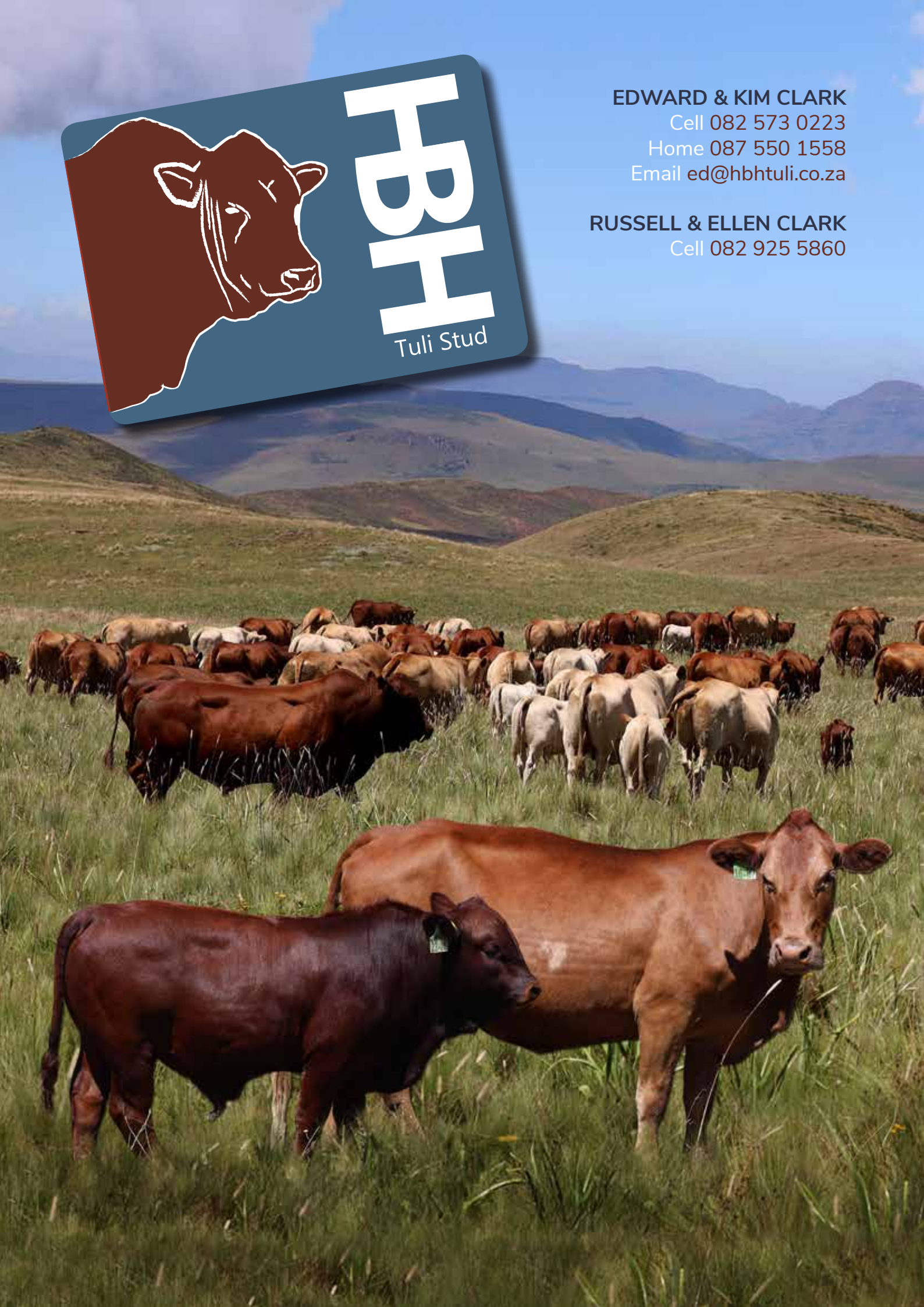
Tuli

Journal 2026

Fertile, profitable veld cattle | Vrugbare, winsgewende veldbees



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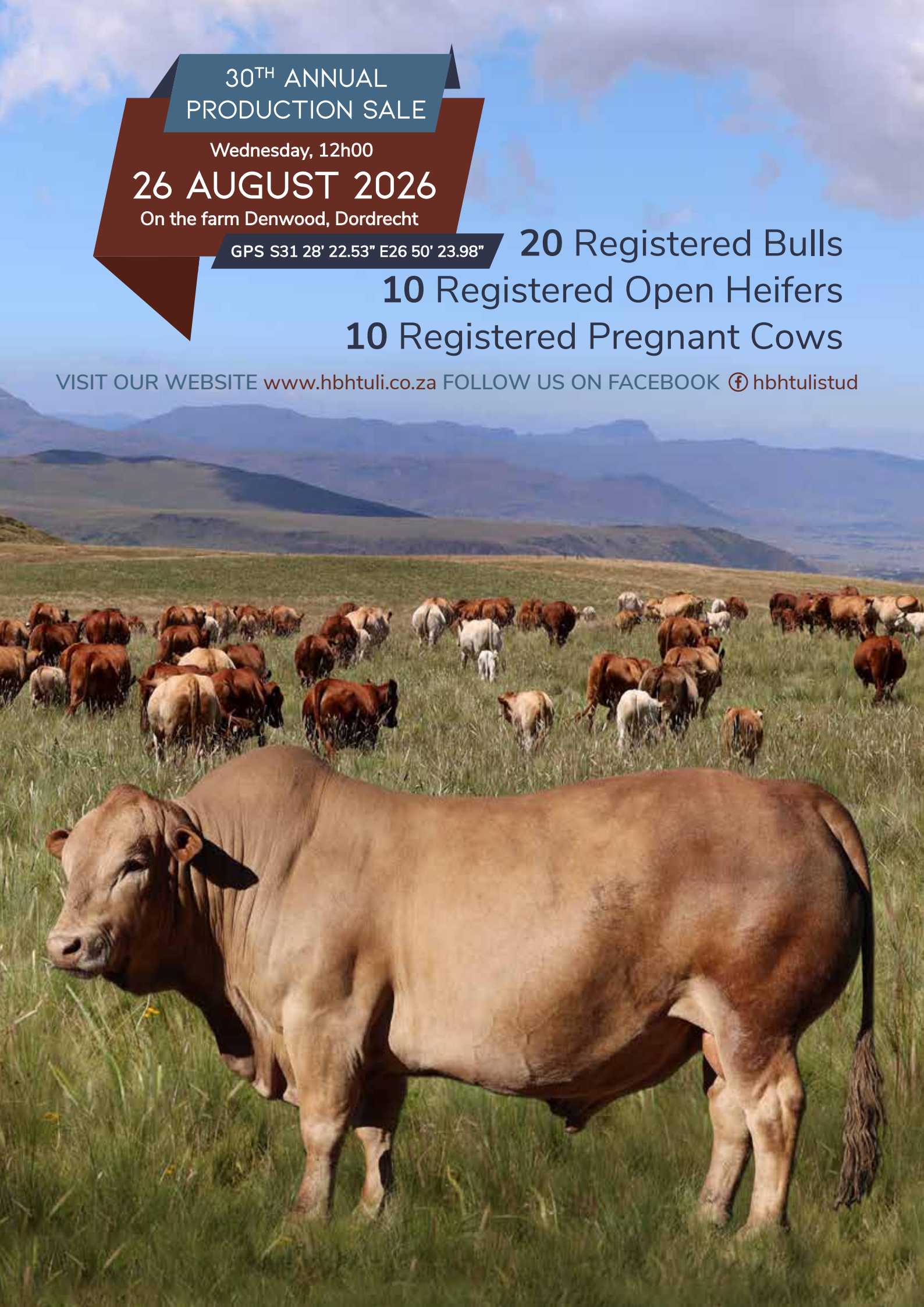
30TH ANNUAL
PRODUCTION SALE
Wednesday, 12h00
26 AUGUST 2026
On the farm Denwood, Dordrecht
GPS S31 28' 22.53" E26 50' 23.98"
20 Registered Bulls
10 Registered Open Heifers
10 Registered Pregnant Cows
VISIT OUR WEBSITE www.hbhtuli.co.za FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK hbhtulistud

ADVERTISERS

2026 Tuli Journal

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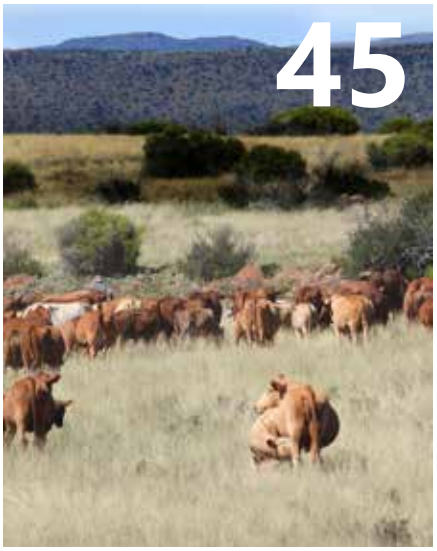

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RAAD 2026

PORTEFEULJES

Dave Mullins
TGI, Afrika-verteenwoordiger, Boereinligtingsdae, Bystand met kursusse

Christo Rothmann
Finansies, Koeiwaardes

Zippo Lambrecht
SA Stamboek, SA Stamboek vergaderings, Toekennings, Nasionale veiling, Rasadviseur, Rasstandaarde, Veilingsreëls, Katalogusse, Joernaal

Werner Gouws
Inspeksies, Inspekteurskursusse

Ben Raath
NAMPO, Wynveiling, Grondwet, Bystand met bemarking, Klerasie en promosiemateriaal

Helena Malherbe
Veilingsreëls, Rasstandaarde, Bystand met bemarking, Aanbied van kursusse (teorie), Inspeksies, Klerasie en promosiemateriaal

PRESIDENTIAL REPORT

By Stephen Mains-Sheard

2025 has certainly not been without its challenges. Financial pressures have remained significant, and farming amid increasing disease outbreaks and unpredictable climate conditions has created an exceptionally difficult environment in which to produce profitable beef.

