting pressure on resources and the job market, and the sense of entitlement so rife in the country.

We constantly hear that we should empower people, but no-one can be empowered sustainably: true empowerment comes from within.

The key to empowerment is that government should create an environment and climate where it is possible to "sell" my labour needs and where entrepreneurs want to invest and do business.

A business must grow to be sustainable. This only happens when the proverbial economic cake gets bigger.

We need healthy economic growth, but government policy is unsustainable. With more than 55 million people in the country, but only five million registered to pay tax of which only three million actually do pay their dues and 17 million receiving some form of social grant, government should seriously consider how this model will be sustained.

Food security starts with the farmer, producing the food that enters the market. Arguably, we can import food, but with

our tax base being what it is, that is a short-sighted solution.

Farmers are often not given enough credit for their contribution to rural stability by creating job opportunities.

Maybe we should differentiate between a farmer and someone who lives on productive agricultural land but depends on a social grant because their agricultural income is insufficient to make a living.

A farmer should simply be defined as someone producing food to be sold at market for a profit, sustainably.

Farmers normally speak about the future from a specific religious conviction realising that we receive our life task from the Word of God, which gives us a certain responsibility to fulfil. We know that God is in control, and the Word shows us that He uses people to fulfil His desire. Think of David, Joseph, Gideon and Daniel. They had to act under the instruction of God.

This shows how we must believe and pray but also work to create a future. Otherwise tomorrow will be just the same as today.

Severe climate challenges over the past few years over which farmers had no control have put many in dire circumstances, endangering their economic sustainability. A farmer cannot carry the financial burden of the production cycle in a three-year period of drought and no crop yields during which inputs costs keep accumulating.

Shouldn't we have started looking at the production process from a different angle, a long time ago?

Primary producers in various commodities and regions have their backs against the wall.

The farmer is the epicentre of profitability: the entire agricultural cycle—from the first input supplier, past processors leading to the consumer—depends on the farmer's production.

Farmers normally speak about the future from a specific religious conviction realising that we receive our life task from the Word of God

Every link in the food chain should be asking what their future will look like when we lose productive farmers and their land.

At present, farmers carry the main risk. For example, the farmer offers up his land to the bank as collateral for input costs like seed, fertiliser, diesel and chemical products. The institutions get their money and profit, but when the farmer has no crops for whatever

reason, the debt—and the risk—stays his responsibility.

It is time to start thinking outside the box and view the risk from a different angle. We must create models that divide uncertainty more equally among all role-players, to protect the primary producer as the centre of the agricultural chain.

At TAU SA, we have started ongoing conversations with many key role-players in order to pool knowledge and create solutions in the best interests of all. The main dilemma is that we are working in silos apart from each other. Everyone wants to push their own agenda. New schools of thought are needed if we want to ensure that everyone in South Africa — internationally seen as a marginal agricultural country — has food on the table.

Producers must rethink their own positions too. Twelve years we suggested syndication: when ten farmers, for example, pool their capacity into a business entity like a cooperative, the mutual benefits are legion. Think equipment, safety and stability.

In some cases, farmers have applied this model and become part of a mega farm instead of becoming a mega farmer. Greater torque when buying and better market development are just a few aspects coming into play.

Soon it will be necessary to pool consumers' knowledge and capacity, too.

We need a conference on this topic and we are working on giving it life very soon. ■

Bennie van Zyl, Managing Director, TAU SA



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Safe harbours

Seil-Safari creates new hope for agriculture



On Monday 1 April agricultural giant Laeveld Agrochem set sail for the second time on their world-first Seil-Safari, a luxury cruise from Durban to Mozambique, which marketing director Corné Liebenberg positions as their farmers' day on water.

As was the case during the first Seil-Safari, levels of enthusiasm were matched by levels of anticipation at what is generally regarded as a cruise of hope. Unlike its predecessor, however, the number of passengers on Seil-Safari had increased from less than 800 to well over 2 000, filling the new, improved MSC Musica to capacity. Participants in the

memorable maritime event included farmers and their families to a select cast of speakers, media representatives, entertainment artists and industry stakeholders.

The luxury cruiser lifted anchor from a cloudy Durban harbour towards rough seas, which some may have felt was indicative of the current political and economic storms, but any negativity was quickly left behind amid a general atmosphere of festivity and optimism.

Palate-pleasing cuisine and food for thought

While passengers enjoyed a 24/7 culinary feast, food for thought, hope and guidelines for the future were equally abundant, highlighting the importance of a frank exchange of views and a free exchange of information. This, said Liebenberg, has proven crucial not only in identifying farmers' concerns but in creating the opportunity for commercial agriculture to take stock of transformation progress and the political temperature. It also provides a much-needed platform for





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technical experts to convey information about issues such as production innovation and technologies aimed at improving yields and growth prospects. An onboard exhibition area also allowed companies to engage directly with a very select group of delegates.

All expertise on board

A noteworthy aspect of Seil-Safari was the concentration of intelligence on board, with a variety of expert panels and presentations delivered every day. It was a rare opportunity to immerse oneself in cutting-edge thought leadership from across the entire agricultural spectrum.

Meyer on megatrends

Prof Ferdie Meyer, director of the Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP), discussed megatrends in agriculture that are likely to impact the way in which farmers do business. These include land reform, infrastructure, markets, trade, climate change and technology.

Pointing out that South Africa has 93 million hectares of agricultural land of which 66 million are owned by white commercial farmers, Meyer emphasized the need for an inclusive economy. "Farmers should not fear land reform; they should rather be part of the process to influence a market-led outcome favouring all stakeholders," he said.

Serfontein's solutions

Another highlight was Free State mega farmer Nick Serfontein's presentation, following a letter he wrote to President Cyril Ramaphosa last year in which he proposed solutions to assist developing farmers. Serfontein, who is also a member of President Ramaphosa's advisory council on land reform, encouraged farmers to become part of the transformation solution and to

not fear change. "My advice to you, is (to) buy more land if you can. There is a future for all of us in agriculture, but we cannot ignore the legitimate need for land reform which we must be an integral part of," he explained.

A niche of their own

A particularly interesting panel introduced the audience to the presenters and director of the award-winning *Nisboere* television series, which seeks to transform perceptions of farming in South Africa. The title is a combination of the Afrikaans words *nis* (niche: position of opportunity, specialty, specialisation) and *boere* (farmer: person who cultivates land or crops or raises animals).

In the words of presenter Malixole Gwatyu, "The term *boer* is widely associated with the stereotypical image of a farmer with a vast tract of land, farming potatoes, mielies and wheat, or raising cattle. There are also many negative perceptions attached to farming in South Africa, and in some circles the profession is restricted to a small minority.

"As the population grows, food security, too, is increasingly becoming a cause for concern and a familiar topic in public discourse around land usage and opportunities. As much as we need large-scale farmers, we must also start envisioning a solution to the imminent national food crisis and become agents for change and innovation.

"Food security exists when people have access to enough food to ensure a healthy life. It's time to stop the blame game and do something about the negativity surrounding the agriculture industry. If we want to improve the food security situation in our country, it is imperative that we attract people from all walks of life, empowering them to change their lifestyle and improve the lives of those around them.

Now in its fourth season, the show has surpassed all expectations.

"The initial expectations were to encourage people to start their own food production enterprises and create jobs over and above contributing to food security. We believe we

have succeeded in popularising this move", says Gwatyu.

"It's been interesting to see what people have been doing out there – from successful snail farms to producing stuff in their kitchens and some producers who prefer to keep their businesses or inventions a secret. More than 200 farm visits later, we humbly believe it has garnered a huge following and keeps growing. We discovered that the concept of "niche farming or products" is also very popular with commercial farmers or farms for good cashflow (e.g. a 30 ha ginger production on a banana farm). So, we wanted to show that niche farming is much broader than we all think. The future entails rolling out the niche farmers concept in different facets such as training opportunities and broaden it to involve more South Africans."

Nisboere received the accolade of Magazine Show of the Year at the South African Film and Television Awards (SAFTA) in March this year.

Stars by day and night

The entertainment menu was equally exciting and varied, including sterling performances from music group Touch of Class, storyteller and comedian Andries Vermeulen, musician and songwriter Elvis Blue and, generally perceived to be the star of the cruise, popular artist Bok van Blerk, whose humorous but heart-felt delivery touched audiences to the core and helped stimulate a vibrant sense of community.

After spending four days on board with hundreds of farmers, selected experts and a variety of stakeholders, Liebenberg believes there are ample reasons for optimism. "Without detracting from the challenges we face, I would say the reigning sentiment on the cruise was one of optimism, underpinned by the realisation of the power that lies in joining hands and working together," he explained. "I think back to the launch of the fourth season of our hugely successful *Nisboere* series, I consider the red carpet that neighbouring countries are ready to roll out for our farmers, and I truly believe that we are standing on the threshold of a brave new era in agriculture," he concluded. ▲

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A changing model

Technology and cash-flow are key to future agri-business practice

As Departmental Chairperson of the University of the Free State's (UFS) Department of Agricultural Economics, Prof. Johan Willemse is a highly respected researcher and thought leader within the agriculture space. Little wonder that farmers flocked to attend his presentation on business models during Seil-Safari 2019. Singled out for attention were the importance of technology and cash-flow. We asked Prof. Willemse for more insights.

Globally, technology is being identified as both the biggest opportunity and a big constraint for farmers. How does this compare with the situation in SA?

Farmers are increasingly converting to technology, not only in terms of switching from analogue to digital, but also the fields in which it is used, e.g. plant nutrition, irrigation, seed etc. With the results indicating that new technology is a prerequisite to remaining internationally competitive, the problem here is ultimately more a question of funding than of any unwillingness.

What is the place of technology in the farmer's business model today?

The fact of the matter is that South African agriculture, including the food sector, is guided by an exceptionally open market policy from government, with a liberal trade approach. A large percentage of the income generated by the agricultural sector is derived from exports, a trend suggesting the need to remain competitive in the export market. Even in the case of the domestic market, imports are a fact of life and in many cases, our import protection is much lower than that of other countries. Again this points to our need to produce at an internationally competitive level and, accordingly, to invest in new technology's.

Why is cash flow increasingly important for farmers to get right?

The majority of farmers do not get into financial difficulties as a result of a bad debt asset ratio, but because of limited cash flow. Of importance against the background of this is the trend of banks and other financiers to focus increasingly on cash flow as an indication of repayment ability.

Why is it important to have your farming business audited?

Government is looking to squeeze more taxes out of all sectors of the economy and, in my experience, farmers have always been an attractive target for tax authorities. Given this reality, the fines for non-payment and the interest on late payment are simply not worth it. It is much cheaper and safer to have audited books and pay the auditor to be save you contributing too much to the taxman.

What are the risks and opportunities of urbanisation in Africa?

Rapid urbanisation is a fact of modern life and is projected to grow significantly. This means that millions more people live in urban areas where they are dependent on retailers and commercial farmer to supply sufficient and affordable food. It also means that competition for scarce water resources will increase.

To increase production and efficiency does not always mean horizontal increases in production. More often it entails vertical expansion and/or identification of areas where new technologies are needed.

How can SA farmers benefit from the switch from rice to pork and poultry as living standards increase?

The dietary habits of the South African population are changing in tandem with urbanization and economic development to a more protein- and plant-based regime. This trend is being reflected by our agri-sector,

with livestock, fruits and nuts as the largest and fastest growing sectors and grains lagging, but still growing as animal feed demand increases. This shift is taking place in both African and Asian economies

How can farmers more creatively identify markets for their products?

Farmers competing in the so-called commodity markets, i.e. maize, wheat, sugar and so on, need to be very price competitive, which normally require economies of scale to reduce costs.

The other option is to pursue niche markets in which products are required to have specific qualities for which farmers are usually compensated with higher prices.

