



agriculture, land reform
& rural development

Department:
agriculture, land reform & rural development
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM & RURAL DEVELOPMENT • JULY - DECEMBER 2011 • 4th EDITION

Female Entrepreneur Awards 2011

Department bestows honours to Female Entrepreneurs



"A transformed, vibrant agricultural sector for food security and sustainable rural development"

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Vision

A transformed, vibrant agricultural sector
for food security and sustainable rural development

Mission

The Department as a lead agent in the sector,
will champion land and agrarian transformation,
promote and facilitate increased production
and provide expertise for improved livelihoods,
sustainable rural development and food security for all.

Values

- Responsiveness • Sacrifice • Professionalism
- Accountability • Respect • Innovation



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Editorial Team

WVD Mothibi: Editor – In – Chief
Sipho Mbaqa: Managing Editor

Contributors: Phemelo Manankong, Maria Matshogo, Stephen Moseki, Lerato Khaziwa, Keitumetse Mathiba, Nomaphelo Feyi, Tshepisho Sebeela, Ashley Delpport, Jamilla Mohamed

Pictures

Phemelo Manankong, Stephen Moseki, Lerato Khaziwa, Tshepisho Sebeela, Thinus Jonker, Benedict Balepile, Tommy Reardon, Dr Kegakilwe, Keitumetse Mathiba, Ashley Delpport

Layout and Design

Communication Services

E-mail contributions, comments to:
communication@ncpg.gov.za

Editors Note

Emanating from our last Staff Indaba was the need to improve internal communication to keep staff members informed and up-to-date with developments in department and government in general. To this end, in 2010 we implemented the SMS system and it has worked remarkably well in that it allowed instant short messaging. In 2011 we completed almost ninety percent of migration of E-mail addresses to ncpq. We also had successes in addressing network and connectivity problems, however challenges remain in terms of reliability and speed.

There is good news though that the department will be improving our IT infrastructure by combining Telecom's infrastructure with more reliable wireless communication technologies from Vodacom and related service providers. God willing, this should largely eliminate comments such as; "I have never received such an e-mail" or "our network is slow" and "our telephone system is very unreliable". Since God is not in the habit of climbing down from heaven to assist with our problems, we will have to make these systems and technologies work for us, come hell or high water.

It is indeed encouraging to observe that more and more South Africans are keen in complying with their civil duties - most importantly by paying their taxes. The South African Revenue Services has again recorded growth in the levels of tax compliance with a new record of 4.86 million income tax returns submitted during this year's Tax Season. There can be no effective service delivery if we do not comply and honor our tax obligations. We have indeed taken the "eish" out of tax-eish-ion by filling honestly and on time. It's the right thing to do. It is in the interest of our NATION .

The 1st December was World AIDS day. The challenge for all of us is to Act Aware. According to the Department of Health and the United Nations, 1000 people are infected per day and 17000 people succumb to the disease in our country. We also have the unique distinction in that 6 million people live with HIV/Aids in South Africa, making us the country with the highest number of HIV/AIDS sufferer in the world.

Acting Aware means finding out facts about HIV/AIDS and using this knowledge to protect yourself and others from HIV/AIDS infection. Remember, discriminating against people who are HIV/AIDS sufferers is not cool. It is a human rights violation.

Colleagues, the Good News is that the Department obtained an Unqualified Audit opinion for the year 2010/2011 financial year. Keep Up the Good Work!!!

MEC Norman Shushu, HOD WVD Mothibi, management and the Temothuo News editorial team wish you a prosperous 2012.

Foreword

by the Member of the Executive Council



The strategic thrust of the department remains the creation of a transformed, vibrant agricultural sector for food security and sustainable rural development. This aspiration is based on the MTSF 2009-2014 and the subsequent adoption of the 12 outcomes by government to place the country in a new developmental path. In line with this policy trajectory, our efforts focused primarily on the translation and institutionalising the new mandate of government and in particular the outcomes approach.

In the previous financial year much work was done to reorganise the department by developing institutional frameworks that will give expression to the expanded mandate of rural development. It was therefore logical that the 2010/11 financial year addresses sufficiently the strategic content that enables us to champion land and agrarian

transformation and sustainable rural development for food security for all. In this respect, it gives me pleasure to note that the department engaged in extensive strategic planning processes that resulted in a revised strategic plan and annual performance plan.