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the passing of Oom Charl van Rooyen and Mrs Merensia Groenewald. Oom Charl was a legend in the cattle industry and made an immense contribution to the Tuli Society. It was truly a privilege to have spent time working with him.

Merensia goes back a long way with the Tuli breed. Her father started using Tuli bulls in 1986. Merensia was also a senior inspector of the Society. Taken far too soon, she will not be forgotten. Our sincere condolences go to their families and friends.

Our 2025 Tuli journal was a reminder of the professional manner in which Oom Charl went about his business with the assistance of his daughter Adria. Adria has offered to continue with the journal and I'm sure the 2026 journal will bear testament to the professional manner they as a team tackled this project.

Our 2025 production sale season went well, with the top prices achieved as follows.

Highest priced bull: R240 000
Seller: Langlyf Tulis, Albie Rautenbach
Purchaser: RGV Tulis, Oosthuizen Family

Highest priced pregnant cow: R38 000
Seller: Nonnie Tulis, Cornelius Rautenbach
Purchaser: Frikkie Janse van Rensburg

Highest priced cow & calf: R64 000
Seller: Malu Tulis, Helena Malherbe
Purchaser: Wolhaarkop Tulis, Jim Bredenkamp

Highest priced open heifer: R42 000
Seller: Bushman's Mountain Tulis, Christo Rothmann
Purchaser: RGV Tulis, Oosthuizen Family

Well done to the breeders for achieving these excellent prices.

The inspectors' course scheduled to be held at the Clarks' farm, Denwood, unfortunately had to be cancelled due to extreme weather conditions. We are grateful to Jim Bredenkamp for stepping in and offering to host the course at Wolhaarkop. Thank you to Jim and Barenda for being such exceptional hosts.

I would also like to congratulate Mrs Helena Malherbe and Jim Bredenkamp on achieving their Senior Inspectors status, well done on this significant accomplishment.→

Foto: Gouwsberg Tuli / Andre Pretorius

Foto: Bushman's Mountain Tuli

Once again, we had a highly successful exhibit at NAMPO. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members who contributed to making it a success. A special word of appreciation to Ben and Sarina Raath, Christo Rothmann and Jim Bredenkamp for proudly flying the Tuli flag.

My sincere thanks also go to Andrew Webster and Stephané Roos for assisting with the Tuli crossbred animals and for introducing the "guess the weight of the ox" concept, which generated great interest. Finally, thank you to Dr Petrus Engelbrecht for providing the Tuli bull, cow, and calf, your support is greatly appreciated.

On 30 April, we hosted our third wine auction. This event continues to grow from strength to strength and provides the Society with much-needed fundraising support. A special word of thanks to Ben and Sarina Raath for the tremendous effort you put into making this event a success, we are truly grateful.

We also extend our sincere appreciation to SwiftVee, Vleissentraal, and all our member sponsors for your ongoing support. Thank you as well to Lettie Fouché School for hosting the event, we are pleased that we are able to make a meaningful contribution to the school.

Please take note that the Wine Auction, National Sale, and AGM will take place in the same week, from 13–14 August 2026.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr Giel van Niekerk (Ganna Aar Stud) on winning the ARC National Best Elite Cow Award, and Mr Ed Clark (HBH Tuli Stud) on receiving the 2025 SA Studbook National Elite Platinum Cow Award. Congratulations also to Mr Christo Rothmann of Bushman's Mountain Tuli Stud on being named ARC National Herd of the Year for 2025, an outstanding achievement and a tremendous endorsement of the Tuli breed. Well done to the entire Bushman's Mountain team. I would also like to make special mention of the bull ADM 2342, owned by Mr Dave Mullins (Avondale Tuli Stud), which was nominated to represent our breed in the 2026 Phase D Bull competition. Unfortunately, due to Foot and Mouth Disease, the bulls will not be exhibited this year; however, each breed's nomination will still be promoted and marketed accordingly.

Our genomic reference population has now grown to over 1,200 animals, enabling the implementation of genomically enhanced breeding values for the breed. Additionally, the Zimbabwean Tuli Society is utilising SA Studbook for their genomic testing. This collaboration will help expand the reference population further, increasing genetic variation and strengthening genetic linkage for the combined Tuli evaluation, ultimately delivering significant benefits to the Tuli breed.

The TGI is progressing well and remains firmly on track. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr Florence Nherera-Choduke and her team for their dedication in ensuring the success of this project. I also extend my appreciation to my fellow councillors, who serve as directors and mentors, generously giving of their time to guide this initiative and help create a positive impact for our breed.

Finally, I would like to thank all council members for their continued commitment and contributions. Your efforts play a vital role in ensuring that the Tuli breed continues to grow in value, sincere thanks to you all.

On behalf of the Council and all our members, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to our Secretary, Mrs Teresa Rust, for her dedication and the invaluable work she does for the Society. We also express our appreciation to our Secretariat, Mr Claus Kempen, as well as all Studbook personnel for their committed and professional service.

Finally, I would like to thank all our members for your continued support. May our Tulis inspire us to remain positive during these challenging times, and it is my hope that the farming environment will improve throughout 2026. ▲

THE FAITHFUL FARMER

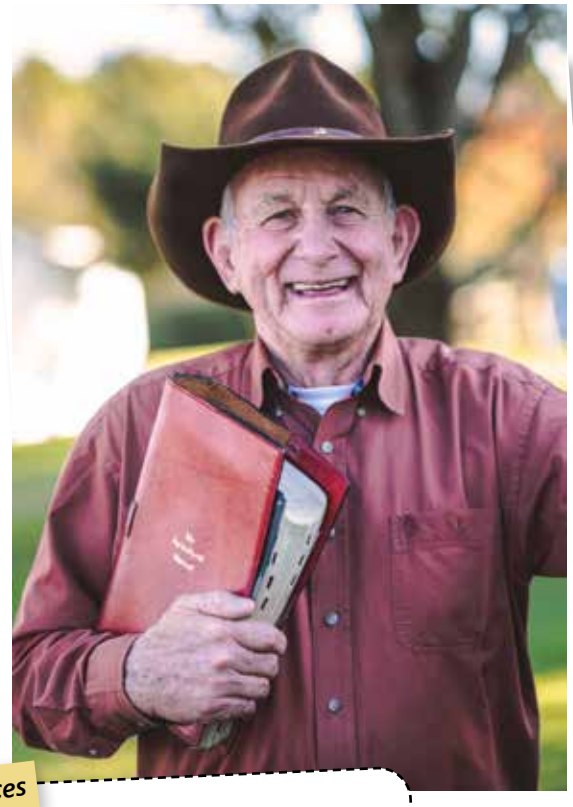
It is a wonderful privilege to be a man of the land, especially a cattle farmer. I have had the honour of working on cattle farms in Scotland, Australia, Zambia, and of course, here in South Africa. Livestock farming is extremely close to my heart. Yes, I have also been a potato farmer, "Faith Like Potatoes", both the book and the film, tell part of that story.

But when it comes to my deepest passion, it lies with animals: cattle, sheep, and horses. My son and my two grandsons also work with cattle dogs, and it thrills my heart to see how efficiently they handle the livestock with their dogs. They have also mastered the art of roping cattle in the field, something that brings me great joy to witness.

The Bible is very clear about involving the whole family in the farming operation. In fact, the Word of God says in Mark 8:36, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

I want to encourage you to involve your wife and children in your farming enterprise. And if possible, start them at a very young age. When my family were small, we would sit around the dining-room table each evening at supper and talk through the events of the day on the farm. We did not shelter them from the realities of farming. If there was a drought, we prayed together for rain. If there were floods, we asked the Lord to intervene and to help us.

As a result, they all grew up in agriculture, and what a privilege it is for me today to drive around with them in the bakkie and have them show me what they are doing, and to share their dreams and aspirations for the future.



The future of this country depends on its farming community. You know the old saying:

> ***Never criticise a farmer with your mouth full.***
>
> How true that is.

My prayer for each one of you is that the Lord Jesus Christ, in His divine love and grace, will protect you, your loved ones, and all who work on your farms, so that you may be an example to this nation of what Jesus can do through a family dedicated to Him.

From a fellow farmer who loves and respects you greatly:
Keep on keeping on, for the Lord.