The bottom-line is that farmers need to understand the particular markets in which they operate, as this will determine their approach.

How do government social grants actually benefit farmers?

Social grants are not an unconditional blessing. Without it, however, we would have had a much larger percentage of the population living in hunger (currently 25% lives below the so-called bread line). Government's current spending on social grants is in the order of R200bn of which an estimated 50-60% is spent on food.

If corruption is a fact of life, how best factor it into the business model?

Corruption leads to more crime which, in turn, increases the cost of doing business. Within this context, we not only have to accept that we will have to spend more of our own money to combat crime, but that it will become increasingly difficult in certain areas to farm with specific crops or animals. ■

Greg Penfold



PERITUM

AGRI INSTITUTE

FOR STUDENTS

This is not your ordinary campus. Our students become part of a family while obtaining a nationally and internationally accredited agricultural qualification in crop production or animal production. Our hands-on, practical qualifications ensure that our students are work-ready the moment they receive their qualification.

FOR CORPORATES

A variety of training courses and development programmes are available to agricultural corporates to ensure skilled, engaged employees. We tailor these courses to the needs of our clients, through strong partnerships and experts on the topics.



FOR THE FUTURE OF
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YOU CAN HELP BUILD A SUSTAINABLE AGRI-INDUSTRY

South African farmers have the massive responsibility to provide food to an ever-growing population – locally and internationally. They do this every day with skills they've acquired throughout the years, by keeping up to date with constantly evolving farming practices and utilising the newest technology.

We believe that agriculture is the backbone of our economy. We also believe that, in order to build a stronger and sustainable industry, our country's young agricultural minds need to hone their skills and equip themselves with knowledge and experience. We know that a recognised qualification is the one thing that sets these entrepreneurs apart from the rest.

We also know that young farmers love the smell of early mornings and freshly ploughed fields, the sound of cattle grazing in the distance and a tractor starting for the day's work. We know you would prefer spending your time under the blue skies rather than being surrounded by classroom walls, books and computers.

What if we told you there is a way you can obtain a nationally and internationally recognised qualification and spend your time outdoors working or farming?

This is exactly what we offer at Peritum Agri Institute.

We have a variety of affordable agricultural qualifications – two years of studying after which you will not only obtain your diploma, but you'll also be skilled and work ready.

We offer learnerships, skills programmes and national diplomas in agriculture. Our qualifications include modules like farm business management, farm staff management, farm financial management, marketing of agri-products, crop and animal production, and infrastructure, resource and technology management. Our national diploma programmes in plant and animal production form the basis for learners to extend their learning into more specialised areas of production and management, as well as the establishment of sustainable farming operations through the inclusion of a wide spectrum of competencies.

This is where your own learning journey starts. Where you'll continuously learn new practical skills to make sure that you are set for life.

It is what we call the Peritum Way.

Our campus is centrally located in Bloemfontein where you'll be part a vibrant student life. We offer qualifications structured to give you freedom and practical hands-on experience. Our classes are scheduled only once every six weeks from Monday to Friday, which means you can study and earn an income simultaneously.

We provide these qualifications in collaboration with our agri-partners, including John Deere, Red Meat Producers Organisation (RPO) and AERES to further ensure your exposure to the agricultural sector.

Our students also have the opportunity to experience international agriculture trends, with our first group of top performing students who visited the AERES University in the Netherlands in April this year.





All you need to enrol is your Grade 12 certificate. Even though our study material is in English, our students have the freedom to attend their classes or do assignments in either English or Afrikaans.

And – this is the best part – they don't write exams. We only require a portfolio of assessments to be handed in after completing each module.

Peritum Agri Institute is the centre of expertise where agri companies and organisations can source comprehensive solutions for the design and development of a future-proof workforce. Yet, at our heart, we are about people. Inspiring the aspiring farmers we teach, enabling the experienced producers we assist, advising agri-companies we partner with and empowering the people.

Do you have your Peritum passport for Nampo Harvest Day 2019?

Throughout the year we've visited high schools across South Africa to entice learners to join the Peritum Way. If you have already received your passport, remember to bring it along to Nampo this year as we will be hosting an exciting competition.

Head over to Facebook and like our page, Peritum Agri Institute, and visit our exhibition area at Nampo for more information on how or where to get your passport stamped to stand a chance of winning the competition prize.

If you don't have a passport yet, don't worry! Get yours at our exhibition and join in the fun, learn more about Peritum Agri Institute and our agri-partners while browsing all the products on offer at Nampo.



Are you still unsure of what happens after you've finished your studies?

To summarise – our hands-on courses ensure that you leave prepared to take on a job in the agri industry. You'll have a diploma that is recognised nationally and internationally, as well as access to a network of job opportunities.

Stay ahead of the curve, get formal training with a unique practical approach in collaboration with trusted names in agriculture, enjoy student life and earn an income, all at once.

Join the Peritum Way today!

We look forward to seeing you at
Nampo 2019.

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Only one entry per person per day. Competition commences during Nampo from 14 May to 17 May and only one winner will be announced every day. All entries must be submitted personally by the participant. The outcome of the competition is final and no correspondence will be entered into. If more than one participant has all the answers right, a draw will be done to determine the winner. If no participant achieves full marks for the specific day, the winner will be determined by the highest percentage of correct answers. Price (product) will be delivered by the agent within a reasonable period as arranged with the winner. Price (product) will not be handed over at Nampo due to the nature of the product. Price (product) is non-transferable and cannot be exchanged for cash. If any participant undermines these terms and conditions, the right is reserved for the entry.

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   @SyngentaSA

Back with a bang

Zhauns is here to help grow your business

It is with great excitement that Zhauns launches its new company branding at the Nampo Expo 2019. We are the same company in terms of our experience, knowledge, expertise, technical service and great product range. We are however a better company in terms of our efficiency, customer care, pricing and stock availability.

Just short of 20 years in this business and we have learned much and continue to improve. We have assisted many thousands of people start their own business, helped people improve their business and helped the average South African contribute to our economy in a meaningful way, not to mention helped people "support" their families.

Our company rebranding was necessary, and an opportunity for us to give ourselves a 'new lease on life'. We wanted to be better, stronger and play a bigger role than we already play in the South African economy. We decided that together with the rebranding we should focus on less products, better pricing, improve the stock availability and have more stock of products that are popular and relevant to our country's requirements (less delays). Our range of machines start at pop- corn machines, heat press machines to liquid sachet machines



to brick machines to the ever popular toilet roll machines and up to the large roof sheet machines. We really do cater for everyone, the start- up young entrepreneur to the existing company wanting to increase capacity or the company wanting to diversify into other avenues in order to improve revenue streams.

Agricultural equipment happens to be a category that we see with huge potential growth, especially for the small to medium size entrepreneur. We are selling our small tractors at a very affordable price here at the expo, not to mention any product bought at our expo will receive a fantastic 20% discount. We have items like egg incubators (various sizes), fencing machines, pellet

machines to name but a few. We urge you to visit our website-www.zhauns.co.za (also going through a rebranding phase so be sure to keep an eye on the new exciting look and feel that should be up and running within the next two months).

We have many agricultural products to choose from. The website will also show you many other products and if you would like to know if we have something similar to what you see either in output/design/capacity etc. please do not hesitate to email us on info@zhauns.co.za in order for us to investigate for you.

Besides our website, we urge you to visit any of our three showrooms (CT, DBN and JHB) to view some of our products we have on our showroom floor. Please remember that together with the purchase of our products, we do FREE training/FREE installation from our professional and expert technical team (T's and C's apply).

Please allow me to take this opportunity to wish you well for 2019, to encourage you to visit our website and enquire about any of our products that interest you.

Good luck and may "profits" follow you this year.

*Dion Mostert,
National Sales and Marketing Manager*



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THE FEEDING GAME

Game pellets ensure safe and correct supplementation through the year

The game farm industry in South Africa has shown dynamic growth over the past few decades, and there are currently more than 10 900 farms where game is farmed. The best economic performance of roughage utilisers expressed in return on capital is where the system optimises the use of the cheapest natural resource component in the feed system.

In terms of optimal production per hectare, the seasonal nature of roughage production in Southern Africa means it simply isn't possible to provide for all of the grazing animal's nutritional needs.

Profitability can be increased drastically through supplementation of around 10-15% of total dry matter requirement. However, further increases may lead to increased production but not necessarily increased profitability.

During winter months the veld suffers from a natural protein deficiency. If reproductive animals' protein requirements are not met, reproduction is the first thing that suffers. This means there is less product to sell, while the fixed costs of the enterprise remain the same. Through sufficient and carefully-utilised winter grazing, combined with strategically correct protein supplementation, it is

possible to achieve the goal of optimal production per hectare.

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives of optimal production per hectare of natural resource, provide Epol Antelope 16 pellets (16% crude protein - production pellets), Epol Grazer 14 pellets, (14% crude protein), Epol Game Rancher 12 (12% crude protein maintenance pellets) or Epol Rhino pellets (12.5% crude protein) at 0.5-0.8% of body weight per day. All animals need to be adapted to game pellets after a period of non-use.

Placement of troughs

The single biggest problem with game supplements is that intake is difficult to control due to the wide variety of species that sometimes coexist, as well as the dominant species that eat more than the others. By placing feeding troughs far apart within the camp/area, intake can be spread out more fairly. The purpose of Epol Antelope 16, Epol Grazer 14, Epol Game Rancher 12 and Epol Rhino pellets supplemented at 0.8% of body weight is to maintain the condition of game during the dry winter months when there is a predominantly protein and energy deficiency and to provide phosphate, trace minerals and vitamins. On green summer pastures, Epol Antelope 16, Epol Grazer 14, Epol Game

Rancher 12 and Epol Rhino pellets will stimulate an increase in weight. When intakes are low, it can usually be attributed to the fact that sufficient nutrients are consumed from the pasture.

Research by Ferreira and Van Zyl (2003) showed that methionine, lysine, histidine and arginine were the most limited amino acids required for growth in various game species. The essential amino acid ratios in the game species also followed the same trend. Balancing these imbalances through supplemental feeding of Epol Antelope 16, Epol Grazer 14, Epol Game Rancher 12 and Epol Rhino pellets will greatly benefit optimum weight increase, conception and a shorter inter-calving period in some game species, such as buffalo.

Protein for the rumen

During the winter months in summer rainfall regions, the protein percentage of the grass drops to as low as 3%. However, it is not so much the game that suffers from a protein deficiency as the microorganisms in the animal's rumen. These organisms are responsible for, amongst other things, the digestion of grass and supplementary feed ingested by the animal. The efficacy with which the rumen's microorganisms digest the grass or feed will largely depend on the

animal's protein intake, as nitrogen (derived from rumen degradable protein) is required by the microorganisms to grow and multiply.

As soon as rumen-degradable protein is supplemented on dryveld, nitrogen intake and microbial growth increase and the microorganism population multiplies. The grazing ingested by the game is then digested quicker and the energy therein is released in a form that can be utilised by the game. Therefore, the digested feed leaves the rumen quicker and because the animal's rumen feels empty it stimulates the animal to consume more veld grass and bush. In this way, better utilisation of the dry grassland and leaves is achieved and weight loss can be limited. Epol game pellets contain no urea and are therefore suitable for both ruminant and non-ruminant game species!

Also important is the fact that by the end of winter, the amount of roughage is usually

also limited and a maintenance supplement alone will not be sufficient to minimise weight loss. Therefore, Epol pellets have been formulated to contain a combination of natural protein resources, energy from sugars, starch and hemicellulose, as well as all the essential macro and micro minerals and vitamins. Supplementing the trace minerals copper, cobalt, zinc, manganese and selenium throughout the year in our high rainfall areas at the coast plays an extremely important role in optimising the condition, conception percentage and general health of the animals.