The transformation of the sector requires innovative ways to support small-holder farmers so that they graduate to commercial farming. At the same time it is important that our initiatives promote and facilitate increased production. It is for this reason that our extension services reached more farmers with advice and training resulting in increased productivity. Most importantly, a number of cooperatives were established and supported ensuring that people previously disadvantaged are brought into the mainstream of economic activity.

My sincerest gratitude goes to all officials who went an extra mile to ensure that the Department achieves as reported in this annual report. Together, we will continue to do more in improving the quality and access of services to the public.

Norman Shushu, MPL
MEC: Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

Foreword

by the Head of Department



During the financial year under review, considerable amount of work was dedicated towards institutionalizing the new mandate of rural development and the new outcomes approach. This entailed the review of the strategic plan of the department to ensure that the policy imperatives as enshrined in the outcomes approach finds expression in our programmes. Furthermore the departmental operational plan was implemented in line with the Annual Performance Plan.

The 2010/11 Annual Report is presented according to the key programmes of the Department. Detailed presentation of actual delivery against predetermined objectives is provided in each programme under the heading: Programme Performance.

In order to explain the achievements of targets and deviations a service delivery narrative has been provided for each programme. Its primary purpose is to highlight major milestones in each programme. The following is a summary of the major achievements for the year under review:

- Farm Workers and Farm Dwellers summit was held;
- Through the Balelapa Project 113 351 households were profiled which enabled the Department to direct food security interventions where they are needed most;
- Established 23 Cooperatives and provided training to 13 existing cooperatives; 59 MAFISA (Micro Agricultural Financial Institution Scheme of South Africa) loan applications were approved in 2010/11 with R4.85million disbursed;
- A total of 23 232 animals were vaccinated against Anthrax and dipping and de-worming of animals continued. 65 000 doses of the Live attenuated Smithburn, 5 000 doses of the inactivated vaccine and 60 000 doses of clone 13 vaccine were purchased which assisted emerging farmers on the path of the Rift Valley Fever outbreak;
- Awareness programme included a TV advert on Rift Valley Fever which ran on SABC TV channels over a week and a half, radio interviews were conducted, smses communicated, 5000 posters distributed to cooperatives, schools and health facilities;
- Most of the outstanding construction work at the Nieuwoudtville Rooibos Project including the design and construction of the pasteurising equipment and its installation at the tea factory;
- Considerable work was done at Riemvasmaak, the CRDP site;
- The Department obtained an unqualified audit opinion for the 2010/11 financial year.

Viljoen Mothibi
Head of Department

Department bestows honours to Female Entrepreneurs

Text: Phemelo Manankong and Keitumetse Mathiba
 Pictures: Benedict Balepile

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development advanced the empowerment of women in agriculture by recognizing their outstanding contribution and increasing their visibility through the Female Entrepreneur of the Year Awards 2011. The glamorous event which was held on the 12 August at the De Aar Town Hall in the Pixley Ka Seme district.

The female Entrepreneur of the Year Awards Competition is an instrument through which women's contribution to the fight against poverty is being recognised and encouraged. It also acknowledges women as the lifeline of society and custodians of food security whose role is critical in improving the quality and quantity of agricultural products through improved delivery, innovation and excellence.

Addressing a hall filled to capacity, the Northern Cape Premier Ms Hazel Jenkins outlined that agriculture is not for women who want instant results. She added that the competition seeks to encourage producers whom many of them are women from rural areas. "Certainly, farming is not for the faint-hearted. It is an activity that requires immense perseverance, keenness and boundless energy. This event highlights the pivotal role women play in society", she said.

The adjudication process in this year's female entrepreneur competition involved 57 participants and only 35 competed in various categories. These are the various category winners:



Some winners of the 2011 competition



De Aar Town Hall filled to capacity

CATEGORY	WINNER
Best Female Farm Worker	Selina Seboniswa
Best Subsistence Producer	Maria Kantwan
Top Young Entrepreneur: Livestock	Annatjie van Huysteen
Top Entrepreneur: Export - Processor	Jana du Plessis
Top Entrepreneur: Commercial - Livestock	Sharon Freeman
Top Entrepreneur: Smallholder	Jane Mbuqe
Top Entrepreneur: Smallholder - Horticulture & Crops	Mapule Fourie

The event was held as a highlight of Women's month Activities. The Female Entrepreneur of the Year Awards 2011 winners will represent the Province in the National category which will be held in March 2012.

Department's Veterinary Services intensified campaigns against rabies in the Province

Text: Phemelo Manankong
Pictures: Phemelo Manankong and Tommy Reardon



The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development's Veterinary Services embarked on a campaign to vaccinate dogs and cats against rabies in the province.