Angus and Jill Buchan

Scripture References

Mark 8:36 (KJV)
"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Psalm 37:4 (KJV)
"Delight thyself also in the Lord: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Psalm 37.4 (NKJV)
Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Profitable cattle for the Karoo

2020
SA Stud Book Elite Gold

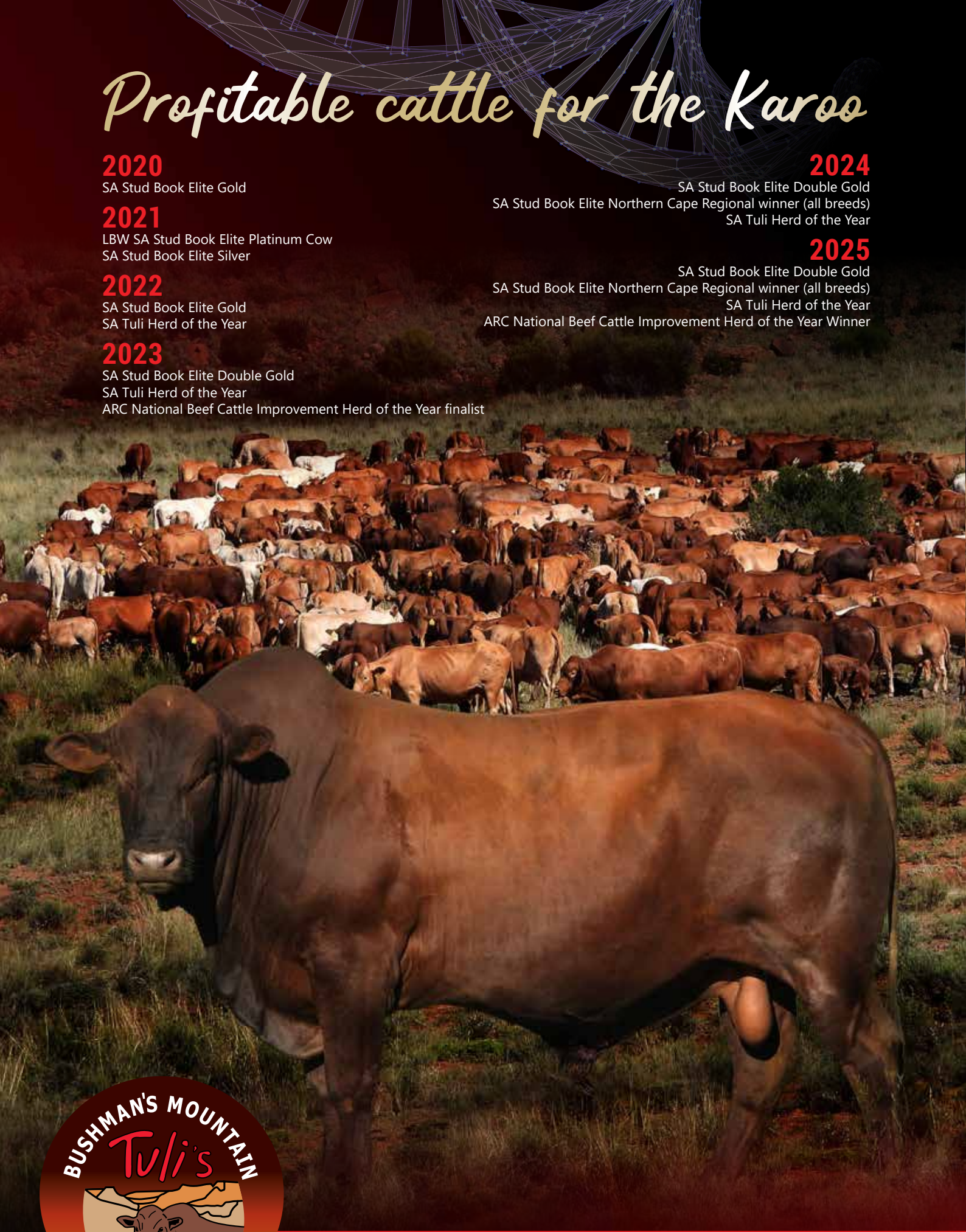
2021
LBW SA Stud Book Elite Platinum Cow
SA Stud Book Elite Silver

2022
SA Stud Book Elite Gold
SA Tuli Herd of the Year

2023
SA Stud Book Elite Double Gold
SA Tuli Herd of the Year
ARC National Beef Cattle Improvement Herd of the Year finalist

2024
SA Stud Book Elite Double Gold
SA Stud Book Elite Northern Cape Regional winner (all breeds)
SA Tuli Herd of the Year

2025
SA Stud Book Elite Double Gold
SA Stud Book Elite Northern Cape Regional winner (all breeds)
SA Tuli Herd of the Year
ARC National Beef Cattle Improvement Herd of the Year Winner



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Profitable cattle for the Karoo

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CATTLE FARMING MADE PROFITABLE, *enjoyable* & SUSTAINABLE

By Kit Pharo - Pharo Cattle Company

Pharo Cattle Company sells over 1000 grass-developed breeding bulls every year. Our headquarters are located in eastern Colorado (noted by arrow), where we get 300 to 350 mm of precipitation. However, we have cooperative cowherds in 13 states (noted by stars). Our seedstock program consists of Angus, Red Angus, Hereford, South Poll and Heat-Tolerant Composites.

In the U.S., the cost of cattle farming inputs doubled between 2010 and 2024. DOUBLED in just 14 years – and the cost of inputs is still increasing. I believe we are seeing something very similar in South Africa and other places around the world. The chances of this trend reversing are very slim.

Because of extensive drought in North America, the number of beef cows is lower than it has been for 50 years. This has created record-high cattle prices. Cow-calf producers can do many things wrong and still be profitable. Because FMD outbreaks have severely disrupted the beef supply chain in South Africa, prices here are also at record-high levels.

No one knows how long these high calf prices will last – but we all know they won't last forever. When calf prices fall, what →

Agriculture that is not profitable and enjoyable will never be sustainable. A business is only sustainable if it can be passed on from one generation to the next. The fact that the average age of cow-calf producers in South Africa is over 60 tells me that most cow-calf businesses are not as sustainable as they should be, which tells me they are not as profitable and enjoyable as they should be.

I believe the cow-calf portion of the beef industry – around the world – is at a major turning point. What has worked so well for the last 20 years will not work for the next 20 years. Those who are the quickest to adapt and change will be in the driver's seat. Those who are the slowest to change will get left behind or run over.

> ***A business is only sustainable if it can be passed on from one generation to the next.***

will happen to the cost of inputs? I'm pretty sure the cost of inputs will continue to increase. What if they double again? Will survival require change?

Much has changed in the last 20 years, and yet most of today's cow-calf producers operate as though nothing has changed. People, for the most part, are afraid of change. As silly as it sounds, many would rather fail doing what they have always done than succeed if success requires change.

Profit
=
Income
(Production x Market Value)
–
Expenses

In agriculture we have very little, if any, control over the market value and the prices we receive. The only two things we have control over are our production and our expenses. Reducing expenses is a great way to increase profits. The easiest money you will ever make is the money you don't spend – and it is tax free.

"

Increasing production is also a great way to increase profits – **but ONLY IF you increase production per hectare, NOT per animal.**

For the past 50 years, cattlemen around the world have bred and selected almost exclusively to increase production per cow.

As a result of this incessant selection for bigger and bigger weaning weights, bragging rights have increased, cow size has increased, stocking rates have decreased, cost of production has increased – and profits have decreased. The first step most producers need to do to maximize profits is to STOP focusing on kilos per cow (bragging rights) – and START focusing on kilos per hectare (profit).

The most profitable cattle farmers around the world have one thing in common. Without exception, they strive to make the most efficient use of the available forage resources on their farm. This has nothing to do with what breed of cattle they have. It has everything to do with making the most of every drop of rain and ray of sunshine that falls on the land they control.

The three keys to making the most efficient use of your available forage resources are 1) Planned rotational grazing, 2) Matching your production cycle to your forage resources and 3) Matching cow size and type to your forage resources. I will briefly discuss these three keys.

1 Planned rotational grazing

After building some cross fences and piping some water, we started rotational grazing in the summer of 1994. The first rule of thumb is to move cattle fast when the grass is growing fast, and slow when the grass is growing slow. The second rule of thumb is to put the highest number of cattle in the smallest possible area for the shortest period of time.

One of the benefits of rotational grazing is reducing and eliminating supplemental feeding. The only time our cows receive anything other than free-choice sea salt is when the snow is too deep or too crusted for them to graze through. Rotational grazing has also improved our rangeland. We have improved forage quality, quantity and diversity.

The biggest benefit to rotational grazing, however, has been the ability to increase total beef production per hectare. A novice grazier will be able to easily increase beef production by 50%. Several graziers have been able to double beef production per hectare. That's like having someone give you another farm for free.

Above is a picture of the Las Damas (The Ladies) Ranch in the Chihuahuan Desert of northern Mexico. The ranch on this side of the fence has been practicing rotational grazing since 2005. Compared to where he started, Alejandro Carrillo has quadrupled grass and beef production! That's amazing!

2 Matching your production cycle to your forage resources

For the most part, your production cycle involves calving and weaning. You should be calving in sync with your very best forage resources. If your cows are gaining weight prior to calving, it will be easy to get them bred back with their next calf.

You can and should wean early (90 to 120 days of age) during a drought. A cow's nutritional requirements are drastically reduced when her calf has been weaned. You can wean later if you have adequate forage resources. There are huge benefits to leaving calves with their mothers until they are 10 months of age.

3 Matching cow size and type to your forage resources

I want a herd of cows that can produce and reproduce strictly on what my farm is producing. I don't want to spend any money on any outside inputs. Contrary to what most cattle farmers believe, we can come very close to achieving this with the right size and type of cows.

Let's begin this section by reviewing a few basic facts.

1. At least 65% of annual cow cost is spent on feed and pasture.

2. Seventy percent of the feed a cow consumes is strictly for maintenance. Only 30 percent goes toward production.

3. Bigger cows eat more than smaller cows. They require more feed for maintenance (survival).

4. Heavy milking cows also require more feed for maintenance – even when they are not lactating. This is due to the genetic makeup of their visceral (internal) organs. Put another way, heavy milking cows have a big engine that requires high octane fuel – even when they are not lactating.

5. There is a direct straight-line correlation between cow size and cost of production. Cattle farms with the biggest cows are the least profitable.

Most cattlemen in North America, Australia and South Africa believe their cows are too big. Why do most cattlemen have cows that are too big? For 50 years, they have been single-mindedly focused on increasing kilograms per cow (bragging rights) – instead of on kilograms per hectare (profit). Do big cows always wean the biggest calves?