Livestock and game farming combined

A combined livestock and game farming enterprise can have various economic but also ecological benefits. Arid regions are also biologically protected best by accommodating a wide variety of species. For example, Springbok competes 60% with the grazing habits of Dorpers but only 40% with that of Merinos. Some species will be less competitive because they prefer the coarser, longer grasses avoided by both Dorpers and Springbok. Biomass/ha increases up to 40% by combining the correct game with normal livestock farming. Game is also more resistant

to normal livestock diseases occurring in the area where they are raised.

Game species eminently adapted to the available habitat on the farm should always be considered in a combined livestock- and game-farming enterprise. The larger the farm and the more heterogeneous the vegetation and topography, the greater the number of species that can potentially be kept. Whether or not other established game farmers have achieved success with specific species in a comparable environment can also serve as a reliable benchmark. Success not only depends on adaptability but also on competition from other game species.

Trophies and biltong

Only game that can adapt to the rest of the livestock farming enterprise, as well as the purpose of the game farming, should be considered. For example, in ecotourism, the capital expenditure is high and the Big 5 play an important role in marketing. Biltong or trophy hunting can be successfully managed with combined farming. The right species, as preferred by the respective biltong and trophy hunters, must be kept. Biltong hunters prefer affordable game species, while trophy hunters usually want a wider variety of species. ■

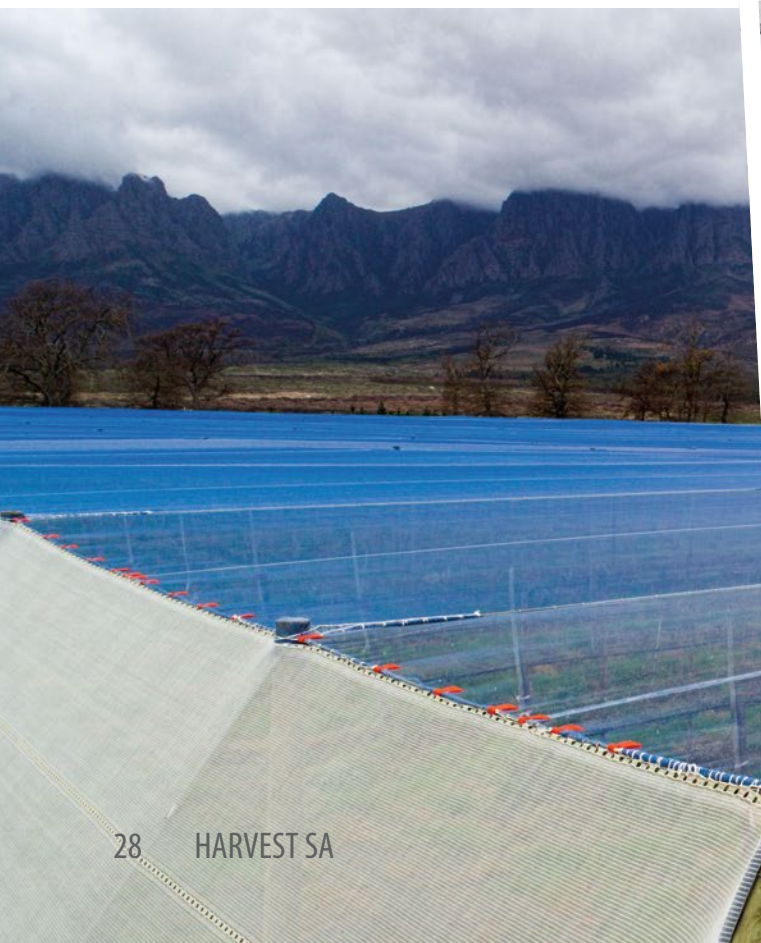
*Dr Vlok Ferreira, National Technical Manager
Ruminants, RCL Foods*





SpectraNet

The ultimate crop protection shade net



With the help of science, innovative light manipulation and UV management, photo-selective colour netting creates an environment that can be manipulated into optimal growing conditions for crops to flourish in. Shade netting can also help benefit water efficiency as it reduces the amount of evaporation from free water surfaces.

A well-constructed shade house provides a protected microclimate, ideal for seedlings, vegetables, cut flowers and pot plants. In hot climates vegetables and cut flowers are grown under shade cloth to reduce heat and light intensity.

The key is to provide the plant with the best quality light, but what is meant by light quality? Photosynthesis is most efficiently driven by blue and red light. Blue light (with a wavelength range of 425 to 500 nm) has higher energy levels which is particularly important for the initial stages of

plant growth as well as during the blooming and fruit colouring process. Red light (with a wavelength range of 650 to 700 nm) provides for excellent plant growth and development due to its moderate energy level.

The quantity of blue and red light as well as the ratio of blue to red light can be manipulated by the grower in order to obtain the best quality, size and colour in fruit or vegetable production or to improve flower size and stem length in flower cultivation.

This process is done by using SpectraNet in different densities and colours, or a combination thereof, to absorb, reflect, transmit and diffuse selected light wavelengths as required for specific plants.

Other advantages of our shade netting are that the fabric does not unravel when cut. If the material is damaged, repair work can easily be done. The flexible, long-lasting and light-weight fabric is easy to erect and "breathes" due to its open mesh configuration.

At NAMPO 2018, Knittex demonstrated SpectraNet's strength by erecting a 2m x 2m

structure and covering it with SpectraNet Code 20. We loaded the structure with 500kg on the Sunday before NAMPO, and left it like that for the entire week.

At the end of NAMPO, our team decided to have a bit fun and a Knittex sales representative climbed on top of the 500kg load. A picture is worth a thousand words and this one says all you need to know about our level of quality and strength.

Knittex is an industry-leading manufacturer of high quality knitted fabric that is durable and 100% recyclable.

Our SpectraNet range provides producers with the highest results and best return on their investment. This is backed by years of research and development to ensure that nets have a guaranteed lifespan of 10 years or more.

This year at NAMPO, we are exhibiting our new bubble tube design and tensile strength at our stand (NO H10B). This impressive display of our shade net fabric's strength illustrates the how we can add value to your crop production process.

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Citrus legend

Homage to the late Gerrit van der Merwe

This legend will always be remembered for a twinkle in his eye and a can do attitude. When a challenge arose he did not only approach it, but ran towards it in order to sort it out.

This legend should have been called “Mr Collaboration”—he firmly believed that doing things together was better than doing things alone—and he had the leadership ability and perseverance to make others believe it. He was a founder member of Citrus South Africa—a grower organization that sought to bring discipline into a deregulated environment.

This legend is viewed as the father of South African citrus exports to the USA. He played a leading role in gaining original access. Once access was gained he realized the strength in working together—as a founder member and Chairman of what is now known as Summer Citrus. In the early years he interacted closely with the Australian industry (at that time the only other southern hemisphere citrus



producing country with US access) in order to promote responsible and orderly marketing into the USA. He travelled extensively

to and through the USA, ensuring that the US program delivers what the buyers expect and what the growers demand.

Under his watch South African volumes to the USA have increased from 200 000 cartons in 1998, to close to 4 million today. During times of crisis this legend kept a calm head, working on solutions that many had either not thought of, or deemed impossible. For this legend nothing was impossible.

I am doubtful that any citrus family has the provenance of this legend—his family have farmed on their farm since 1750. They now farm on 900 hectares of citrus orchards. With a doctrine of inclusivity, the farm is focused on job creation and community upliftment—workers are looked after from an educational, medical and social point of view.

Through his Fairtrade accreditation, and from his own resources, this legend has supported those associated with his farming ventures.

His farming venture earned him the Agriwriters Farmer of the Year award in 2010.

This legend opened his doors and his home to everybody—and all who visited felt truly welcomed. He was extremely proud of his farming venture, and of his children who joined him on the farm. He was a doting grandfather and loving husband to Lizette.

He is well remembered for his sayings—“Moenie ‘n goeie storie met feite opmors nie” (“Don’t spoil a good story with facts”) or “Jy gaan eendag net so dom wees soos ek” (“One day you’ll be as dumb as me”) and “Ons bly eers stil en kyk wat hull ons aanbied” (“We’ll hold still and see what they have to offer”). These sayings and many more depict a man with an irrepressible sense of humor, a love for all and a great adventurer. This Legend died doing what he loved most—exploring Africa.

This Citrus Legend is the late Gerrit van der Merwe. ■

Justin Chadwick, CEO, Citrus Growers Association



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**SALES, LOGISTICS AND FINANCE
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DAMPENING FUEL HIKE IMPACT

Diesel hedging and equipment management are the best antidote to high costs

South African farmers are currently facing the convergence of increased global oil demand, higher oil prices, a weak rand-dollar exchange rate, increasing taxes, an inefficiently applied fuel rebate and significant fertilizer inflation. Given this perfect storm of costs, it will be inevitable for farmers to absorb the latest fuel price increases weighing down on already thin margins.

Improved economic growth, especially in the developed West led by the United States (US), has seen a steady increase in the price of Brent crude since the beginning of 2019. ZAR gains against the US dollar have counteracted increased oil price effects in recent years, but sustained US growth has seen the ZAR perform relatively poorly this year. On a pure pricing level, South African farmers are currently squeezed between a falling ZAR and a rising Brent crude price.

The R5.49 per liter tax on diesel has resulted in a situation where 35 - 40% of the price of diesel in South Africa is made up of taxes. Despite this tax burden making diesel in South Africa significantly more costly than in neighboring countries, the percentage of administered costs in the fuel price is expected to increase further. This year's budget, for example, introduced a 10 cent per liter carbon tax. This is relatively low by global standards, and South Africa's carbon tax rates are likely to grow over time, especially considering the pressure under which South Africa's fiscus is currently operating.

A diesel rebate provides limited relief: 100% of the portion of levies on the diesel price supporting South Africa's Road Accident fund (R1.98 /l) and 40% of the fuel levy (R3.37/l) qualify for South Africa's agricultural

fuel rebate, provided that the diesel is used directly in the production of food qualifies for the rebate. Farmers must keep log books recording which diesel purchases were used for tractors to plow or used to fill harvesters. Fuel used for bakkies or transport of goods to markets or broader distribution to consumers does not qualify.

Finally, South Africa's agricultural fuel rebate is, anyway, limited to primary agriculture. Since food distribution and the broader fuel needs of agriculture's wider supplier and distribution ecosystem do not qualify for the fuel rebate, the rebate is likely to have a limited palliative effect on food inflation when measured across the entire agricultural value chain.

The fact is that production cost inflation is driven less by fuel than by fertilizer, a by-product of the oil refining process. Last year's diesel price increases only accounted for a 0.8% increase in total intermediary agricultural production costs in 2018; fertilizer prices accounted for 5.7%. Fertilizer components, urea in particular, increased 15% over 2018.

When one considers that fuel costs account for 6% of income produced, while fertilizer costs account for up to 21% of income produced, the disproportionate impact of fertilizer inflation on agricultural production, especially grains, becomes clear.

In light of these facts, the question is what farmers can do to manage today's increased production costs and heightened price risk.

Firstly, diesel hedge and option contracts traded on SAFEX provide farmers a mechanism to purchase forward contracts on diesel at fixed prices in ZAR. Farmers can buy three months' diesel supply at a fixed price ahead of planting or harvesting, for example. This can help manage the impact of price spikes

on production costs. The broader agricultural value chain, including beneficiaries, transporters and distributors, can also hedge diesel. As such, hedging diesel provides a mechanism to bring fuel price stability and cost-predictability to the entire agricultural value chain. This has the potential to significantly reduce the carry-through effect of increased fuel prices on food inflation.