The campaign was part of celebrating rabies month across the globe on the 28 September 2011. It also seeks to raise awareness among various groups especially children about the impact of human and animal rabies, how easy it is to prevent it and how to eliminate the main source of the global disease.

The veterinary services officials rolled-up their sleeves and left no stone unturned to make the rabies campaigns across the Province a success. Rabies is a disease which people can get from animals, it is caused by a virus which affects the brain and it leads to death. The virus is shed in saliva and is spread by the bite of an infected animal. It is also a zoonotic disease which can be transferred to people from animals such as dogs, cats and wild animals.

The significance of vaccinating dogs and cats is to reduce the risk to people and animals. According to Veterinary Science Unit Deputy Director, Dr Moshe Mathonsi, "People must be aware of the signs in animals and the public should be cautious of dogs that show foaming at the mouth, biting every object and are extremely aggressive. Wild animals generally loose fear for humans".

Dr Jean Antoine Zinsou articulated in his presentation at the Gala evening held in Kuruman, that rabies causes much damage as the virus replicates and passes to other neurons through the fibre connections. He further explained that:

- The virus also passes down axons to the skin and to the salivary glands, where it is released into the saliva.
- Damage in the brain is limited. Neuronal death is not pronounced, but neuronal dysfunction is considerable, perhaps mediated through inhibition of the synthesis of neural transmitters.
- The Negri body is an eosinophilic inclusion body found in the cytoplasm of certain nerve cells containing the rabies virus.
- Anatomically, most of the damage is in the hypothalamus, but it is the interference with the cardio-respiratory control that results in death.

Some of the learners and educators who attended the Rabies School Competition applauded the department for raising awareness of rabies and engaging various schools in the province. They thanked the department for informing them and noted that it will assist them to respond to any incident that may occur and to vaccinate animals.

Various stakeholders including our sister departments ensured that the campaign was a success. The Northern Cape Department of Health's Communicable disease has confirmed five human cases from 1997- 2011, of which three incidents were related to cats and two related to mongoose. Immediate medical attention can prevent the disease from spreading in your system should you be bitten by an infected animal. Currently there is no treatment for rabies and death is almost certain once symptoms appear.

Department's Veterinary Services intensified campaigns against rabies in the Province

Signs and symptoms of Rabies

In Humans

- Fever
- Headaches
- Irritability
- Itching
- Twitching at the infected area.



In Animals

- Aggression
- Unprovoked attacks
- Biting unusual objects
- Uncontrolled barking
- Aimless wandering
- May have trouble eating, drinking or swallowing
- Excessive salivation, may stagger or appear paralysed.



Dr Letsie & Dr Mathonsi handing out prizes to the winners of the drama and poetry competition



Dr Kegakilwe with the winners of the School Competition



Players partaking in the Golf Day



Drum Majorettes from Wrenchville High School in full parade

Women's Month Commemoration

Text and Pictures: Keitumetse Mathiba

As part of Commemorating Women's month in the country, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development's Gender unit organized a women's event on the 26th August in Kimberley. The event was celebrated under the theme "Working together to enhance women's opportunities towards economic empowerment". The aim of the event was to honour, remember and salute all women who have made significant contributions in our country. Among the guest speakers were Pastor P. van Wyk from the Office of the Premier and Psychologist Ronel Groenewaldt who shared their expertise.

Issues highlighted were as follows:

- Men empowering women
- Discrimination of women in the work place
- The "pull-her-down" syndrome
- Domestic Violence against women and children

Women were encouraged to speak out on issues affecting them, as keeping quiet will never solve problems affecting them. Should you experience problems in the above mentioned issues please contact our Health and Wellness Unit for guidance and assistance.



Women of the Department who attended the event



Ms Moletsane extending a hand of gratitude to Ps. van Wyk

Science Week

Text: Stephen Moseki, Pictures: Stephen Moseki and Lerato Khaziwa

The Department of Science and Technology hosted the Annual Science week across the country under the theme: "The Role of Science in Economic Development" from the 1st to the 6th of August. The Northern Cape Province also kicked off its activities at the Phatsimang College of Education with an array of interesting and intriguing science exhibitions, seminars and lectures.

Learners were transported from various schools to attend the fair, which saw the Department having its own stall under the theme; "The Role of Chemistry in Agriculture". The Department also extended the programme to the Vaalharts Research Station where learners from different schools were exposed to the practical application of chemistry in Agriculture. Here learners experienced the role of chemistry in animal and crop production through interactive presentations.