Average cow weight	*Average weaning weight*	*Percent cow weight weaned*
565	*280*	*49%*
615	*277*	*45%*
660	*267*	*40%*
700	*271*	*39%*
770	*260*	*34%*

North Dakota State University divided their cowherd into five groups based on size. It is a well-known fact that smaller cows can wean a higher percentage of their own weight than big cows. Big cows should be able to wean bigger calves than small cows. However, in a real-world environment, big cows struggle to meet their maintenance energy requirements. Consequently, they will produce smaller calves and fail to breed back.

We have spent the last 40 years requiring our cows to do more with less. We have increased our stocking rates. Our only supplement is sea salt. We only feed hay when the snow is too deep or too crusted to graze through. We do not vaccinate our cows or treat them for parasites. These are our conclusions.

1. Low-maintenance energy requirement is the most important trait to select for. Maintenance requirement is a factor of size, growth and milk. Low-maintenance requirement has a huge effect on fleshing ability and fertility.

2. On a scale of 1 to 9, we prefer cattle with a 3 to 4 frame score. Frame score is very indicative of maintenance requirements.

3. Mature cow weight of 500 to 565 kilograms. This is what our 3 and 4-frame cows weigh. Our 3 and 4-frame cows often weigh more than 5 and 6-frame cows, because there is more cow and less air space under the cow.

4. We also need cows with tremendous volume and capacity.

Pictured below are two 10-year-old cows on my home ranch in eastern Colorado. We require our cows to calve at two years of age and every year after that.

A cow must wean a calf every year to stay in the herd. We never make an excuse for a cow or give her a second chance.

Pictured below are two of our mature herd sires. Notice their thickness and masculinity. Masculine bulls produce feminine cows

Since we sell breeding bulls in some subtropical areas, we have been experimenting with several heat-tolerant breeds and breed combinations to better fit those environments.

We are trying to minimize the use of Bos indicus breeding because most Brahman cattle are too big and inefficient for our program. Brahman-cross cattle also have a lower level of fertility. In the U.S., Brahman-cross calves are discounted.

For the most part, we have been experimenting with Bos taurus breeds of cattle that have Spanish or African origins. These breeds include Mashona, Creollo, Romosinuano, Tuli and Senepol. We are crossing these heat-tolerant breeds to our slick-hided Red Angus cattle. The bull pictured below is 50% Red Angus, 25% Mashona and 25% Romosinuano.

As stated earlier, I believe the cow-calf portion of the beef industry – around the world – is at a major turning point. What has worked so well for the last 20 years will not work for the next 20 years.

Those who are the quickest to adapt and change will be in the driver's seat. Those who are the slowest to change will get left behind or run over. There will always be advantages to being ahead of the curve – and consequences for being late. ▲

WANNEER SKOKKE DIE STELSEL TREF: RISIKO EN KWESBAARHEID IN SUID-AFRIKA SE *Rooivleis-waardeketting*

Deur Danie Jordaan (Senior Dosent), Diaan Venter, Wesly Mokomele, Bongi Dlamini, Thabile Tsabedze (Studente) - Landbou-Ekonomie: Universiteit van Pretoria

Nuwe navorsing wys waar Suid-Afrika se rooivleis-waardeketting die kwesbaarste is – en wat gedoen kan word om veerkragtigheid te versterk.

Wanneer konflik in die Midde-Ooste of Oos-Europa uitbreek, word die gevolge vinnig veel verder as die slagveld gevoel. Binne ure reageer oliepryse, verskepingsroetes word ontwrig en kunsmismarkte skuif. Hierdie reaksies is nie bloot geïsoleerde markbewegings nie, maar die eerste skakels in 'n ketting van aanpassings wat uiteindelik produksiebesluite op plaasvlak raak. Vir boere en landbou-ondernemings duisende kilometers weg vertaal hierdie skokke vinnig in hoër brandstofkoste, stygende voerpryse en toenemende onsekerheid in landbou-waardekettings. Wat hierdie dinamika besonders maak, is nie net die omvang daarvan nie, maar die spoed waarteen dit plaasvind, dikwels vinniger as wat besighede operasioneel kan aanpas.

Suid-Afrika se rooivleissektor is nie immuun teen hierdie druk nie. 'n Styging in oliepryse verhoog vervoerkoste regdeur die waardeketting, terwyl duurder kunsmis graanproduksiekoste opstoot en voerpryse kort daarna volg. Hierdie kostedruk word verder vererger deur plaaslike strukturele beperkings. Elektrisiteitsonderbrekings, swak logistieke netwerke en diergesondheidsuitdagings plaas addisionele druk op 'n stelsel wat reeds onder spanning verkeer. Bewegingsbeperkings weens bek-en-klouseer ontwrig byvoorbeeld die vloei van vee tussen plase, voerkrale en abattoirs, wat nie net produksie nie maar ook marktoegang raak. Wanneer hierdie globale en plaaslike druk saamval, word die impak nie bloot opgetel nie, maar vermenigvuldig, wat die stabiliteit van die hele waardeketting ondermyn.

Hierdie werklikheid weerspieël 'n breër verskuiwing in hoe landbou-waardekettings funksioneer. Waar produksie histories meer plaaslik en minder geïntegreerd was, is dit vandag ingebed in 'n globale netwerk van insette, markte en logistieke stelsels. Hierdie integrasie skep geleenthede vir groei en handel, maar verhoog terselfdertyd blootstelling aan eksterne skokke. In Suid-Afrika word hierdie blootstelling verder versterk deur binnelandse strukturele uitdagings, insluitend verswakkende landelike infrastruktuur, beleids-onsekerheid, sosiale spanning en klimaatsveranderlikheid.

Waar die waardeketting die kwesbaarste is

Swak padinfrastruktuur verhoog nie net vervoerkoste nie, maar verlaag ook die betroubaarheid van logistieke skedules en verhoog verliese tydens vervoer. Klimaatsdruk, in die vorm van droogtes, veranderlike reënval en uiterste temperature, beïnvloed weidings, waterbeskikbaarheid en diergesondheid op 'n wyse wat moeilik voorspelbaar en moeilik bestuurbaar is. Hierdie faktore tree nie in isolasie op nie, maar versterk mekaar deur komplekse terugvoermeganismes wat die druk op die waardeketting verder verhoog.

Om hierdie dinamika te verstaan, vereis 'n duidelike onderskeid tussen risiko en kwesbaarheid.

Risiko

Risiko verwys na spesifieke bedreigings wat produksie kan ontwrig, winsgewendheid kan verminder of marktoegang kan beperk.

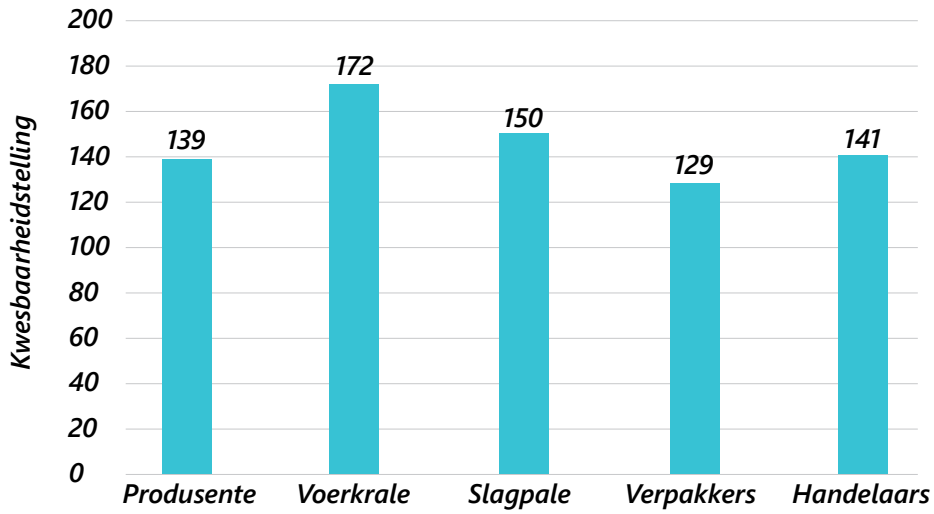
Kwesbaarheid

Kwesbaarheid, daarenteen, dui op die onderliggende strukturele kwesbaarheid van die stelsel en sy vermoë om skokke te absorbeer, aan te pas of te herstel.

'n Waardeketting met lae kwesbaarheid kan selfs hoë vlakke van risiko hanteer sonder sistemiese ontwrigting. Waar kwesbaarheid egter hoog is, kan selfs relatief klein ontwrigtings groot en wydverspreide gevolge hê. Die implikasie is duidelik: die impak van risiko word nie net deur die aard van die skok bepaal nie, maar deur die toestand van die stelsel wat dit moet absorbeer.

Teen hierdie agtergrond is 'n studie onderneem om die Suid-Afrikaanse rooivleis-waardeketting te ontleed vanuit beide 'n kwesbaarheids- en risikoperspektief. Die ontleding, gebaseer op insette van 119 respondente regoor die waardeketting, insluitend produsente, voerkrale, abattoirs, verwerkers en kleinhandelaars, bied 'n geïntegreerde blik op waar die sektor die kwesbaarste is en wat van die voorste risiko's is.

Figuur 1: Kwesbaarheidstelling per rolspeler in die rooivleis-waardeketting



Figuur 1 toon dat kwesbaarheid nie eweredig oor die waardeketting versprei is nie. Voerkrale kom na vore as die mees brose skakel, gevolg deur abattoirs en kleinhandelaars, terwyl produsente en verwerkers relatief laer vlakke van kwesbaarheid toon. Hierdie patroon is betekenisvol omdat dit wys dat kwesbaarheid nie noodwendig by die begin van die produksieproses lê nie, maar eerder by die knooppunte waar verskillende dele van die stelsel integreer.