Secondly, farmers can use new technologies and up-to-date equipment to reduce running costs. Farmers generally replace their mechanised equipment, especially tractors, every five years or so. New equipment, and especially the technologies to manage and monitor the equipment that new models increasingly come with, will provide an opportunity to increase equipment efficiency while reducing running costs. Instead of merely looking at capital costs when purchasing new equipment, farmers should work closely with tractor manufacturers to develop comprehensive mechanisation plans that can increase performance and production while reducing fuel consumption and other running costs.

Although farmers can do little about global oil consumption and production trends, the international price of Brent crude, taxation or legislation, hedging diesel and reducing running costs through the judicious purchase of equipment and its strategic use are two tools available to the industry in these challenging times.

Applied broadly across the entire agricultural value chain, the sector could successfully reduce the impact of increased fuel prices on food inflation in the broader economy. ■

Marthinus Looock, AgriBusiness Senior Manager at Standard Bank



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CULTIVAR NAME	YEAR OF RELEASE SAGL	PLANT BREEDERS RIGHTS APPLIED FOR /GIVEN	REGISTRATION NUMBER	KG SEED SOLD 2018	MARKETER	COMMENTS
Kariega	1993	-	-	58 550	Klein Karoo Seeds	PBR expired
Elands	1998	-	-	63 850	Klein Karoo Seeds	PBR expired
Duzi	2004	February 2006	ZA 20063421	395 300	Klein Karoo Seeds	
Krokodil	2004	February 2006	ZA 20063422	1 250	Klein Karoo Seeds	
Matlabas	2006	February 2006	ZA 20063423	287 100	Klein Karoo Seeds	Matlabas is planted in the same area as Senqu
Tankwa	2007	February 2009	ZA 20094126	0	Klein Karoo Seeds	Yield not comparable, withdrawn
Buffels	2007	November 2015	ZA 20094127	0	Klein Karoo Seeds	Yield not comparable, withdrawn
Sable	2009	November 2010	ZA20104334	1 500	Klein Karoo Seeds	
Senqu	2010	November 2012	ZA20125173	12 000	Klein Karoo Seeds	
Koonap	2010	November 2012	ZA20125170	6 975	Klein Karoo Seeds	
Kwartel	2010	November 2012	ZA20125171	0	Klein Karoo Seeds	Yield not comparable, withdrawn even though it has good disease resistance
Ratel	2011	November 2012	ZA20125174	625	Klein Karoo Seeds	
Renoster	2014	February 2018	ZA 20186594	36 675	Klein Karoo Seeds	2018 First year commercial, will replace Duzi, limited seed all sold
Koedoes	2014	February 2018	ZA 20186592	86 875	Klein Karoo Seeds	2018 First year commercial, will replace Duzi, limited seed all sold
Steenbok	2016	Applied in 2017				Awaiting PBR, No marketer tendered
Kubetu	2016	Applied in 2015				Awaiting PBR
Usutu	2018	Applied in 2019				At ARC-CO for payment of PBR
Mokolo	2018	Possibly 2019				
Trudou	Possible 2019	Applied in 2018				Awaiting PBR



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The special edition model comes with dramatic styling to differentiate itself from the rest of the Amarok range. It is powered by a 132kW BiTDI engine, class-leading 8-speed gearbox and boasts Volkswagen's 4MOTION® technology.

VOLKSWAGEN INTRODUCES A SPECIAL EDITION AMAROK



With over 30 000 Amaroks sold in South Africa since launch in 2010, Volkswagen has added a special edition Amarok, the Dark Label.

From the outside the special edition Amarok Dark Label distinguishes itself from the rest of the Amarok range through the locally-sourced MAXE matte black styling bar with 'Amarok' lettering, door handles and exterior mirrors

The Amarok presents an aggressive stance and offers everything that could be expected from a rugged bakkie

in matte black, matte black highlight front protection grille with dark chrome lacquered ledges, tinted rear windows, blacked-out B-pillars, black side sills, 'Dark Label' décor film on the sides, smoked taillights and new 18-inch 'Rawson' alloy wheels.

Inside the Amarok Dark Label, the new black "Greenhouse" headlining, Vienna leather seats, silk glance chrome air vent borders and floor mats embroidered with 'Dark Label' lettering continue the design theme of this special model.

Functional and standard features of the Amarok Dark Label include bi-xenon headlights with LED daytime running lights, front and rear park distance control, tyre pressure monitor, 'Plus' multi-function on-board computer, 'Composition Media' infotainment system, app-connect with voice control and multi-function steering wheel.

A comprehensive list of safety equipment comes as standard on the special edition Amarok, including on and offroad Electronic Stabilisation Programme and Volkswagen's

award-winning Automatic Post-Collision Braking System which can reduce the chance or severity of a secondary accident in the event of a collision.

Additionally, the Amarok Dark Label can be customised with the following optional features; seat heating (winter package), increased GVM/ heavy duty suspension, rear view camera, climatronic air-conditioning, 'Discover Media' infotainment system (including Satnav) as well as rubber floor covering for the cab and passenger compartment.

With a length of 5.25 metres and a width of 2.23 metres including the mirrors, the Amarok presents an aggressive stance and offers everything that could be expected from a rugged bakkie. The voluminous loading area of the Amarok Dark Label is wide enough to accommodate a Euro pallet placed sideways.

Under the skin, the Amarok's powerhouse is the tried and tested BiTDI engine which generates 132kW from 4 000 rpm



and 420Nm of torque from 1 500 to 2 000 rpm. The engine is paired with a class-leading 8-speed automatic transmission and permanent 4MOTION® four-wheel drive system.

The Amarok Dark Label completes the zero to 100 km/h sprint in 11.3 seconds and has a top speed of 179km/h. Amarok Dark Label Recommended Retail Price (Vat and emissions tax included): R688 900.

Service and Warranty

The Amarok Dark Label comes standard with 3 year/100 000 km manufacturer warranty, 5 year/90 000 km Genuine Automotion Service Plan and 6 year anti-corrosion warranty. The service intervals are at 15 000 km.



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Proven staying power

Best service, prices and quality in pruning from Trim Cut

Trim Cut was founded by me, Tommie Schoeman, in 2008. We started small with only one locally built machine. With a lot of hard work and effort we quickly grew into a small, yet efficient company. With no fewer than four machines, we worked from Tzaneen, covering the whole of Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Kwa-Zulu Natal, East and Northern Cape. Trim cut has mechanical skirting and pruning machines as well as selective hand pruning equipment.

Our mission:

- To offer our customers the best service and prices without compromising the quality of our work
- To maximise the reliability of our equipment
- To increase the pruning productivity to the highest standards
- To find pruning solutions to our customers' pruning problems
- To become the preferred company in agricultural contracting & sales
- To encourage our employees to realize their full potential and actively improve themselves.

In 2012 TOL Incorporated offered me the agency for sub-Saharan Africa to distribute their wonderful range of products.

Mechanical pruning machines designed and built to last

Staying power in business is earned. Doing business year after year in seasons both good and bad not only confirms sustained success but also demonstrates a company's ability to adapt to meet the changing needs of its customers. TOL Incorporated has been manufacturing agricultural equipment for nearly 40 years, proving its staying power.



TOL specializes in mechanical pruning machines. The California-based company also builds pruning/picking towers and ADI hydraulic pruning tools. From the innovative design behind every TOL machine to the sturdy materials used in the manufacturing process, TOL agricultural equipment is built to provide years of hassle-free use.

Made for a variety of crops in diverse climates and topographies, TOL agricultural equipment is used throughout the world. From South Africa to Mexico, Georgia to New Mexico, Canada to Texas, and its home state of California, TOL has earned repeat business from customers who recognize TOL's reputation for quality and safety. Growers and dealers alike appreciate TOL's superior customer service.

When growers approach TOL with specific requests to improve yields or increase efficiencies, this manufacturer listens and responds. One example of this adaptability is

the TOL TH4500 Hedger/Topper Mechanical Pruning Machine. Designed specifically for pecan growers, it effectively reaches the heights and cuts the size of wood characteristic of pecan trees.

Tol-Inc's range of pruning machines are purposely built for the best quality prune and highest productivity rate.

Excellence at Trim Cut begins with quality components and continues through ongoing inspections until the moment of delivery. Going beyond the sale, Trim Cut is committed to providing the very best service. Long-time customers still operate machines purchased from TOL through Trim Cut in the early days of their relationship. They can attest to TOL's staying power.

To learn more about Trim Cut and the products like the TH4500, contact Tommie Schoeman on mobile number +27 82 570 7034



AGRI Pruning Solutions



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People of the stars shine bright

Land ownership makes Naledi villagers self-reliant



Naledi villagers established a farming co-operative run by around 20 members

About 23km from Ficksburg in the Free State lives a working-class community of about 100 residents in a village called Naledi. In 2014 nonprofit social activist initiative Earthrise Trust purchased a farm and transferred ownership of some of the land to the villagers.

Of the 273 hectare farm, which Earthrise owns, 130 hectares is arable and 143 hectares is suitable for grazing. After a series of meetings with residents, Earthrise transferred 42 hectares into the community trust for the building of homes and other social infrastructure, such as sports fields.

In addition, Earthrise reserved 28 hectares for the Naledi farming co-operative and another 110 hectares for the cattle owners' association, created by Naledi residents who own livestock, for grazing.

Since then, the residents have created a self-sustaining village and other small community-based enterprises, eradicating unemployment. Some of the profit from these enterprises is used to build and invest in infrastructure, and development programmes to meet their needs.

Government hold-up

Naledi, which means star, falls under the local municipality of Setsoto, which is characterised by the natural beauty of the Thabo Mofutsanyana district. Farm workers and tenants who sought accommodation closer to their places of work within the scenic mountains and valleys built the village in the late 1970s.

Although Earthrise transferred ownership of the land in 2014, the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform has failed to make the transfer official.

The village is still in short supply of basic services such as sanitation, electricity and proper housing.

On 14 September 2014, Earthrise sent a letter to the department saying the trustees had conducted research that found "the most important asset on the farm was the people and the most important asset of the people, beyond their knowledge and skills, was property they could call theirs".

The changemakers

"People in the past were always looking for employment, but now the people work for themselves," says Anton Chaka, 55, a village

leader and chairperson of Naledi's farming co-op, which employs at least 20 people.

Chaka started working as a 'garden boy' in 1981 and became the assistant manager of Rustlers Valley Farm, where a well-regarded annual music festival used to take place. He says his managerial position came about because Frik Grobbelaar spent most of his time away from the farm, which was owned by a company called Rustlers Valley. Grobbelaar was the company's majority shareholder from the 1980s until 2008, when he died of a heart attack. The year before, a fire had engulfed the farm and killed all the livestock.

According to a document seen by New Frame, the farm was no longer being used for commercial purposes and, in August 2013, the smaller shareholders in the company decided to sell it.

Earthrise Trust was the preferred buyer because of its "vision outlined by the trustees to use the land to develop an integrated participatory partnership approach to building sustainable rural communities and a commitment to transfer a portion of the land over to the residents of Naledi village," according to Earthrise.

Hope and permanence

Following a successful bid and conveying process, the sale was registered in December 2013.

Residents such as Chaka and the village elders say life was uncertain because of the threat of evictions, caused by lack of ownership of the land.

Most of the roofs in the village are not nailed down but kept in place by stones, a symbol of the previously temporary nature of life there and of unpredictable evictions. But now that they own the land, a number of the residents hope to build permanent brick houses.

The struggle for liberation did not end in 1994, says Earthrise executive director Gino Govender. People are still oppressed in various ways, through a lack of land ownership and economic opportunities, he adds.

Govender says the government has created a dependent citizenry by forgetting that "people are agency of liberation and [are capable of] leading their own transformation, which is an ongoing process ... Naledi becomes a centre of what's possible when you have a democratic governance of the commons ... We practise ancient wisdom that our ancestors taught us, and it makes life worth living."