The Presentation included amongst others:

1. Proper use of fertilizers in crop production. The proper amount of fertilizer will determine your optimum yield in crops which in turn gives you more profit.
2. Proper use of pesticides and their storage.
3. Highlighting the role chemistry plays in animal production via Veterinary Science in terms of vaccines but also different types of animal feeds and medicines.
4. There was also a presentation based on the Animal



Roberta Burgess interacting with learners

Reproductive System (chemistry: the role of hormones).

Learners also received guidance on the different careers in agriculture by following the stories: "from the field to the fork – beef production" and "from a seed to a cloth – the story of the cotton plant". These stories also highlighted the role chemistry plays in processing raw agricultural material into "on-shelve" products. The key message of the department's presentation and exhibits was to entrench the understanding that all biological and physiological processes in animals and plants are based in biology and moreover in chemistry.

Officials contribute to Mandela Day

Text: Nomaphelo Feyi

Pictures: Phemelo Manankong

The Northern Cape Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development officials set aside their daily activities to give 67 minutes of their time to the world's greatest icon, Mr. Nelson Mandela, in celebration of the Nelson Mandela Day Campaign.

The Nelson Mandela Campaign was launched in 2009 by President Jacob Zuma to celebrate the birth of uTata Madiba and his tireless contribution to the emancipation of the people of this country and the world. This day, 18th July, has also been adopted by the United Nations in honour of this great world leader.

On this day MEC Norman Shushu and officials of the department rolled up their sleeves to better the lives of the communities. Jankempdorp, Warrenton old age centre and Boitumelo crèche, which was identified as one of the beneficiary institutions, was a hype of activity. Officials of the department and community members brought it to a standstill by renovating, painting and cleaning the yard.

The crèche was established in the late 1960s and it has produced a number of successful people in society who include among others teachers, nurses, managers and successful business people hence its significance.

Ms Virginia Boikanyo, the principal at the crèche, could not hide her excitement and expressed gratitude for what the department has done. She said "Our crèche was in a hopeless situation and the intervention of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has come handy as it has instilled hope and enthusiasm not only on our learners, but even the community".

According to the project leader, Mr. Ali Diteme, assessments were done on two old age homes in Jankempdorp, Warrenton and Boitumelo crèche and the department worked on the need to assist the two centres and the crèche and Mr Diteme stated that the exercise shows that the department was keen to respond to the call by President Jacob Zuma to honour Uтата Madiba.

Meanwhile officials in the districts also brought a sparkle of hope to some old age homes and disabled schools by donating starter packs at various centers. Over R300 000 was spent on the programme to make it a success.



Clarina hard at work at Boitumelo Crèche



Teamwork gets the job done



Norman Zuithoff and "Oom Gauri"

Departmental projects to represent the Province in China

Text: Lerato Khaziwa

Picture: sourced by Lerato Khaziwa & Ashley Delport



Ms Jana Du plessis in her working station

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development was requested by the Department of Trade and Industry in partnership with the Chinese government to identify projects in the province that have the potential to export. Three project applications were submitted of which two were successful.

The two projects identified to represent the Province was the Bee keeping and Pollination in Keimoes and the Eksteenskuil Agricultural Cooperative.

The Bee keeping and pollination owner, Ms Jana Du plessis the winner of the Female Entrepreneur Competition 2011, Category: Top Entrepreneur-Export. She began bee keeping in 1996 when she was still in high school. As the only bee farmer in the province, the demand for honey was growing rapidly. She remembered how she began pollination farming in the year 2010 and realizing that without bees one cannot have a good produce especially for lucern seed farmers, watermelon and winter water melon all of which she farmed with.

She is currently distributing to all nine provinces and exporting to neighboring Namibia. Securing this international market means that she would have to increase her production volume which in turn would result in employing 35 small communal female farmers of which she has mentored.

The Eksteenskuil Agricultural Cooperative (EAC) was registered in December 2006 in Keimoes in the Northern Cape. The cooperative is comprised of small-scale grape

farmers consisting of 85 members. The Cooperative has already penetrated the market as they export their produce to Fairtrade markets through Tradecraft and the European Fairtrade Association (EFTA). An agreement has been reached with the processor South African Dried Fruit Cooperative (SAD) and Pioneer Foods to process the grapes before exporting to European markets.

In 2011 alone, EAC exported 156 MT Thompson's to the Tradecraft marked in the United Kingdom and 36 MT Thompson's to Japan and 19 MT of golden Sultana to Switzerland.