Voerkrale funksioneer as 'n kritieke spilpunt tussen primêre produksie en verwerking. Hulle word gelyktydig blootgestel aan wisselende voerpryse, veranderende vee-aanbod en streng finansiële vereistes. Hierdie kombinasie van faktore beteken dat hul winsgewendheid sensitief is vir relatief klein veranderinge in insetkoste of marktoestande. Wanneer marges onder druk kom, kan finansiële spanning vinnig eskaleer, wat hul vermoë om skokke te absorbeer beperk.

Abattoirs toon soortgelyke kwesbaarheid omdat hulle afhanklik is van 'n stabiele vloei van vee, doeltreffende logistiek en streng regulatoriese nakoming.

Ontwrigtings in enige van hierdie elemente kan deurset verminder en knelpunte skep wat die res van die waardeketting beïnvloed. Kleinhandelaars ervaar kwesbaarheid op 'n ander manier, hoofsaaklik deur hul blootstelling aan reputasierisiko, voedselveiligheid en veranderende verbruikersvoorkeure.

Produsente en verwerkers toon laer vlakke van kwesbaarheid, maar dit weerspieël eerder die aard van hul risiko's as 'n afwesigheid daarvan. Produsente word veral geraak deur swak inligtingsvloei en onsekerheid oor kopers, wat produksiebeplanning bemoeilik in 'n stelsel waar biologiese siklusse reeds aanpassings beperk. Oor die hele waardeketting heen speel faktore soos sosiale onstabiliteit, menslike hulpbronbeperkings en swak koördinering 'n belangrike rol in die bepaling van kwesbaarheid.

Die kerninsig is dat kwesbaarheid sistemies is. Swakhede in een deel van die waardeketting kan maklik na ander dele oorgedra word deur voorsieningsverhoudings, prysoordragte en logistieke afhanklikhede. Hierdie onderlinge verbondenheid beteken dat die bestuur van kwesbaarheid nie op individuele vlak kan plaasvind nie, maar 'n gekoördineerde benadering vereis. →

Tabel 1: Risiko's in die waardeketting

Risiko	Impak	Waarskynlikheid	Snelheid	Risikotelling	Risiko-kategorie
Swak infrastruktuur	*4*	*3*	*2*	*22*	*Laag*
Arbeidskwessies	*4*	*4*	*2*	*23*	*Laag*
Misdaad en sekuriteit	*4*	*3*	*3*	*25*	*Medium*
Beleids-onsekerheid en swak afdwinging	*3*	*4*	*3*	*21*	*Medium*
Onvoldoende vaardighede en bestuurskapasiteit	*3*	*4*	*3*	*21*	*Medium*
Dieregesondheid (siektes en entstowwe)	*4*	*4*	*4*	*34*	*Hoog*
Klimaat- en omgewingsfaktore	*4*	*4*	*4*	*31*	*Hoog*
Ontwrigtings in handel en uitvoerkanale	*4*	*4*	*4*	*31*	*Hoog*
Ekonomiese druk	*4*	*4*	*4*	*29*	*Hoog*
Hoë insetkoste (voer, elektrisiteit, water)	*4*	*4*	*4*	*34*	*Hoog*

Die grootste risiko's in die waardeketting

Terwyl kwesbaarheid aandui waar die stelsel struktureel kwesbaar is, wys die risiko-ontleding watter bedreigings die grootste en mees onmiddellike impak op besighede het. Soos in Tabel 1 uiteengesit, moet risiko's nie net volgens hul aard beoordeel word nie, maar ook volgens hul impak, waarskynlikheid en die snelheid waarmee hul gevolge realiseer.

'n Duidelike patroon kom na vore. Dieregesondheidsrisiko's en hoë insetkoste staan uit as die mees kritieke risiko's, met die hoogste saamgestelde tellings. Hierdie risiko's kombineer hoë impak met hoë waarskynlikheid en vinnige deurwerking, wat beteken dat hulle nie net groot skade kan veroorsaak nie, maar dit ook binne 'n kort tydsraamwerk doen. Hierdie kombinasie maak hulle besonder moeilik om te bestuur, aangesien reaksietyd beperk is en aanpassings dikwels eers plaasvind nadat die impak reeds begin realiseer.

Klimaatsdruk, handelsontwrigtings en breër ekonomiese onsekerheid vorm 'n tweede groep hoë-prioriteit risiko's. Hierdie risiko's beïnvloed nie net produksie nie, maar ook pryse, marktoegang en beleggingsbesluite. Hulle het 'n wyer sistemiese impak en speel 'n bepalende rol in die langtermyn stabiliteit van die waardeketting.

Aan die ander kant van die spektrum val infrastruktuur en arbeid. Hierdie risiko's het relatief laer tellings behaal, hoofsaaklik omdat hul impak stadiger realiseer. Dit beteken egter nie dat hulle minder belangrik is nie. Hul geleidelike aard kan lei tot 'n opbou van strukturele swakhede wat oor tyd die doeltreffendheid en mededingendheid van die waardeketting ondermyn. Die gevaar lê juis daarin dat hierdie risiko's onderskat word omdat hul effekte nie onmiddellik sigbaar is nie.

Die belangrikste insig is dat risiko's nie net beoordeel moet word op grond van hul potensiële skade nie, maar ook op grond van hoe vinnig en wyd hulle deur die stelsel versprei. Risiko's met hoë impak en hoë snelheid vereis onmiddellike aandag, terwyl stadiger risiko's doelgerigte langtermyn-intervensies vereis.

Wat risiko en kwesbaarheid saam wys

Wanneer risiko en kwesbaarheid saam beskou word, word dit duidelik dat die impak van skokke nie eweredig versprei is nie. Sekere dele van die waardeketting dra 'n groter deel van die aanpassingslas. Voerkrale en abattoirs tree dikwels op as drukpunte waar ontwrigtings konsentreer en versterk word.

Hierdie dinamika beteken dat die effek van risiko's nie lineêr is nie. 'n Diergesondheidsuitbreking kan byvoorbeeld 'n beperkte direkte impak hê, maar in 'n kwesbare stelsel kan dit vinnig lei tot wydverspreide ontwrigting. Dieselfde geld vir insetkoste, waar prysstygings finansiële druk in spesifieke dele van die waardeketting kan konsentreer en versterk.

Koördinering speel 'n kritieke rol in hierdie konteks. Wanneer inligting vloei en verhoudings sterk is, kan die stelsel beter aanpas. Wanneer dit swak is, verhoog die waarskynlikheid dat ontwrigtings versprei en eskaleer. Hierdie insig beklemtoon dat veerkragtigheid nie net 'n funksie van individuele besighede is nie, maar van die kwaliteit van die verhoudings tussen hulle.

Bou van veerkragtigheid

Die bevindinge dui op 'n sektor wat steeds sterk is, maar toenemend onder kan druk kom. Om veerkragtigheid te versterk, is gekoördineerde planne op verskeie vlakke nodig. Op regeringsvlak bly sterk veeartsenydienste, beleidsduidelikheid en infrastruktuurbelegging krities.

Op bedryfsvlak is samewerking en koördinering noodsaaklik om inligtingvloei en reaksievermoë te verbeter. Op besigheidsvlak moet ondernemings fokus op risikobestuur, finansiële stabiliteit en operasionele plooibaarheid.

Die sleutel is om van 'n reaktiewe na 'n proaktiewe benadering te beweeg, waar risiko's vooraf geïdentifiseer en sistemies bestuur word eerder as bloot gereageer word wanneer hulle realiseer.

'n Waardeketting onder druk

Suid-Afrika se rooivleis-waardeketting funksioneer in 'n omgewing waar globale skokke, plaaslike strukturele swakhede en klimaatsdruk toenemend saamvloei.

Die sektor se toekoms sal nie net bepaal word deur die aard van hierdie risiko's nie, maar deur die vermoë van die stelsel om dit te absorbeer en aan te pas.

In hierdie opsig is die kweek van veerkragtigheid noodsaaklik vir aanpassing en versterking van individuele boerderye en besighede en ook vir die bedryf in geheel. ▲

Reënvalvooruitsigte

VIR DIE VOLGENDE MAANDE ASOOK DIE 2026/27 SOMERSEISOEN

Deur Johan van den Berg - Landbouweerkundige

Die afgelope reënvalseisoen vanaf Julie 2025 is gekenmerk deur 'n redelike goeie eerste deel van die somerseisoen oor die grootste deel van die somerreënvalgebied met die uitsondering van die suidelike dele van die Noord-Kaap asook bykans die hele Oos-Kaap.

Droër toestande het egter begin voorkom vanaf Januarie 2026 oor die sentrale tot oostelike dele met die reënvalpatroon wat wes-, suid- en suidooswaarts begin skuif het om goeie neerslae te veroorsaak oor die dele wat droog gebly het in die eerste deel van die 2025/26 somerseisoen.

Die seisoen is ook gekenmerk deur 'n swak La Nina-verskynsel, dit wil sê see-oppervlaktemperature in die Sentrale Stille Oseaan van die sogenaamde Nino-gebiede, was koeler as normaal. Daar is 'n verandering besig om plaas te vind met see-oppervlaktemperature wat besig is om weer terug te keer na meer normale temperature. Vanaf die mid-winter is daar sterk aanduidings dat temperature warmer as normaal gaan word, dit wil sê El Nino neigend. La Nina is gewoonlik geassosieer met redelike gunstige reënvaltoestande oor die Somerreënvalgebied en El Nino meer negatiewe neigings, veral in die tweede deel van die somer. →

Met die huidige oorgangsfase vanaf La Nina na neutraal en later in die winter na El Nino, hoe kan reënvalvooruitsigte daar uitsien?