Farming in a different way

The co-op grows vegetables such as tomatoes, cabbages, sugar beans and pumpkins. Since it started in 2015, it has received funding from a number of organisations and companies. "We are looking at farming in a different way and this land is not for sale. It is for our children," says Chaka.

Old Mutual gave the co-op R1.5 million in 2015. Chaka says most of this money was spent on input costs, irrigation and the monthly stipends each co-op member is entitled to get. This funding lasted a year and a half.

A year later, hailstorms threatened the co-op's crops. "We needed to get a shade net and our cabbages had pests," says Chaka.

They approached Tsebo Foundation, an organisation that "specialise in initiatives that enable people to support themselves, employ others, build community roots and create economic stability", and in 2016 the foundation agreed to donate R1.3 million to

build tunnels in which vegetables could be grown year-round.

Last year, the Industrial Development Corporation gave them R4.9 million. According to Chaka, the government dragged its feet but eventually donated R2.13 million.

The father of two says they look out for one another in the village. "Naledi is different from other villages. Here, we educate our own children and we make sure that every child is well taken care of ... No one should be left behind and go hungry. We make sure that at least one person in each family is working."

"I want to go back to the farm"

Jappie Lephatsi, 56, is the chairperson of the adjacent Franshoek village and works as a manager at the Earthrise Mountain Lodge. In 1979, after completing standard 4, Lephatsi went to work on a gold mine in Welkom in northern Free State.

"At the mine, I went underground for a month ... I did not like the underground work because there is nothing meaningful you could possibly do afterwards due to health-related issues that a mine creates."

Fed up with being underground, he wanted to move to the mine's workshop, where he could do maintenance-related work. In 1999, the mine stopped producing gold, leading to a sizeable number of retrenchments. Lephatsi was not retrenched. Instead, the mine asked

him to move with them to their new regional offices in Welkom because of his outstanding work performance.

"I said to them, no, I want to go back to the farm. They gave me 14 days to think carefully about my decision." Lephatsi says he never looked back to the mines, a decision over which he has no regret.

He said that during his upbringing, no one really cared for his education. Now he has committed himself to making sure young Naledis have a better future.

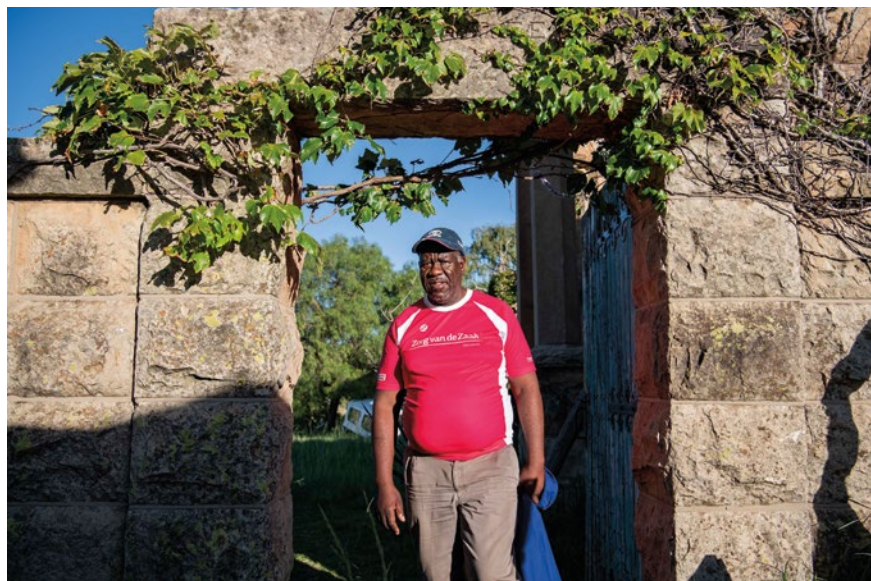
"In 2016, we spent three months building a crèche for the little children and I was in charge of that construction from the beginning until to the end," says Lephatsi.

Smart structure

The Nelson Mandela Centre of Learning, which cost R320 000 to build, "is a Canadian-style building and if the weather is hot, the crèche gets cooler insider and when it is cold outside, it gets warmer inside".

It was built to improve the children's literacy so that they transition smoothly into primary school. Masontaya Mokhonatsi, 40, is a teacher at the crèche. She told New Frame that they named the centre after the former president of South Africa "because he earnestly liked children to be educated". ■

*Magnificent Mndebele
First published on newframe.com*



Jappie Lephatsi, 56, is the chairman of the adjacent Franshoek village and works as a manager at the Earthrise Mountain Lodge

Growing the farming community

Small-scale growers key to sustainability of South Africa's rural economies

With more than 125-years as one of the biggest sugar producers in the country, Illovo Sugar South Africa remains convinced that small-scale sugar cane growers not only play a major role in the industry; but are also the lifeblood of many rural communities.

It is in that light we have been at the forefront of supporting emerging growers everywhere we have presence. With more than 3 000 small scale farmers on our books (the latest statistics indicate there are 20 000 small scale sugar cane growers in the industry) supplying us with sugar cane, we are acutely aware of the importance of small-scale growers not only in contributing to our company's success, but also helping support the growth of the rural economies we operate in.

As a major supplier of sugar to the consumer and industrial markets which produce syrup and speciality sugars, we need the support of sugar cane growers to ensure

we meet the demand for our products so that we remain South Africa's leading sugar producer.

Our flagship Sezela Mill complex on the south coast of KwaZulu-Natal produces furfural and its derivatives while high-quality ethyl alcohol, from which various grades of alcohol are made, is produced at our Merebank plant on the south of Durban. Our Merebank plant also manufactures lactulose.

As we value the contribution of small- and medium-scale growers, Illovo has continued to work with this stakeholder group to promote sustainable agriculture and economic development activities.

We develop these programmes as we believe that the success of small-scale growers is our success and key for the transformation of South Africa's multi-billion sugar sector. Illovo Sugar further provides extensive technical, financial and capacity-building support to small-scale sugarcane growers with the purpose being enabling the productivity and sustainability of these growers and land reform growers.

Our company has also entered into a partnership with the National Treasury's Jobs Fund initiative to provide capital for a project to develop 3 000 hectares of uncultivated small-scale grower cane land on the South Coast of KZN, bringing much-needed economic activity to many villages and towns in the region. All in all, the three-year project brings in some R70-million annually into these rural economies.

Through the project, communal land is being developed into sugar cane farms owned and operated by the community. This three-year project, which commenced in 2017, has helped generate employment opportunities for communities in farming as well as secondary activities associated with crop husbandry, crop removal and logistics. This initiative reaches approximately 2 000 small growers.

According to the World Bank's South Africa Poverty and Inequality Assessment Report 2018, KwaZulu-Natal accounts for the biggest numbers of the poor in South Africa, mainly because of its share of the population





AN ILLOVO SUGAR AFRICA COMPANY

size. To overcome this, Illovo has paid special attention to transforming rural economies through supporting land transformation and ownership of land by black people.

Our own land reform programme has seen us sell 28 000 hectares of land to black farmers. To date, our own land redistribution initiative – comprising 55% of our original land portfolio – has facilitated the establishment of more than 50 black mid-scale or large-scale commercial farming enterprises.

Who Is Illovo Sugar South Africa?

Illovo Sugar South Africa is a proudly South African business with a deep heritage in the rural KwaZulu-Natal having established operations for over 125 years. It is a diversified agri-processing business with the core being sugar production for local market sales. The company has, over the years, invested heavily into process innovation to benefit by-products of sugar cane production. We convert molasses to generate alcohol and successfully developed groundbreaking technologies for processing bagasse and select plant material to extract furfural for industrial uses.

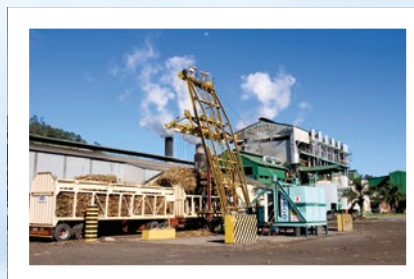
Our commercial activities span the global market place with sugar and alcohol-focused on the local South African market. Sugar exports are done through the Sugar Associations' central desk. Furfural alcohol is mainly an export product competing with significantly larger operators out of Asia.

Illovo Sugar South Africa is a level 1 BEE company, a proud accolade, and a demonstration of the commitment the business has to transformation in line with country objectives. The business has been on the journey commencing with the establishment of black commercial growers and a black industrialist in sugar milling. We have, and will continue to, invest in skills and enterprise development as well as employment equity, diversifying the representation of our workforce.

As a rural-based business, our operations are a critical component of the rural economy, from the people that are employed and suppliers associated with the activities directly and indirectly generated by our presence. We have thus invested in the sustainable

development of growers in these rural economies from black small-scale to land-reform growers, which has resulted in significant improvements in financial inflows into these communities. Our aspiration remains to grow these initiatives in partnership with relevant government programs to further support economic growth in these rural communities in which we operate.

Illovo Sugar South Africa



Adapt or die

How droughts will affect South Africa's broader economy

Droughts have become more commonplace in South Africa in recent years. In the past two decades since 1990, 12 of those years were defined as drier years compared to only seven years in the previous 20 years.

The latest period included three consecutive years of drier conditions, between 2014 to 2016. In some regions, such as the Western Cape, the country's second largest province in terms of economic contribution, the drought continued into 2017.

These droughts are associated with climate change – the effect of human behaviour on the planet's temperature.

Over the past two years the Western Cape was forced to set strict water restrictions—including curbs on irrigation—as dam levels dropped to below 20%. This had a direct effect on agriculture and food production, as well as ripple effects across the country. In the province more than R5 billion was

lost to the economy, largely due to the drought. This matters for the country as a whole because the Western Cape contributes 22% to national agricultural GDP. And the deciduous fruit and wine industries, and increasingly the citrus industry, are key exports and contribute significantly to South Africa's overall agri-economy.

The economic implications of all of these outcomes are dire.

From 2015 to 2017 South Africa's economic grew by a mere 1.1% average per annum, with the agricultural sector growing at a rate of less than 0.5%. That's not enough to make a dent on the country's biggest challenges, which include high rates of inequality, poverty as well as unemployment.

Western Cape as a case study

Tourism sector

The drought negatively affected the province's tourism sector. Even though the impact hasn't been quantified, the number of tourists visiting the province went down during

the drought period. This was also reflected in the fact that year-on-year overnight guests in the region grew at a mere 1% from 2016 to 2017, compared with 7% a year earlier. Some hotels had bookings declining by between 10% and 15% in 2018, compared to 2017.

Tourism in Western Cape is estimated to employ about 300 000 people.

Food prices: the impact of drought on food prices was severe with staple food items such as maize increasing.

This affected mostly poor households which spend relatively large portions of their income on food—as much as 34% of their total income.

Also, lower agricultural production has affected food supplies. This in turn could increase food prices and food insecurity.

Jobs

The Western Cape has the biggest agricultural workforce in South Africa – nearly a quarter of the country's farm workers are employed in the region. And agriculture and

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agro-processing are responsible for 18% of employment opportunities in the province.

The drought has led to job losses in the province's agriculture sector. The 2017 third quarterly labour force survey showed that approximately 25 000 jobs were lost from the agricultural sector nationally. More than 20 000 of these were lost in the Western Cape province. Many were associated with the drought.

Most farm workers are unlikely to get jobs elsewhere, which means that job losses will worsen poverty.

Impact on the fiscus

If the pattern of drought continues, it's likely to affect the country's financial standing too. This is for a number of reasons.

Firstly, the National Treasury will have to continue spending money on disaster relief, as opposed to other economic activities. This year, for example, the South African government may need close to R3 billion sought by farmers severely affected by the drought.

Future assistance could be in the form of helping build infrastructure like boreholes and supporting farmers who need to reduce stock.