These projects will represent the province in China with a trip scheduled for November 2011. They will have an opportunity to attend expo's in Beijing and Shangai where they will market there produce.



A member of the Agricultural Cooperative in Keimoes



The Rietrivier Milk Project

Text and Pictures: Thinus Jonker

The Commercialization of Goats is one of the key programmes of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

This programme is based on seven pillars and Research and Development plays a vital role to ensure that producers remain abreast with the latest technology. Training of producers also received attention to capacitate them with the necessary knowledge and skill to run efficient farming enterprises. Currently the R&D and training pillars are operational from Koopmansfontein Research Station, but in order to expand the scope of the Programme a decision was taken to investigate the possibilities in the goat milk industry.

Goat milk can play an important role in food security and can also create opportunities for processing into value added products (cheese, yoghurt, etc). The grain and fodder crop industries along the major rivers also provide an ideal opportunity for more intensive livestock production system.

Rietrivier Research Station is situated 40km south of Kimberley and has 120 ha of irrigation. An investigation in 2009 revealed that the farm was under-utilized for research purposes and it was decided to convert existing infrastructure to establish a milk goat facility. The development of the facility was planned for a five year period to allow for the building of required capacity and to also spread the financial pressures over time. Once the unit is fully functional it will be utilized for research on breeding, nutrition (intensive systems as well as planting pastures), health management, processing and other related fields. Training on different aspects will also be provided to officials, producers and processors.

The construction work is done by the farm personnel with the assistance of temporary workers and they are currently busy with the 3rd phase of the development. On completion the unit will comprise of 200 – doe facilities, 12 – point milking parlours, milk processing unit, ram facility, kid rearing facility and a feed processing plant.

In 2010 two Saanen bucks and 24 saanen does were procured and 38 doe's will be in milk at the end of the kidding season. The fertility of the saanen goats is very high and the flock already boasts two sets of triplets and one set of quadruplets born during the 2011 Kidding season.



The facility before renovation



The new 12-point milking parlour



Mr van der Merwe (middle) and team during the milk processing training

From Farm Worker to Smallholder Farmer an interview with Susan Mapule Fourie

Text and Photos: Phemelo Manankong



Ms Fourie (left) and her daughter at the maize field

Ms Mapule Fourie started farming in 2007 on a ½ hectare plot that she rented from the Local Primary School in Hartswater. She planted for household consumption and the surplus was sold. She managed to open a savings account and saved money for seed and fertilizer. In 2009 she obtained an additional four hectares from the local school and started to produce cash crops.

Ms Fourie became successful in her farming operation due to her commitment and sound financial management. Her farming practices include indigenous and new technologies and has managed to succeed from being a subsistence producer (producing for household) to a smallholder farmer in good standing. Ms Fourie is a hard-working farmer who has managed to use her knowledge and experience as an ordinary labourer and used her circumstances to her advantage.

P. Manankong : Who is Ms Susan Fourie?

S. Fourie: I started as a farm labourer/worker on the plots in and around Vryburg and Hartswater. My passion for agriculture pushed me to plant my own vegetables. As an ordinary farm labourer, life was not good as it was very difficult to feed my family and supply their needs. You will be surprised to know how much farm workers earn.

P Manankong : Where did it all start?

S Fourie: I started to rent half a hectare of land from the Tadcaster Primary school, planted for household consumption and the surplus was sold. I then won the Female Farmer Competition in 2009 and I expanded my operation by renting an additional 4 hectares from the school to plant cash crops.

P Manankong: What inspired you to get into farming?

S. Fourie: My experience in farming as a farm labourer inspired me and also my love for agriculture got me going, even though it was not easy.

P Manankong : Have you received any assistance from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, monetary or otherwise?

S. Fourie: I have not received any funding from the Department but advice from the Extension Officers in the District.

P Manankong: You are selling your vegetables on the N18 route. How is the money assisting you and your family?

S. Fourie: The money is helping me to pay for my daughter's fees at the National Institution for Higher Education in Kimberley. I also pay my bills and re-invest the remaining money back into my business.

P Manankong: What challenges are you facing as a farmer?

S. Fourie: The challenge is that when I harvest the maize I have planted, I need to hire harvesters and other equipment. The rental costs of the machinery is expensive and very little profit remains after all the overheads have been covered.

P Manankong: Ms Fourie, thank you very much for making time to speak to us.