Met 'n droë Januarie en Februarie 2026 oor die sentrale tot oostelike dele van die land begin groeityd van weidings minder word. Meer as 60% van die totale veldproduksie vind normaalweg plaas vanaf Januarie tot einde Maart, alhoewel dit van oos na wes effens verskil. Daar is tans dus reeds 'n agterstand in veldproduksie alhoewel daar nog reën moontlik is in Maart en April maar minder groei gaan plaasvind omrede temperature laer word voor die winter.

Alhoewel El Nino (soos wat verwag word vir die volgende seisoen) gewoonlik verantwoordelik is vir minder reën as daar na die jaarlikse totale reënval gekyk word, kan daar steeds sekere maande of periodes wees met bogemiddelde reënval. Afhangende van die tyd wanneer 'n El Nino ontwikkel gedurende die winter en lente, is daar dikwels bogemiddelde reënval in die laatwinter en lente tot selfs in Oktober en eerste deel van November. Hierdie reën is nie baie effektief om veldgroei te stimuleer nie aangesien dit nog te koud is. Daar vorm dikwels gedurende hierdie tydperk 'n "groen droogte" waar die veld mooi groen is maar daar is nie werklik produksie nie.
Die probleem tydens El Nino neigende seisoene is dat daar minder reën vanaf Desember tot ten minste Maart voorkom wanneer die meeste veldgroei en produksie moet plaasvind. Die swakste reënvalmaande is dan rondom Februarie tot Maart of April wat swak weidingstoestande kan laat voorkom vir die volgende herfs maar ook vir die winter en lente wat volg.

> ***Daar is dus redelike rooi ligte wat flikker vir die komende winter maar veral vir die somer van 2026/27 en die winter van 2027.***

Daar is dus redelike rooi ligte wat flikker vir die komende winter maar veral vir die somer van 2026/27 en die winter van 2027. Die addisionele effek van Bek-en-Klouseer waar baie plase onder kwarantyn geplaas is en produsente nie van markklaar vee kan ontslae raak nie, word baie van die strategiese weiding en voer gebruik om markklaar vee te onderhou. Hierdie voedingsbronne is eintlik bestem om die normale kudde in stand te hou en kan dit problematies word in die winter en lente wanneer hoeveelhede droë materiaal minder word en die kwaliteit ook afneem.

Langer termyn is daar ook aanduidings van 'n droër siklus vir die volgende klompie seisoene. Daar is 'n siklus van ongeveer vyf jaar van beter reënvaltoestande en ongeveer vyf jaar van swakker reënvaltoestande. Die grootste deel van Suidelike Afrika het baie goeie reënvaltotale gehad vanaf ongeveer 2020 alhoewel die El Nino van 2023/24 effens swakker was. Dit het gevolg op die rampdroogtetoestande in baie gebiede vanaf ongeveer 2014 tot 2019. Vorige droë periodes of siklusse het ook voorgekom vanaf 2002 tot 2008; 1991 tot 1996; 1982 tot 1987 asook die middel tot laat 1960's. Gedurende hierdie tydperke het rampdroogtetoestande oor baie gebiede geheers. Die groot probleem is die geakkumuleerde effek van droogte: Een droë of ondergemiddelde seisoen of jaar is nie noodwendig 'n droogte nie maar as daar meervoudige seisoene of jare van ondergemiddelde reënval maar veral van swak verspreide reënval binne 'n seisoen voorkom, lei dit dikwels tot rampdroogtetoestande.

Opsommend is daar aanduidings van droër toestande wat kan begin voorkomin die komende seisoene en is dit belangrik om vroegtydig goeie weidingsbestuur toe te pas maar ook te kyk na strategiese voedingsbronne vir tye wanneer daar moontlike voervloeiprobleme kan ontstaan. ▲

THINK TWICE, CLICK ONCE:
Cyber Security
ON THE MODERN FARM

By VKB Group Information & Technology

Farming today looks very different from what it did even a decade ago. Phones, apps and online platforms are now part of everyday farm life. Farmers use digital banking, WhatsApp to communicate with buyers and suppliers, online systems to buy and sell equipment, and technology to track livestock, manage movements and improve security.

All of this brings real value. It saves time, improves decision-making and helps farmers run more efficient, resilient businesses. But with these benefits comes a new kind of risk. Criminals no longer need to climb fences or break locks to steal from you. Today, they can target your bank account, your email, or your farm systems from anywhere in the world.

> ***One simple rule can already prevent a large portion of cyber crime: Think twice, click once.***

Why we trust strangers online

Imagine a stranger stopping you at the co-op gate and saying:
"Pay me now, my shop is just around the corner. I'll bring your tractor part later."

Most farmers would immediately be suspicious. Yet online, people often pay thousands of rands to websites or WhatsApp sellers they have never verified. The website looks professional. The Facebook page seems real. The message is written in perfect Afrikaans or English. It feels trustworthy.

Scammers understand this psychology. They copy real brands, clone logos, use fake reviews and create urgency with "limited time offers". The moment the money is paid, the seller disappears.

The technology itself is not the problem. **Misplaced trust is.**
If you would not hand cash to a stranger in real life, do not do it online either.

Your information is part of your farm's value

Before digital systems, farmers kept breeding records, feeding schedules, grazing plans and herd numbers in notebooks and files. That information was protected because it was valuable.

Today, much of this information lives on phones, laptops and "the cloud" – which is simply someone else's computer. If your email, apps or farm systems are not protected properly, this information can fall into the wrong hands. In the wrong context, details about your herd size, movements, equipment and routines can expose you to financial loss, fraud or even physical risk.

Your email is the master key

Most people do not realise that their email account is the **master key** to their digital life. Password resets for banking, farm platforms and cloud services all go through email. If criminals get into your email, they can move sideways into everything else. This is where an important protection comes in: **multi-factor authentication**, often called MFA. It sounds technical, but the idea is simple. To log in, you need two things:

- Something you **know** (your password), and
- Something you **have** (your phone that receives a once-off code or approval).

Think of it like your house on the farm. Your password is the front door key. MFA is the safety gate. Even if someone steals the key, they still cannot get in without opening the gate as well.

One critical rule applies to all accounts, especially email and banking:

> ***No one** – not your bank, not your medical aid, not your mobile provider – will ever ask you for your one-time pin (OTP).*

If someone asks for an OTP, they are trying to get into your account. Never share it, not on the phone, not on WhatsApp, not in an email.

When the farm becomes digitally connected

As farms become more connected, digital safety becomes part of farm safety. The same WiFi network that connects phones may also connect cameras, alarms, GPS collars, gates and farm management systems.

If that WiFi network is left with the default username and password that came with the router or alarm system, it is like leaving the farm gate unlocked at night. Criminals know many people never change these settings. Once someone gets into your WiFi, they can often move from one device to another. A compromised camera or router can become the doorway to everything else connected on the farm.

At the same time, new technologies bring real benefits. Livestock tracking, traceability platforms, online auctions and farm management apps support animal health, theft prevention and compliance. These tools are valuable. But each new app and device is also a new doorway that must be protected, just like any physical asset on the farm.

The hidden cost of "Free" trends

Not all digital risks come from criminals. Some come from our own habits. AI photo apps, filters and online trends seem harmless and fun. But every photo uploaded and every permission granted builds a digital profile about you – your face, habits and behaviour.

When something online is free, it is worth asking: Why is it free?
Often, your data is the real product.
This does not mean farmers must avoid technology. It means technology should be used with the same care and awareness as any tool on the farm.

A shared responsibility on the farm

Cyber safety is not only the farmer's responsibility. Farm workers use smartphones, WhatsApp and banking services as part of daily life. If a worker's phone is compromised, it can still create real risks for the farm.

Just as farmers teach safety around machinery, chemicals and livestock, basic digital safety should become part of everyday awareness on farms. Simple guidance, repeated often, can prevent serious harm.

When things go wrong

If you suspect fraud or hacking, act quickly. Contact your bank immediately, change passwords, and disconnect affected devices from WiFi. The faster you respond, the more damage you can prevent. Cybercrime thrives on hesitation and silence.

Why the VKB Group is talking about this

Within the VKB Group, VKB Corporate Services, including VKB Group Information & Technology, works closely with digital systems and cyber risks in the agricultural environment. This article is shared as a public-interest contribution. Strong cyber awareness helps protect farmers, families and livelihoods, and strengthens the resilience of our agricultural communities. For similar articles, more cyber-topics and the work of VKB Corporate Services follow the VKB Group on it's social and digital channels for regular updates.

- LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/vkb-group/
- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/share/16dACcivQ7/

Final Thought

Technology has become part of the modern farm, just like tractors, fences and boreholes. It brings opportunity, but it also requires responsibility.

Before you click, before you trust, before you pay – **think twice, click once.** ▲

CHECKLIST – For the Office

(Stick this on the office wall)

- Think twice before clicking links or paying online
- Use strong, unique passwords for all accounts, especially email and banking
- Turn on multi-factor authentication for all accounts, especially email and banking
- Secure your WiFi and change default usernames and passwords
- Verify new or changed bank details by phone before paying
- Back up important farm and financial data to a secure cloud location or to an external hard drive
- Keep phones and apps updated
- Teach workers basic cyber safety
- Do not overshare sensitive farm information online
- If something feels wrong, stop and verify

CHECKLIST – In the field

(Share with your farm employees)

- Do not click strange links in SMS or WhatsApp
- Do not share your PIN or OTP with anyone
- Banks will never ask for your password
- If a message feels urgent, stop and ask your supervisor
- Do not download unknown apps
- Lock your phone with a PIN
- Tell your supervisor if you think your phone was hacked

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- Voorkom droëgalsiek.
- Verhoogde konsepsie- en kalfpersentasies.
- Optimale mikrobiese proteïenproduksie weens die gelyktydige vrystelling van stikstof (vanaf ureum) en energie (vanaf melasse).