Secondly, continuing droughts could force up the country's import bill. Declining agricultural production could lead to shortages of some food items like maize, wheat and some protein sources such as meat and eggs. This could, in turn, force South Africa to import more.

Thirdly, a shortage of local produce could push up prices. This could affect food inflation and push up the consumer price index. Given that the South African Reserve Bank uses interest rates to control inflation, this could lead to higher interest rates which will affect the broader economy.

Climate change a reality

Climate change poses a threat to everyone. Governments, farmers and society in general need to take proactive steps to deal with the outcomes of changing weather patterns.

Over time, agricultural production will need to adapt to new methods and approaches. These may include the use of drought-resistant seed varieties, modern technologies to adapt and taking up more crop insurance. These approaches are readily available to farmers who have the resources. It's the developing, smallholder and emerging farmers that remain at risk.

Governments can assist farmers by providing infrastructure support making new laws that support the conservation of resources. And government can provide financial support for the development of new technologies as well as seed varieties that are adaptable and can withstand severe weather patterns.

This requires better planning. In addition, government must work closely with the agricultural sector. ■

*Mmatlou Kalaba, Senior Lecturer in Agricultural Economics, University of Pretoria
theconversation.com*

Climate smart

SENER360 is central to irrigation planning

At SENER360 we are proud to not only supply products, but build long term relations with our clients by delivering a package of high quality and excellent service. The SENER360 centre pivot, manufactured since 1994, is known for its excellent quality and strength above industry standards. We have been part of the irrigation industry for more than 25 years and have interests in South Africa, Africa and in the rest of the world.

We are passionate about our centre pivots. We do not only build a tough, very strong structure but spend time on small detail to make a big difference in your everyday life.

Structural stability

SENER360 tower trusses are manufactured from pipe and not angle iron as is commonly used in other brands. The advantage of the lighter material enables us to use two more sets of trusses per tower than is possible with angle iron trusses, ensuring an exceptionally strong structure. An added advantage of the pipe truss structure is its aerodynamic superiority above angle iron as a structural material. That is the reason for a SENER360 machine withstanding a windstorm of 158km hour (actual field data), confirming the reason why no SENER360 was blown over in a recent storm (the only brand not blown over). Standard long base beams, sturdy tower supports, stabilizing rods, diagonals and a low centre of gravity contribute to exceptional stability.

Innovative control panels

The same modular principals used throughout the entire SENER360 design is also visible in our control panel design. Our 'basic' control panel is similar in functionality to the top panels of most other brands. Standard functions include on/ off, feedback

when the machine stops, direct mm adjustment, showing position of the machine, low pressure and pressure start, part circle and sector adjustment with variable mm application per sector, auto reverse with variable mm application on return, scheduling options and many more!

All new and old** SENER360 panels can be controlled by your cell phone*, Tablet*, computer or base station by adding a simple plug in "Communicator" unit of your choice (GPRS/ cell network, Wi Fi or radio unit).

Full pump control, VSD control and feedback is also available on the same system.

**(Android, IOS and other)*

*** (older control panels are limited to on/off, direct mm adjustment, run and stop feedback communication.)*

New panels have full function internet controls, record keeping, graphs, etc.

"Last sprinkler" solutions

One of the common problems with centre pivot irrigators is the regular blockage of the last nozzle. We have solved this problem in a simple innovative way, constantly keeping the last nozzle clean throughout the irrigation cycle.

SENER360 centre pivots are equipped as standard with the high-quality, high-performance Komet Twister sprinklers operating at 10psi (0.7 bar) or optional 6psi (0.42 bar), mounted on drop pipes.

This top-quality product ensures outstanding water distribution and water in the soil, even in trying climatic conditions.

Heavy-duty motors and gearboxes

The standard drive train of a SENER360 centre pivot is made up of heavy duty wheel gearboxes with an optional five year extended warranty*, driven by a 0,56kW (40:1) motor gearbox combination (30:1 and others are optional.) *T&C apply

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Why Frexus® for the Food & Beverage Industry?

Innovative Water Care (Pty) Ltd is a leading manufacturer of internationally recognized disinfectant brands such as HTH® for residential swimming pools, HTH Scientific® for commercial swimming pools, industrial and municipal applications and Frexus®

Our Frexus® brand is formulated for the disinfection of water used for the washing of fruits and vegetables, cleaning of hard-surfaces, sterilization of supply water, etc. Frexus® carries SANS 1853 approval and is registered with the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS) for hard surface disinfection in the Food & Beverage industry. Innovative Water Care is in the process of registering the Frexus® range with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) under Act 36 of 1947.

Disinfection for the Food & Beverage Industry and sanitization in swimming pools differs fundamentally in the minimum chlorine concentrations required for effective microbiological control.

With our swimming pool product range, we recommend that available chlorine levels in swimming pools are maintained between 1–3 ppm for effective sanitization and bather comfort. Food washing applications require available chlorine concentrations ranging from 70 – 150 ppm due to the organic load introduced to the wash baths by the produce. This difference in chlorine concentrations

resulted in the formulation of the HTH® range for swimming pools and the Frexus® range that can be applied at higher available chlorine concentrations as required by the Food & Beverage industry.

Apart from the aforementioned reason, we do not recommend use of our swimming pool formulations in the Food & Beverage industry due to their application specific benefits.

HTH® Granular+ Mineralsoft was developed for the sanitization of swimming pool water. The Mineralsoft range contains additives with unique benefits associated with swimming pool use, but is not approved for application in the Food & Beverage industry. The Frexus® formula contains no additives that could adversely affect produce quality or cause excessive Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) when applied at recommended levels for post-harvest washing.

HTH® Floater+ contains cyanuric acid that protects chlorine in swimming pools against UV-destruction when applied at a level of < 50ppm cyanuric acid. Several floaters would



be required simultaneously to obtain the available chlorine required for disinfection in post-harvest wash baths. This could easily result in cyanuric acid levels higher than 50 ppm which could overstabilize the chlorine rendering it unavailable for disinfection. Frexus® contains unstabilized chlorine only and therefore cannot cause overstabilization of chlorine.

At Innovative Water Care, the diversity of customer applications and their various disinfection needs are the driving forces behind our comprehensive product offering. Please contact our sales team for guidance on the most suitable products and solutions for your application.

Stressing out over water

Agri-processing demands greater incentives for efficiency

On 25 March, Agbiz and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, jointly hosted a workshop on water use efficiency in agri-processing. Agbiz members and other companies involved in the agricultural, manufacturing, paper and pulp value chains gained insight into the matter through presentations and panel discussions that included representatives from the IFC, private companies, industry associations, academia, government and community cooperatives.

The first session allowed private companies to showcase some of the successful initiatives that they have implemented and the challenges they have experienced by investing in technologies and management practices that resulted in significant savings in water use. This was likewise bolstered by case studies showcasing similar research

conducted by academia. The aim of this session was to showcase what can be done, but also for other companies to hear first-hand the benefits that these investments have yielded.

Many of these solutions are relatively simple, but innovative, such as using brine instead of potable water to clean equipment and floors. The second session focused primarily on the regulatory environment and possible amendments that would incentivise and streamline investments into more efficient water use. The panel discussions and presentations provided for a diversity of views and robust debate. Be that as it may, there were a few recurrent themes that clearly came out of the discussion.

Firstly, competition for water resource allocations will come under increasing pressure in the future as our water resources are highly stressed and the situation is exacerbated by an increasingly variable climate. Future scarcity therefore acts as the biggest push factor driving companies towards

these investments opposed to a reduction in costs as water continues to be a relatively small input cost. Be that as it may, there are concerns that allocations and restrictions operate from a historical baseline that does not distinguish efficiencies and inefficiencies.

Put bluntly; restrictions are equally imposed on efficient and inefficient companies. Greater incentives therefore need to be developed to reward efficient firms and encourage investment. Aside from available capex, a critical component required for the successful implementation of water use efficiency improvements is partnerships with local government and regulatory entities. The resultant benefits are likewise not only limited to economic gains or business sustainability as the resulting excess created can result in meaningful socio-economic benefits in an economy whose growth may increasingly become constrained by water availability. ■

Theo Boshoff, Agbiz head of Legal Intelligence

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Getting food from farm to fork

New strategy expands NMISA's world-class infrastructure offering

South Africa has developed a quality infrastructure over a period of 70 years to support its trade, the manufacturing industry and to provide an essential component of environmental health and safety and effective law enforcement. The global and domestic situation is changing fast with new technological advances and a looming African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The National Metrology Institute of South Africa (NMISA) is responding accordingly with one view on the international and regional developments and the other on the national priorities and needs and the Industrial Policy Action Plan, IPAP 2018. The need for a much stronger export effort, gearing up for the digital industrial revolution (Industry 4.0), beneficiation, institutional co-ordination and raising IPAP impact are specific drivers for the strategy. Additional drivers are the regulation of medical devices and subsequent need for traceability, the needs from law enforcement agencies and laboratories.

NMISA's Strategy 2019 to 2024 expands the traditional offerings of the application of measurement units and the establishment of National Measurement Standards to a comprehensive measurement offering to Government, state-owned enterprises and applied/industrial



metrology. The world class measurement infrastructure is placed at the disposal of the national manufacturing community and the populace and leads the region to international and inter-regional acceptance of products and goods.

Proficiency testing and reference materials in the agricultural sector

The agricultural sector is central to South Africa in terms of food security as well as its contribution to the economy through exports and job creation.

Successful

export of agricultural produce and products is dependent on goods meeting specification and regulations as determined by the importing country. To prove that goods are suitable for sale internationally involves laboratory testing of nutritional content as well as the level of contaminants such as pesticides or biotoxins. If laboratory results do not agree with import laboratories, entire consignments can be lost if notifications or recalls occur. To assist laboratories in obtaining the required traceability and international comparability, the National Metrology Institute of South Africa (NMISA) is committed to supporting the agricultural sector through proficiency testing and traceable reference material production.

What is proficiency testing?

Proficiency testing proves that a laboratory can obtain the same accurate result, when testing the same material, as any other laboratory. Therefore, when you send your apples or maize to a local lab, you can have confidence that the test report you receive will be the same as the test report generated anywhere else in the world.



What is a reference material?

There are two kinds of reference materials. The one is an authentic standard of a pure chemical and the other is a material with a known amount of a certain chemical in it. When performing a chemical test, it is important to know without any doubt that you are measuring the correct chemical and its concentration. If you are exporting wine, you need to be sure that most of the alcohol is ethanol and not the potentially toxic methanol.

To do this, you must ensure that you can distinguish these two alcohols and measure the amount of each present with an authentic standard at a known concentration. To test if the measurement of the wine is accurate, laboratories use wine reference materials or quality control material. This is a wine sample with a certified concentration of both methanol and ethanol. If a laboratory can obtain the correct value for the reference wine sample, it is very likely that the sample test result will be correct also.

The Chemistry and Materials group at NMISA houses an energetic, scientifically diverse set of staff members committed to supporting the agricultural sector. Staff members have a wide variety of expertise from the surface analysis of materials to determining the levels of contaminants such as pesticides and mycotoxins in foodstuffs.

These skills are combined to produce Africa-relevant reference and quality control materials and coordinate proficiency testing schemes for contaminants, nutritional content and food labelling parameters.

The advantage of having material that is sourced and produced locally is that these materials inherently compensate for differences in food composition, pesticide usage and biotoxin growth compared to material originating from Europe and the United States. That means reference materials and proficiency testing samples will be similar to the samples laboratories obtain daily and better represent results provided to clients. Through this value added-chain, NMISA supports the laboratory that assists the farmer and producer in getting the food from the farm to the fork.