S. Fourie: Thank you also for making time to come and see me.



Always hard at work in the field



Staff Profile

Text: Ashley Delpont
Photographs: Zafika Mbonambi and Tumelo Lerole

We interview colleagues to find out just what it is that makes them tick...



Zafika Mbonambi



Masetshaba Louw

Briefly tell us about yourself?

Zafika Zimtoti Mbonambi: I am 31 years old and a down-to-earth and reserved lady from Empangeni, KZN. I am an Agricultural Scientist (Pastures) based in Vaalharts Research Station.

Masetshaba Louw: I am a God fearing, compassionate and a loving person born and bred in Kimberley. I try to maintain a standard of humanity and humility as much as I can.

What is your job description and what does it entail?

Zafika Zimtoti Mbonambi: My job description is to improve resource utilization in the Northern Cape. The following are the main objectives: research into resource utilization technology.

: Information services

: dissemination of research findings and reporting

: participation in rural development

Masetshaba Louw: I'm a Career Awareness Clerk and I work in the HRD unit. I refer to myself as a mouth piece for the department as I tell students and learners in the province about the different agricultural careers and opportunities we have in the department. And I deal with the bursaries.

Are you passionate about the work you do, and what satisfaction do you get from doing what you?

Zafika Zimtoti Mbonambi: I have passion for the career I chose and I will say that there is some satisfaction from this work when one presents a scientific paper in a conference or symposium where one gets exposed to fellow researchers from all walks of life.

Masetshaba Louw: I'm very passionate about my job which comes as a second nature to me because I love helping people. My job portrays my name well as I'm given a chance to take care of the nation by helping other people realise their dreams. I get satisfaction from helping other people to venture into fields that they never thought they could fit into and I go the extra mile in ensuring they get the kind of assistance they need to further their studies and choosing the right career path.

If you were in a position to positively change anything concerning the work you do, what would it be?

Zafika Zimtoti Mbonambi: I would reinforce the research unit in terms of employing young and innovative scientists,

and try and establish more sub-divisions like nutrition, biotechnology, taxonomy and so forth. I would do this because science is an interdependent discipline in that all forms of agricultural science complement each other.

Masetshaba Louw: The changes I felt needed to be made will be implemented soon so they are not a hindrance as they are being sorted out but as we grow we meet new challenges, so I can safely say we will cross that river when we get there as a team because we work well together.

Would you like to offer any advice to anyone interested in your line of work?

Zafika Zimtoti Mbonambi: My advice would be that you should be disciplined and dedicated and should like working in the veld 90% of the time. It will also help to be patient because pasture research may not always yield results immediately sometimes it will take years.

Masetshaba Louw: Have patience as you'll be dealing with school kids whom you going to have to take time explaining to. Have passion for people and driving interests of other people.

What extra-curricular activities are you involved in?

Zafika Zimtoti Mbonambi: I like cycling, jogging and reading during my spare time and also hanging out with friends.

Masetshaba Louw: I play netball for the departments team and I have found new love for the camera (modelling and photography), an inspiration brought by someone close to my heart. I am also part of NCEED and spend substantial time to get it off the ground and getting connected with the relevant people

Who is your role model in life?

Zafika Zimtoti Mbonambi: My late mother because she was one of the most remarkable women in my life. She was strong and wise. That was reflected in her passion to educate her children single-handedly.

Masetshaba Louw: Different people influence me differently. The footprints they leave in my heart impact the way my life is spiralling. I'm blessed to be surrounded by people who have touched me both in a good way and bad because at the end of the day they have helped strengthen my character.

The Presidential Hotline its objectives and how it works

Picture courtesy of Vukuzenzele

The Presidential Hotline was primarily set up with the objective of affording ordinary South Africans the opportunity to directly interact with the Presidency on matters relating to service delivery affecting all spheres of government including parastatals.

The Hotline allows citizens to lodge complaints against poor service delivery or lack thereof, including reporting fraud and corruption.

The ultimate objective of the Hotline is to contribute towards the broader efforts to ensure efficient service delivery and a corruption free society. The Presidency resolved to become more actively involved in offering support to provinces to ensure that complaints that are referred to province are speedily attended to and resolved. To this end the Presidency recommended the appointment of Provincial Liaison Officers (PLOs) in each department.

Public Liaison Officers (PLOs) in provincial departments must, among other things, ensure efficient performance of the Hotline by referring complaints logged on to the Hotline to relevant business units in departments and to report back to the Presidency on solutions and remedial actions taken. All complaints against Senior managers and corruption will be handled by the Presidency.