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MOLATEK

LANTANA CAMARA
A SILENT *threat* TO YOUR HERD

By Dr Naweji Katembo (Agricultural Research Council - Plant Health and Protection)

Across many parts of South Africa, farmers must be aware of an aggressive shrub spreading along fence lines, riverbanks, grazing lands and disturbed veld. Lantana camara (hereafter referred to as lantana) may appear harmless with its clusters of colourful flowers, but it is one of the most serious invasive weeds affecting livestock farming in the country. Understanding this plant is essential, not only because it competes with grazing, but because it can be deadly to cattle. →

The toxicity of lantana is primarily due to the presence of pentacyclic triterpenoids, with lantadene A and B acting as the main toxic compounds. Research shows that cattle can develop serious poisoning after eating green lantana leaves amounting to roughly 1% of their body weight within a short period. To put this into perspective, a 500 kg cow would only need to consume about 5 kg of fresh leaves to reach this danger level. Under certain conditions, particularly when plants are highly toxic or animals are already stressed, consumption of between 5 and 20 kg of fresh material has resulted in severe illness and death. The risk therefore increases rapidly when animals have access to abundant young growth and limited alternative grazing.

Poisoning from lantana is more likely to occur when grazing is limited during drought, when camps are overstocked, when lantana invades pastures and reduces available grass, or when animals are newly introduced into infested camps and begin browsing the plant. Under these conditions, cattle may consume larger quantities of the plant, especially young, actively growing leaves, which are more toxic and palatable, increasing the risk of toxicity.

Affected animals often stop eating within a few days, and poisoning commonly leads to photosensitisation, resulting in skin damage when exposed to sunlight. Other signs include severe liver damage and cholestasis, which can ultimately lead to weakness, reduced productivity, and death if not managed promptly. Farmers should watch for warning signs such as loss of appetite, constipation or diarrhoea, jaundice (yellowing of the eyes and gums), swelling of the face and ears, skin sensitivity to sunlight, weakness, and reluctance to move.

In severe cases, death may occur, often linked to liver failure caused by lantadene poisoning. Even hardy breeds like Tuli cattle are not immune to lantana toxicity. Early veterinary intervention is critical if poisoning is suspected.

Even when not directly ingested, lantana significantly reduces grazing capacity. It forms dense, impenetrable thickets that outcompete valuable grass species, lower the carrying capacity of the land, and restrict livestock access to water points. Over time, veld invaded by lantana becomes less productive and far more difficult to manage. As grass cover declines and access becomes limited, farmers face reduced forage availability and higher management costs, ultimately affecting overall livestock performance and farm profitability.

Under South African legislation, lantana is a declared invasive species, regulated under both the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (NEMBA) and the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act (CARA). These laws require landowners to control and prevent the spread of declared invasive plants on their properties. Failure to manage infestations can result in legal consequences. In other words, controlling lantana is not only good farming practice, but also a legal responsibility that, in the long run, seeks to ensure national food security.

Controlling lantana

Controlling lantana requires persistence and an integrated approach; there is no single quick fix. Mechanical removal is effective when infestations are still small, and plants can easily be hand-pulled when young, especially after rain when the soil is soft. It is, however, discouraged to uproot mature shrubs, as this causes soil disturbance, which in turn promotes seed recruitment.

Chemical control can improve results when used correctly, such as through the cut-stump method (cutting and immediately applying herbicide to the stump), which is highly effective, while foliar spraying works on smaller plants. Always follow label instructions, avoid spray drift onto desirable vegetation, and exercise caution near watercourses.

South Africa has released more than a dozen biological control agents, including leaf- and root-feeding beetles, sap-sucking bugs, and flower-feeding flies, which weaken plants and reduce seed production. However, their impact is often limited, primarily due to plant varietal incompatibility and climatic mismatch. Whilst biocontrol is less effective in the drier inland regions where biocontrol agents are not abundant, it is effective along the humid coastal region where most biocontrol agents are abundant Hybrid lantana varieties present in the country have not co-evolved with the full suite of biocontrol agents collected from the plant's native range, reducing their effectiveness.

Prevention

Prevention and good grazing management remain the most cost-effective strategies, but long-term success depends on fully integrating biological control into management programmes.

While biocontrol may not eliminate lantana on its own, conserving and promoting established agents reduces plant vigour, limits flowering and seed production, and lowers reinfestation pressure over time. Avoid practices that unintentionally destroy beneficial insects, and recognise that biological control works gradually as part of a broader system. Avoid overgrazing to maintain healthy grass cover that suppresses lantana seedlings, inspect fence lines and disturbed areas regularly, act early when new plants appear, and prevent seed spread by controlling plants before fruiting.

In heavily infested areas, phased clearing camp-by-camp may be more practical than clearing entire properties at once. Successful management combines mechanical removal, careful chemical follow-up, active conservation of biological control agents, monitoring for regrowth, and ongoing grazing management over several years to exhaust the seed bank. Left unchecked, lantana reduces carrying capacity, increases livestock poisoning risk, raises production costs, and lowers property value.

Protecting grazing land is essential for safeguarding productive herds such as Tuli cattle and ensuring long-term farm sustainability. Farmers are therefore encouraged to inspect camps regularly, act quickly on new infestations, integrate and protect biological control agents, use responsible chemical methods, and seek professional advice when needed. ▲

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BODY CONDITION *Scoring*

By Dr Helena Theron, Siebert Vermeulen & Dr Japie vd Westhuizen

Body Condition Scoring of a cow herd is a quick and easy way to facilitate management and address potential problems timeously. It can be used to identify adapted animals, improve pregnancy rates and even reduce calving problems. Recording body condition scores is a tool to improve production and therefore profit.

How to do body condition scoring

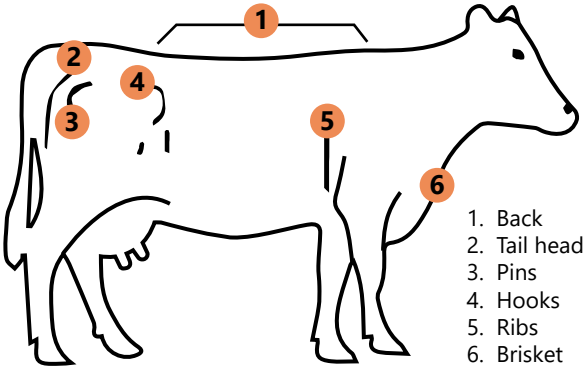


Figure 1: Areas useful for visually determining BCS in beef cows. (Oklahoma State University)

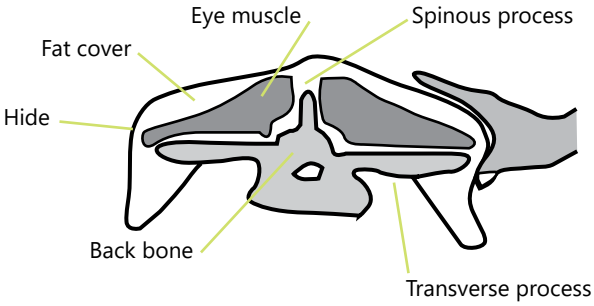


Figure 2: Specific anatomical areas used in determining BCS in beef cows. (Adapted from Herd and Sprott, 1986.)

Body Condition Score (BCS) is an indication of the total amount of fat on the animal. The animals' fatness is visually scored on a scale of 1 to 9, where thin (lean) cows appear thinner, sharper and more bony, while fat cows appear smooth and blocky without visible bones. The Body Condition Score is therefore an indication to what degree the spine, pelvic bones, tailhead and brisket are covered with fat (Figures 1 & 2). Some breeders also use the 1 to 5 scale of scoring, with half scores in between, which can easily be converted to the 1 to 9 scale. It is a subjective measure, so different people may give the same animal a different score. It is therefore advisable to hone a scorer's skills by practicing regularly and be subjected to the skills of other trustworthy scorers.

In times of abundance, animals store excess energy as fat. This is nature's protective mechanism. When feed becomes scarce, animals will first use fat reserves and then muscle tissue as an energy source. The first source of fat energy that is utilized is normally the fat around the organs and then subcutaneous fat. Differences in subcutaneous fat are therefore a good indication of the total fat energy available to animals before the breakdown of muscle tissue starts, which can have very serious disadvantages, and even cause permanent damage.

Body condition scoring is determined by palpating or visually assessing the quantity of fat and muscle over bony prominences in animals (see Table 1). The evaluation of fat reserves is conducted independently of factors such as pregnancy, rumen fill, age, coat length, season, or stage in the production cycle.

Class	Score (1-9)	Score (1-5)	Visible spine	Visible ribs	Tail head	Visible pelvic bones	Brisket fat	Muscling
Lean	1	1	Yes	Yes	Deep dents, no fat	Yes	No	No
	2	1.5						
	3	2						
Normal	4	2.5	Some	Front	No fat	Yes	No	Yes
	5	3	No	No				
	6	3.5			Some		Some	
Fat	7	4	No	No	Fat	Some	Fat	Yes
	8	4.5			Obese	No	Obese	
	9	5						

Table 1: Description of Body Condition Scores. The easiest way to do condition scoring on a herd is to first assess each cow as lean, normal or fat. Each animal within the group can then be divided into 3 again to determine the final condition score.

Lean: Body Condition scores between 1 and 3

Animals appear lean and bony, with little to very little fat and the ribs are visible. On the right is a cow with deep dents around the base of the tail due to no fat.



Average: Body Condition scores between 4 and 6

This is the optimum condition score and can vary depending on production cycle and season. These animals are in optimum condition, and indicate good genetics and/or good management.