Ndwakhulu Mukhufhi, CEO, NMISA



SWORDS TO PLOUGHSHARES

Military vet becomes a Farmer of the Year

South Africa in the late 1980s was a powder-keg. A nationwide state-of-emergency was in place which increased the apartheid government's already over-reaching powers to detain people indefinitely without trial. There was hardly a more dangerous time to be politically active, and for Errol April and others who joined the banned military force, Umkhonto we Sizwe, this was a very high-risk activity.

Fast forward 20 years and Errol April with wife Caroline at his side is looking at the new crop of Bigbucks apple trees on their farm Amanzi in the Greyton area of the Western Cape.

With his dreadlocked hair and broad smile, it is hard to imagine the life trajectory that

led to a senior career in the South African Defence Force, which he left with the rank of Warrant Officer in the Personnel Division, a career as a builder and renovator and a period making biofuel from discarded cooking oil in the United Kingdom.

"Our family grew our own vegetables and fruit and from a young age I was interested in farming," he says, "so when the opportunity came for a farm under the government's Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy, I made the application." Although he had hoped for a livestock farm, he soon got stuck into the business of apples and pears, which, he says, he knew nothing about.

"Amanzi was purchased by the government in 2013 and together with mentorship from Two-a-Day, Caroline and I found ourselves as fruit farmers. We invited our nephew Jeremy

April to join us in the business which he did. At the moment we are farming 211 hectares of apples and pears which are processed through Two-a-Day and sold as Tru-Cape Fruit. We have future expansion plans and hope, by 2020, to begin eco-tourism projects on the farm," he says.

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that the Aprils run Amanzi like a military operation. "I developed many skills in the military which are very useful in farming: forward planning and strategy among them. We inherited six full-time staff when we took over the farm and have retained and developed them into an integral part of the business. All our permanent staff have a 20% profit-sharing stake in the business and all are empowered to make decisions that will improve the business for all of us. I know how much I valued

the mentorship from people such as Wilmer and Tania Ferreira and Peter Dall so I believe it is now my responsibility to mentor others," he says of the on-going efforts to up-skill staff on the farm.

"We are in the lives of our workers: they don't just come to work for us, they are part of our business and our lives and we support them in their communities in the village of Genadendal with feed for their livestock, equipment and fertiliser for their small-scale farming and with general home improvements. Their children go to school in the area and we provide uniforms, sports kits etc. and transport where needed," April says.

Despite sharing profit with their staff teams, the Aprils have succeeded in making the business debt free of the R4.6 million inherited by keeping a tight control on costs and increasing productivity. "Like in the military, I believe it is important to first analyse the situation and then plan how to attack: we do leaf and soil analysis and then adjust feeding and irrigation accordingly. We also keep a binocular on the orchards so know what is happening at every moment of the day. Between Caroline, Jeremy and myself we plan every aspect of the business. We have maintenance reports in place to if there is machinery like tractors that need reconditioning so we can schedule that well ahead of



Caroline and Errol April

time. We have also passed two major audits with flying colours and are very proud to be SIZA and GlobalG.A.P accredited," he says.

Although being the deciduous industry's Novice Award 2017 winner as part of the Farmer of the Year, it is creating perfect fruit that drives their on-going commitment. "We grow eight varieties, among them

Royal Gala, Braeburn, Pink Lady along with Rosemarie and Forelle pears. We are excited about Bigbucks trees which we have planted on the rootstocks previously used for Ginger Goldens to minimise the delay before we are in full production," he says.

Tru-Cape Fruit Marketing, the largest exporter of South African apples and pears, is responsible for achieving the best price for the bin of fruit so that it can return maximum value back to the grower. Managing Director Roelf Pienaar says that increasingly customers locally and abroad want to know about the people behind the brand and the April's story is particularly encouraging: "The strength of the Tru-Cape brand rests on the shoulders of all our growers and the example that Errol, Caroline and Jeremy April set on Amanzi is a particularly excellent one."

The surrounding mountains and meandering stream seem to hold Amanzi cupped in their hands. "We are blessed with water, good people and passion for what the future will hold," April concludes.

Although away at school when we chat, I imagine that Errol and Caroline have their seven-year old grandson, Alex in mind when looking over the valley to the clouds and years beyond. ■

Brian Berkman



Caroline, Errol and Jeremy April

BUILDING A DESTINATION BRAND

Introducing the Elgin Agritourism Route

The Elgin Agritourism Route is the first in South Africa and presents an opportunity to sustainably grow Elgin's existing tourism potential. The leveraging of the strengths of collective marketing of agritourism offerings and services has been successful worldwide, especially in Italy, Canada and New Zealand. The benefits include increasing the length of stay, offering a wider variety of activities and distributing economic benefits across a larger spatial area.

The Elgin Valley lies 70 km southeast of Cape Town, just beyond the Hottentots Holland Mountains. One of the more intensively farmed districts of South Africa, the Valley produces approximately 60% of the national apple crop. In the 1980s the Elgin valley farmers started growing vines successfully, and the area is now South Africa's coolest climate wine-growing region, largely due to its high altitude.

Elgin has an interesting agricultural history. The town of Grabouw was founded in 1856. My parents were farm managers of Palmiet River Farm, owned by fruit pioneer Kathleen Murray, who planted her first apple

orchard in 1915 at the age of 24. Kathleen started without any farming experience or finance, but she was fiercely determined. Other pioneers included Sir Antonie Viljoen, the Moltenos and the Moodies. Included in the Route is the Elgin Apple Museum which documents the history of the valley.

I have been fortunate to witness the development of the Elgin Valley into a multi-activity tourist destination. Today there is the Elgin Valley Market in a converted old apple warehouse in a railway-side setting. A regular steam train service operates between Cape Town and the Elgin Valley Market, an experience that I thoroughly enjoyed. Each of the wineries have their own unique tastings, which attracts a large following of regular wine buyers.

The advantage of the Elgin Agritourism Route is that there are many different accommodation offerings for visitors to extend their stay into a relaxed holiday break. I was particularly impressed by the first Cycle Hotel in Africa. There are bicycles everywhere on the walls of the accommodation as Elgin has one of the foremost mountain bike routes in South Africa. Cycling along farm roads in this beautiful valley is a must. There are other attractions for the more adventurous

and extreme-minded youngsters such as the Cape Canopy Tour, Suicide Gorge, stand-up paddle-boarding and kayaking.

For many of us who prefer a more relaxing visitor experience, a visit to the spectacularly situated South Hill Farm is a must. Owners Kevin and Sandy King pay exceptional attention to detail in every aspect of their agritourism experience. Apart from their delicious wines, they offer luxury accommodation, a function and wedding venue, an art gallery and a restaurant serving country tapas and platters.

The Elgin Agritourism Route owes its continued success to understanding the importance of a destination brand. Events play an important role, including the 2019 Elgin Cool Wine and Country Food Festival, the Overberg Wedding Fair, several cycling and trail run events, and the Elgin Open Gardens Festival.

Agritourism routes are successful because all agritourism farms have to be working farms that agree to a code of conduct and standards so visitors know what to expect. This is a world-wide USP of agritourism. Agritourism farms are recognised by their signage: an agritourism logo and the name of the farm. Agritourism routes include sub-sectors, for example, heritage or culture, an important differentiation because visitors have specific interests and needs. The agritourism category is increasing world-wide as visitors seek unique experiences at value for money prices. The farmers in the Elgin Valley run farming businesses and understand the importance of working together to create a destination. ■

Jacqui Taylor, Founder & Managing Director, Agritourism South Africa

Further information can be found on www.agritourismsouthafrica.com or from Elgin Tourism.



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Pure driving pleasure

The updated Ford Ranger devours dirt with delight

Anyone who has driven to Bothaville from Bloemfontein or Johannesburg will know that the Free State's roads are unforgiving in the extreme. Where tarred surfaces exist, drivers have to contend with pot-holes, while the dirt roads are often extremely rutted to the point that they resemble 4x4 tracks. Nor is the Free State the only province where such conditions are the norm.

Consequently, as a farmer, one's choice of vehicle will have a tremendous impact on one's quality of life. Fortunately, Ford's may just offer the ideal solution. Harvest SA reports back from the recent launch of the updated Ranger bakkie series.

Apart from showcasing some of the attractions particular to the city of George and environs, the launch provided an opportunity to test-drive the latest Wildtrak and XL models, featuring brand new engines, a 10-speed gearbox, new driver assist technologies and important chassis refinements. Space does not permit to enter into a lengthy examination of the technical specifications (just Google it!) so I will focus here on the driving experience – and what an experience it was! The morning drive out on the tarred road from the Oubaai Hotel saw the Ranger simply purring as it ate up the distance with consummate ease. The ride is so smooth, comfortable and quiet that it feels as though the car is driving itself – all you have to do is point it in the right direction. (The sound system is also excellent, and our cell phones connected with the SYNC multimedia and navigation platform like a charm.) We tested the cruise control and the auto-braking feature and can confirm that the vehicle will adjust its speed and following distance to the vehicle ahead and come to a stop automatically should the need arise. Think of the safety advantages on those long night drives!

Next came a section of relatively smooth dirt road as we set off uphill for the



Duiwelskop Pass. Again, the chassis refinements allowed the Ranger to fly effortlessly along the road. Even when the going got rougher and we had to engage 4WD, the smooth feeling persisted.

It was only when the road became steeper and the rocks and ditches began to appear that we had to engage both low-range and our driving intelligence. The Ranger proved more than equal to the task, negotiating severe gradients and obstacles with cat-like agility. Ordinarily, one expects one's guts and bones to be jarred and rattled by extreme off-road driving, but we were surprised to find that the Ranger remained relatively comfortable and remarkably quiet. This made the drive much more of a pleasure than an ordeal!

From the top of the Duiwelskop Pass, we were able to reflect that we had driven up a mountain in a quite a short space of time. I would be fibbing if I said it wasn't absolutely exhilarating! The drive down offered more challenging conditions, until conditions

improved to the point that we could engage descent mode, which allowed the vehicle to descend at a constant pace until we rejoined the tar road and drove to our final destination, Louvain Guest Farm, with its 4x4 trails, hiking and excellent accommodation set in the beautiful upper Langkloof Valley. The sun had passed the yardarm by this point and was pouring down a molten glow that made us appreciate the benefits of a finely-tuned air-conditioning system (and well-earned lunch). The fuel consumption averaged 10km per litre.

Of the two models, the Wildtrak had more oomph where it counted, with slightly superior 4x4 performance. However, either model would be a tremendous asset to any farmer's vehicle fleet.

The only possible disadvantage I could think of was that the vehicle's size tends to make you forget that there are other vehicles on the road! ■

Greg Penfold

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Four tech trends impacting agriculture in 2019

Technology continues to play a prominent role in the development of agriculture globally while helping the industry to break into new frontiers. Agricultural technology innovation is evolving at an unprecedented pace, leaving farmers with no choice but to adapt and reinvent themselves in order to compete, grow and sustain their businesses.

The agricultural industry globally is successfully overcoming some of its prominent environmental and food production challenges through the use of new and advanced technologies, and South Africa is no exception.

The following key tech trends are going to shape agriculture in 2019:

Big Data

The industry is increasingly using data analytics to improve operational efficiency and yield prediction.

Farmers are now able to implement complex systems that assist them with equipment

management. This is also combined with data on weather patterns, soil conditions as well as crops to be planted, to develop a formula to determine the best time and place to plant and harvest.

Big data is also useful for forecasting demand for crops, yield on crops, as well as potential land size and usage of land.

Drip irrigation

Given the recent drought conditions which cost South African farmers billions of Rands in losses, there's a lot of investment in the development of advanced drip irrigation technology, which allows farmers to limit wastage by efficiently delivering the exact amount of water to the soil, needed by their crops to grow.

Vertical farming

No longer just a buzz-word, this modern form of farming used to produce food in a smaller controlled environment through vertically stacked layers to save on water and fertilizer is now an established reality. A number of farmers in South Africa are already

successfully using this technology as part of their farming practices.