The PLO's are to be based in the communication units of provincial departments. In the province the Premiers Office has already organised briefing workshop for PLO's on the Presidential Hotline and their roll in attending to complaints referred to provincial Department.



President Jacob Zuma attending to a call



The Premiers office is planning training for all PLOs in the province. The appointment of PLOs in provincial departments will greatly assist departments in handling, coordinating and resolving people's queries and complaints logged on to the Presidential Hotline including ensuring efficient performance of the Hotline thus improving on service delivery and projecting a positive image of a government at work to our people.

The Northern Cape Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has appointed Mr. Monnapula Tswaile on an acting basis to handle queries and complaints from the Presidential Hotline that specifically affect the Department.



WHAT CONTRIBUTORS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE PENSION FUND (GEPF) BENEFITS

GEPF has created a funeral benefits scheme to help pay the funeral cost when a member or pensioner passes away. Funeral benefits are also paid out on the death of the spouse, life partner or eligible child of a member or pensioner.

How it works

Wherever possible, the GEPF will process a funeral benefit claim within 72 hours of receipt; however, payment can be delayed if the claim for or the documentation accompanying a claim is incomplete or incorrect. In order to allow the GEPF to process the claim quickly and efficiently, the claimant must ensure that the information provided is complete and correct.

Who qualifies for the funeral benefit?

- A member
- pensioner,
- spouse
- eligible child of a member or pensioner

In the case of a member or pensioner the GEPF will pay a taxable amount of R7500 and R3000 for an eligible child towards the funeral costs. If a member retires or exits the Fund but does not qualify for a monthly annuity, he or she does not qualify for a funeral benefit after leaving the service of government.

Who can claim the funeral benefit?

The GEPF will accept a claim from the following people, in order of preference:

A member, pensioner, the spouse of a member or pensioner, a major child of member or pensioner, the guardian of a minor child of a member or pensioner, The

brother/sister or brother-in-law/sister-in-law of a member or pensioner and or the executor of the estate of the deceased.

Please note that no payment will be made to a funeral undertaker.

Documents needed when claiming

- A fully completed Z300 form (Funeral Benefit Claim Form)
- A certified copy of the death certificate
- In the case of a still-born child, written confirmation of the duration of pregnancy and death certification as issued by the attending physician and hospital.
- A certified copy of the deceased's bar-coded ID or passport (or birth certificate in the case of a minor child)
- Z894 Form
- A certified copy of the bar-coded ID or passport of the person applying for the benefits.

How funeral benefits are paid?

The funeral benefit can be paid into a bank account or via an online Post Office. In the interest of fast, efficient processing, the following needs to be provided:

- For bank payments –the Z894 Form (Banking Particulars Form) must reflect the applicants banking details.
- When claim is submitted by fax, the Z894 Form accompanied by a certified bank statement showing the bank's email and landline contact details.
- For payment via the Post Office – details of the online Post Office must be provided on the Z300 form.

Your Human Resource Officers may be contacted for further assistance.

Procedure on Leave of Absence

Text: Jamilla Mohamed

All employees are entitled to leave, but any institution or department will suffer if their employees abuse it.

That's why it's imperative that we manage our leave carefully so that we can prevent leave abuse and easily identify employees who are taking advantage.

The resolution on leave outlined below gives you a clearer picture of how to manage your leave and what is expected of you when taking leave.

In terms of Resolution 1 of 2003, employees are not entitled to be absent without leave from work, during working hours without any valid reasons.

All employees who leave the office during working hours may do so after attaining permission from their respective supervisor. Work undertaken outside the scope of duty of employees must be with the permission of the relevant line manager. Work undertaken outside scope of duty must be in line with the Performance Agreement of employees.

All employees are expected to sign the attendance register as failure to do so will be regarded as leave without permission. Where an employee is absent unexpectedly for reasons of ill health or unavoidable reasons, the employee must complete a leave form on his/her first day of return to work and submit it to the relevant supervisor immediately.

Management may ratify the absence should circumstances merit it if acceptable proof of the reason for the absence is submitted by the employee. However, in all cases of such absence, the employee is himself required to contact his manager directly, by 10am on the day(s) of absence, so as to provide the following information:

1. The reason for the absence
2. The expected duration of the absence

In this regard, should an employee fail to speak directly, in person to his manager or, in the absence of his manager, to the acting supervisor in respect of the above, the employee will be held responsible should a message not reach his manager.

Any absence from work without authority or good cause will result in the employee not being entitled to any remuneration for the period of absence (leave without pay).