Mobile apps

Smartphones are no longer just used for multimedia purposes and accessing information through the internet. Farmers are now actively using apps to monitor their crops via GPS, calculate feed, save water, get access to networks and markets, etc.

Mobile apps have become a major disruptor in the agricultural industry. Developers globally are working around the clock to introduce app innovations that were once unimageable. There are now apps that are able to spot over 430 weed species and identify their characteristics, at a click of a button.

Farmers should regularly research and educate themselves on new technological developments in the industry to avoid being left behind. Those who choose to remain skeptical about the benefits of new technology risk being left behind in the dust. ■

Dawie Maree, Head of Information and Marketing for FNB Agriculture

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REAPING PROFITABILITY

Lubricants can aid farmers to increase productivity while reducing total cost of ownership

In an environment where meeting demand by maximising productivity and minimising costs is key, making the most of the off season to conduct proper equipment maintenance is essential to help avoid costly unplanned downtime during peak planting or harvest times.

However, the potential impact of effective equipment lubrication on equipment durability and reliability is too often underestimated. An international industry study commissioned by Shell Lubricants reveals that only 39% of agricultural companies believe lubrication can influence equipment availability and only 29% understand how wear protection delivered by a lubricant can lead to cost savings. Consequently, many companies underestimate the potential extent of these savings, with over 60% of those surveyed believing that cost savings linked to lubricants would not exceed 5%. However, far greater savings are possible.

There are two equally important elements to seizing this opportunity. The first is selecting the right lubricant or grease; the second is effective lubrication management. However, with the recent droughts playing havoc with the agriculture sector, many farmers have looked for ways to cut costs, and often, selecting the incorrect mechanical lubricants, as well as making use of inferior lubricating products could in fact be detrimental to machinery, and most often leading to downtime and therefore loss of profit.

Selecting the correct lubricant

When evaluating the effect that lubricants have related to TCO, it is necessary to consider the end to end impact on maintenance budgets and processes.

Optimising lubrication translates into a significant impact on component life, maintenance costs, and unplanned downtime, so it can contribute to cost savings far higher than the price of the lubricant itself. Specifically, the engines, axels, and transmissions of farming equipment provide some of the lubrication challenges in the agricultural sector.

It is vitally important to have in-depth knowledge about the products you are purchasing and using in your machinery. Selecting the right lubricant is an important first step in helping to improve reliability, boost productivity, and lower costs.

There are four main elements associated with engine protection, including protection against deposits, wear control, corrosion protection, and extended oil life.

The right engine oil helps protect equipment in all conditions, even when operating at maximum load. Guarding against wear, deposits and corrosion can help enable machinery to operate efficiently in conjunction with reducing the risk of costly unplanned downtime.

In the case of modern farming machinery working under higher loads, the demands on transmission lubricants are increasing. The universal transmission oil is, for most farmers, the most vital lubricant. It must successfully

lubricate the transmission, wet brakes and hydraulic systems of machines including tractors, diggers and combine harvesters, to help keep equipment running smoothly for longer. In this instance, wear protection is an important element yet again. A lubricant that offers high levels of wear protection will safeguard against wear and tear.

Choosing a less effective lubricant rarely results in immediate equipment failure but can lead to increased maintenance expenses over time.

For instance, lower levels of wear or corrosion protection can lead to more rapid degradation of equipment components, resulting in increased maintenance costs from more frequent replacement. These mounting costs can be far greater than the savings from selecting a lower price lubricant.

Selecting a lubricant with numerous OEM approvals for multiple applications can also enable businesses to take advantage of economies of scale, which creates an overall reduction in operating costs. With only 2-3 months to complete an entire harvest, even a single day of unplanned downtime can be extremely costly.

Lubricant management

Lubricant management is of utmost importance, with many businesses not realising the potential benefits associated with effective lubrication management.

Even the best of products cannot operate and work correctly if it is not applied and maintained correctly, and as such, effective

lubrication management is imperative in unlocking TCO savings. Selecting a less effective lubricant rarely results in immediate equipment failure but can lead to increased maintenance expenses over time.

For example, lower levels of wear or corrosion protection can lead to more rapid degradation of equipment components, resulting in increased maintenance costs from more frequent replacement. These mounting costs can be far greater than the savings from selecting a lower price lubricant.

In contrast, a high-quality oil or grease that keeps equipment clean of deposits and effectively protects against wear and corrosion can help extend equipment life, reduce frequency of breakdowns and increase the machine's availability.

There are six key steps integral to proper lubrication management. These include:

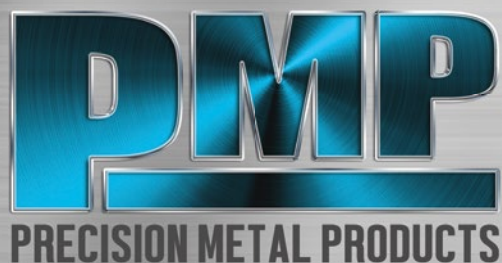
- Right storage and handling – the lubricant must be stored in the right conditions and handled correctly to avoid contamination and preserve its key characteristics.
- Right place – for the oil or grease to reach the right surface it must be properly applied to the equipment.
- Right time – the correct frequency of oil change or re-greasing ensures the lubricant reaches the surface at the right time. Delays can result in accelerated wear.
- Right amount – the correct volume of lubricant or grease applied and topped up to protect moving parts effectively.
- Right monitoring – regular sampling and analysis to ensure the lubricant remains fit for purpose and check for early indications of equipment wear. Inspections also ensure the consistent application of the first four steps. For a complete analysis service, Shell offers the LubeAnalyst oil condition monitoring service that helps to ensure that equipment and lubricants are in optimum working order by identifying potential oil or equipment failures before they become critical. This service is designed to help save money and time on maintenance.
- Right people – the competence of those who lubricate equipment can greatly affect

its positive impact, particularly when it comes to ensuring all the above happens.

Evolving for the future

By 2050, it is projected that the world's population will have reached 9 billion. Meeting increased demand for safe, healthy and nutritious food, while adhering to strict CO₂ emissions requirements, minimising environmental footprint and staying competitive by ensuring cost efficiency will require farmers to maximise equipment productivity and reliability. It is for this reason, in addition to continuously supporting customers in the present day, that Shell Lubricants is constantly looking ahead to identify opportunities for the next generation of products and services that will help companies overcome the challenges of the future. Our future focus and innovation means that our products remain industry leaders anconstantly evolving to meet and exceed the needs of our customers. ■

Anton Niemann, General Manager Lubricants Sales at Shell Downstream South Africa



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Eye in the sky

Western Cape to benefit from Sentinel-2 earth observation technology



As part of its initiative to embrace the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), the Department of Agriculture in the Western Cape has introduced Sentinel-2 earth observation technology.

The department explained in a statement that Sentinel-2 is an earth observation satellite mission developed by the European Space Agency as part of their Copernicus Programme to perform terrestrial observations in support of a wide range of services, including agriculture.

Sentinel-2 is groundbreaking in agriculture and with 10-20m spatial resolution and a five-day revisit frequency, it represents a considerable improvement on the old agricultural remote sensing products.

Sentinel-2 also provides free access to data.

The department has developed a Sentinel portal and remote sensing tools which will leverage the extraordinary wealth of agriculturally relevant satellite data in an integrated platform which hides the complexities from non-specialist users.

These tools provide rapid access to near real-time information on vegetation (veld) and crop conditions resulting in quicker information flow and better decision making and understanding. This also allows for rapid assessment of natural disaster impacts such as fire scar extents, drought, crop failure and pest and disease damage. It also allows for a better assessment of crop conditions and resource use and is therefore particularly useful in the study of the impact of climate change.

Previously the only option to access satellite imagery was to browse through catalogues of images, select suitable cloud-free images and then download and archive each image, with all its multispectral wave bands. This process was both laborious and highly

Sentinel-2 is groundbreaking in agriculture with 10-20m spatial resolution and a five-day revisit frequency

data-intensive, whilst the subsequent analytical workflows required specialist skills and expensive software.

Sentinel-2 also makes use of cloud based services, which streamlines workflow.

The Department is currently exploring some of these cloud-based services in their geographic information system (GIS) and their very popular online tool, CapeFarmMapper (CFM).

Research commissioned by the Department and conducted by the University of Stellenbosch Business School last year

revealed that in order for the Western Cape to achieve an "agri-renaissance", the fourth industrial revolution should be embraced, and affordable technology be made more widely available.

Minister of Economic Opportunities, Beverley Schafer said: "The Sentinel-2 portal is a free-access space where ground breaking satellite imaging technology can be accessed and used to develop agriculture, respond to disasters and study the impacts of climate change. By making these tools available, the Department is contributing towards sustainable farming and the development of a food-secure province through the intelligent use of technology."

Commenting on the development, Benji Meltzer, co-founder & CTO at award-winning agritech innovator Aerobotics said, "Farmers can greatly benefit from the data and insights provided by new and innovative agricultural technology. We therefore encourage them to take full advantage of this wave of emerging tech.

"We agree with the Department of Agriculture for the fourth industrial revolution to take place in the Western Cape. This will introduce new opportunities on how to approach some of the challenges in the agricultural sector, this is why Aerobotics has chosen to invest in the technological future of agriculture with our drone & satellite analytics which has shown great impact by helping keep farms healthy.

"We are confident that with the government pursuing the fourth industrial revolution, South Africa will make significant headway in the agriculture industry." ■



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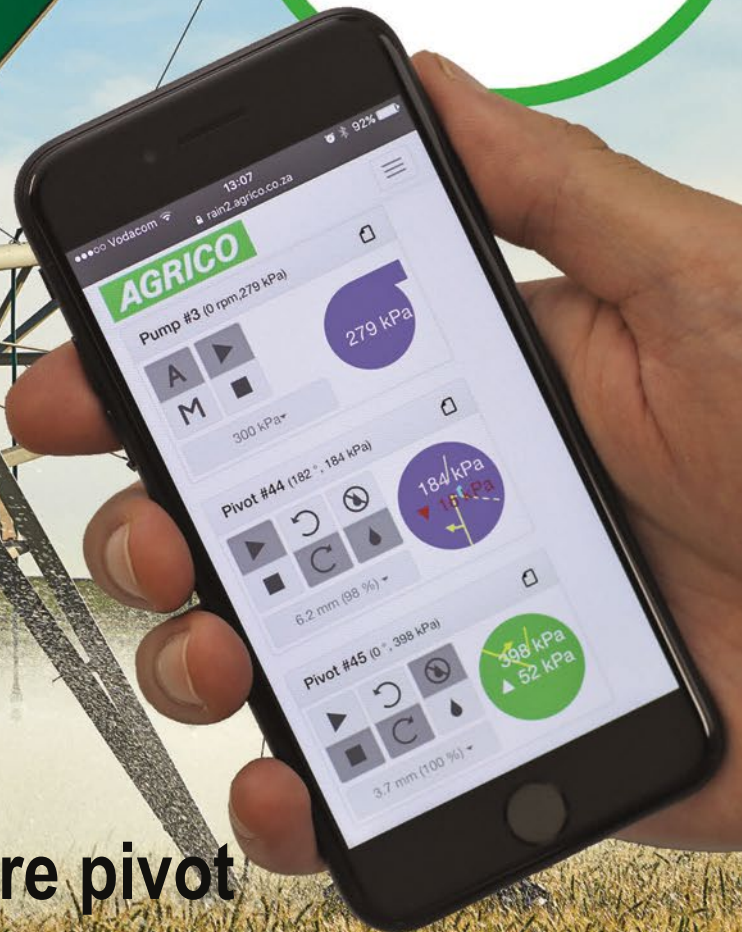
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