The employee will also not be entitled to payment should he/she fail to submit a valid certificate from a practitioner registered with the Health Professions Council and has been absent on more than two occasions during an eight week period i.e an employee may absent himself for two days without a medical certificate but with good cause within the eight week cycle, however, should the employee again absent himself within the same eight week cycle a medical certificate will be required.

Any employee who breaches the above requirements will be subject to discipline in terms of the disciplinary code and procedure.

Sanctions against employees found guilty could range from warnings to dismissal depending on the severity of the absenteeism and the number of previous warnings, if any.

Techno Terror's

Text and Pictures: Lerato Khaziwa



The introduction of every new technology brings challenges that have to be overcome. The departmental Intranet dubbed Agrinet is no different.

This transition relies on, user perception, employee fears understood and remedial action taken, and the smooth integration into the department is needed. Also Consensus among business units and various staff is sought.

During the user training some concerns arose. Users raised privacy issues pertaining to the use of their mailboxes as well as the chat component of which they suspected the administrator has access to. Users were assured of the adequate security measures taken to control the access and usage of the intranet and the monitoring for unauthorized access and illegal operation, guarding against damage or theft.

One of the most formidable challenges posed by the intranet (Agrinet) is Management and User Commitment – This is a serious challenge. To illustrate, there are currently various issues and drawbacks when obtaining commitment which include employee fears, lack of understanding, no motivation and time problems. Establishing user commitment has not been easy however efforts have been made to tackle this situation with caution and correction.

The Intranet user training was concluded November 2011. User's in the districts were concerned with the lack of access to a desktop with internet and suggested that all reception areas be provided with a desktop instead of procuring computers for all staff.

Other challenges include, managing information and knowledge available without overloading users, keeping information current and ensuring confidentiality of



information. These challenges could be met through regular content submissions by all business units which may include content such as weekly plans and activities.

After all, Agrinet exist to propagate information, meaning any initiative that demonstrably improves this core function has an obvious impact on the departmental goals.

The Agrinet, if allowed may deliver demonstrable productivity wins for the department and all business units. Trends like blogging and building communities of practice are emerging as appealing enhancements to intranets and, like any tool that has learned to thrive in its chosen environment, it will continue to evolve challenging staff to keep up.



New appointments

Name and Surname	Post	Directorate
Mr W Mongwe	Senior Registry Clerk	Registry (Kimberley)
Ms J Matsio	Administration Officer	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (Kimberley)
Ms M.K Thole	Land Reform Co-ordinator	Rural Development (Kimberley)

Transfers

Ms F Diallo	Deputy Director	Farmer Settlement
Ms B Dube	Agri Development Officer	Extension Services

Resignations

Ms B Thatelo	Assistant Manager: Communication Services	Communication Services
Ms T Sebeela	Senior Officer: Communication Services	Communication Services

Retirements

Initials & Surname	Center
Mr J.H Venter	
Ms M van Wyk	
Mr S.J Mako	

Our Contact Details

HEAD OFFICE

162 George Street
Private Bag X5018
Kimberley, 8300
Tel: (053) 838 9100
Fax: (053) 831 4685/3635

NAMAKWA DISTRICT

2 Hospital Street
CBD
P.O. Box 18
Springbok, 8240
Tel: (027) 712 1315
Fax: (027) 712 2471

FRANCES BAARD DISTRICT

Vaalharts Research Station
Warrenton Road
Private Bag X9
Jan Kempdorp, 8550
Tel: (053) 456 5800
Fax: (053) 456 5801
Koopmansfontein Research Station: 083 518 3674

JOHN TAOLO GAETSEWE DISTRICT

6236 Kgosimothibi Street, Mothibistad
P.O. Box 26
Kuruman, 8460
Tel: (053) 773 1590/1981
Fax: (053) 773 1800/1232
Wesselsvlei Research Station: 083 518 3184

SIYANDA DISTRICT

Department of Water Affairs Building
Louisvaile Road
P.O. Box 52
Upington, 8800
Tel: (054) 337 8000
Fax: (054) 337 8001
Eiland Research Station: 054 337 8700
Karakul Research Station: 054 332 1931

PIXLEY KA SEME DISTRICT

Cnr Alida and Station Street
Protea Hof Building
P.O. Box 28
De Aar, 7000
Tel: (053) 631 3631
Fax: (053) 631 0564
Carnavon Research Station: 083 618 3193
Rietrivier Research Station: 083 518 4578

Upcoming Events

Landcare Week
World Food Day
16 Days of Activism
World AIDS Day