→

Fat: Body Condition scores between 7 and 9

Overfat cows appear smooth and blocky with no visible bones. A condition score of 7 is sometimes acceptable, while cows with condition scores of 8 and 9 are mostly animals that have skipped calving. Fat also gathers around the base of the tail.

When to body condition score

Although condition scores can be done at any time, at calving, weaning and at the beginning of the last trimester of pregnancy (3 months before calving) are the most important.

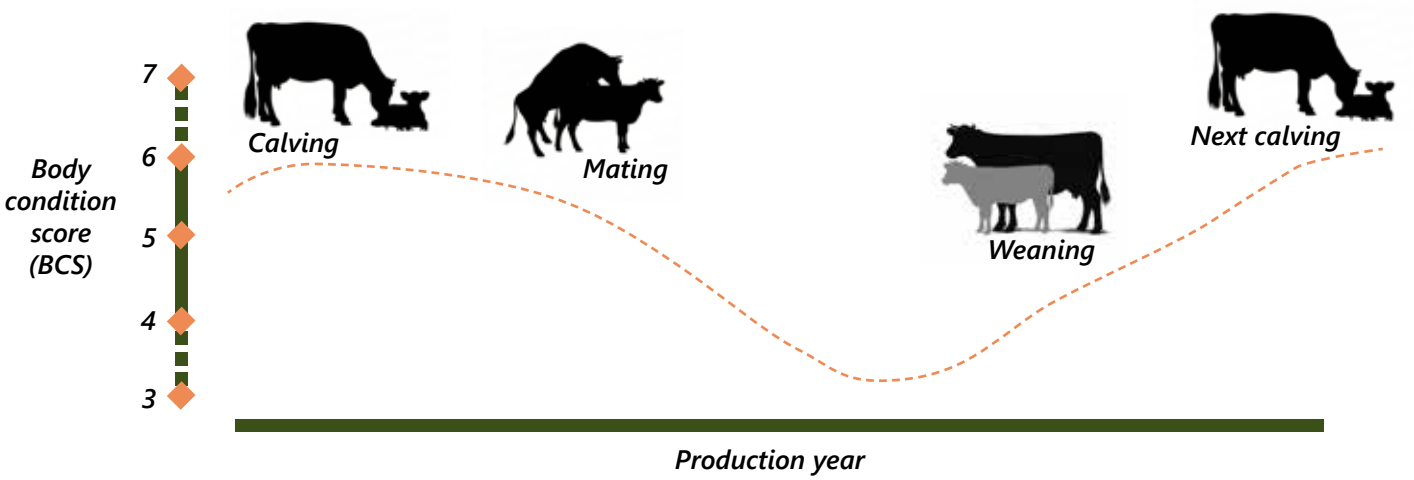
At weaning: The easiest and cheapest time to improve the condition of cows is during the dry period after she has weaned her calf.

At calving: Cows should have a condition score of 5 or 6 (out of 9) (or 3 to 3.5 out of 5) and heifers a 6 at calving. Obese cows have fat in the birth canal that can cause calves to become stuck. Cows that are too thin are too weak to give birth and this can also cause birth problems. A low condition score at calving indicates low energy reserves, which reduces milk production and delays conception. However, be careful not to change condition too quickly in late pregnancy, as the cow's condition tends to stay the same, but the unborn calf becomes heavier, which can also cause difficult births.

Mating: Low conception rates can be prevented by ensuring that cows are in acceptable condition at mating. Over-fat heifers can also develop a lifelong condition called "fatty udder syndrome" caused by permanent fat infiltration in their mammary glands.

Bulls: Condition scores on bulls are also necessary, and bulls should already be in optimum condition 6 weeks before the breeding season.

Animal condition scores vary at different production stages and seasons and can range between 3 and 7 throughout the year. After calving, cows are in a negative energy balance, which causes a drop in condition score. It also drops as the calf grows and suckles more, depending on the environment and season. Body Condition Score should improve again as the calf starts grazing and suckles less. After the calf is weaned, the cow should be late in pregnancy and her condition should increase moderately to be in optimum condition at the next calving.



Recommendations

The herd's average condition score at calving should be 5 to 6 (out of 9) for mature cows and 6 for first-calf heifers. Furthermore, the loss of condition score between calving and mating should be as little as possible. Young cows that are still using energy for growth, or are in competition with older cows, will normally have a lower score than older cows, for example. Similarly, cows with a lot of milk will also tend to have a lower body condition score and once she weans her calf, her condition improves.

Cows and heifers with condition scores of 1 and 2 will have difficulty getting pregnant. They may however become pregnant again if they are given extra vitamins and minerals and enough feed for an upward weight gain.

Differences in the body condition scores of individual animals in a herd can be a good indication of their abilities to adapt to the environmental and production conditions. Cows that are genetically better adapted to the specific environment and production system will maintain condition more easily and also gain condition more easily after the winter.

Be proactive in achieving specific goals, because drastic changes in condition score are sometimes very difficult and very expensive to manage. For example, managing calving seasons in harmony with nature, farming with genetically adapted cattle, well-managed grazing systems, strategic supplementation programs and good herd health lead to optimal body condition scores and improved production. ▲

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THE ROLE OF *Trace minerals* IN REPRODUCTION

By Anri Strauss - Technical specialist: Beef and sheep at Chemuniqué

Trace minerals play an important role in various physiological processes, including growth, reproduction, and health. Ensuring proper supplementation in your cattle herd will contribute to reproductive success and longevity. It should, however, always be seen as a small component of a bigger picture.

Focusing on providing sufficient feed and balancing the macronutrients such as phosphate, energy, and protein should be the first priority to maintain cow condition. Thereafter, one can investigate and fine-tune the smaller components – such as trace minerals – to optimise production and improve reproduction.

A tell-tale sign that something is wrong is when pregnancy rates are lower than normal. After performing a thorough investigation to determine that this is not occurring as a result of a specific disease (e.g. vibriosis or brucellosis) or due to gross nutritional deficiencies (low energy and protein or low phosphorus), the veterinarian can move on to investigate other possible causes such as trace mineral deficiencies. Deficiencies in most trace minerals cause symptoms such as low conception rates, early embryonic deaths in cows, and suboptimal semen quality in bulls.

Zinc

Zinc is well known for being involved in a multitude of functions in the body. Zinc is the only mineral that forms part of specific processes in all the enzyme classes in the body. A zinc deficiency in males causes atrophy of the seminiferous tubules, influencing sperm development, while zinc supplementation increases ejaculate volume, as well as the percentage of live and motile sperm in males. In females, zinc plays a vital role in epithelial integrity and thus in maintenance of the uterine lining and post-partum repair. Zinc is required daily to prepare the body for fertilisation, contributing to oocyte development and maturation. Oocyte quality is very sensitive to zinc deficiencies, and, with decreased oocyte quality, one can expect to see decreased pregnancy rates or cows that are clearly cycling but not becoming pregnant. When zinc is supplemented post-fertilisation, embryo quality improves. Improved zinc status also plays an indirect role in fertility by improving hoof health and, thus, the willingness of cows to show heat and bulls to mount.

Manganese is the second trace mineral that has a significant influence on reproduction. It acts as an activator of enzymes that are part of the antioxidant and protein digestion systems. Manganese is needed for proper cholesterol synthesis which, in turn, is needed for the production of sex hormones, including oestrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. Manganese-deficient cows will either show weak heat signs or may not even show standing heat at all, which leads to a change in the ratio of heifer to bull calves being born. The corpus luteum contains high levels of manganese, playing a role in the success of pregnancy maintenance and embryonic growth. Manganese-deficient cows may give birth to calves with bowed legs or dwarf faces. A true manganese deficiency is rare, with deficiencies usually being caused by other factors such as high iron in the drinking water. →

Selenium

Selenium is important for sperm development through improvement in the antioxidant status of bulls. Optimal selenium supplementation will ensure semen quality and protection of sperm against oxidative stress. In cows, marginally low selenium levels cause retained placentas, early embryonic losses, and weak calves that show symptoms of white muscle disease.

> ***Research shows that retained placentas can increase by 20% as a result of a marginal selenium deficiency.***

Selenium deficiencies may also reduce follicular cell proliferation and thus ovulation.

Copper

Copper is a necessary component of a few enzymes that are linked to reproduction. Copper supplementation in deficient animals shows direct effects on semen quality and conception rates. The correlation between copper and reproduction is linked to the involvement of copper in antioxidant enzymes that protect the animals against bacterial infections, eliminate free radicals, and increase the structural strength of tissue. Copper is required for oocyte viability, but oversupplementation may also have negative effects on oocyte viability. It is thus necessary to ensure that copper is supplemented at just the right level. Furthermore, copper plays a role in embryo viability and thus increases the chances of pregnancy retention. Foetal copper requirements during the last trimester increase exponentially to support foetal growth and development, and the foetus will rely on maternal copper for this purpose.

Other

Other minerals play an indirect role in reproduction. **Iodine** plays a role in normal thyroid function, which influences oestrus and the normal development of foetuses. **Cobalt** is a structural component of **vitamin B12** that, in turn, plays a role in fibre digestion. Vitamin B12 is also required for the conversion of propionate to glucose, which is needed as an energy source for both the cow and the foetus. **Iron** contributes to the oxygen-carrying capacity of the body through red blood cell production, but supplementation with iron is uncommon in South Africa due to our generally high soil iron content.

Conclusion

It is clear to see that all trace minerals play a role in reproduction, whether direct or indirect. To ensure optimal reproductive performance, farmers should supplement a balanced feed with optimal mineral levels. This will ensure that the cows are able to perform optimally and contribute to your farming profit. ▲

Anri Strauss has been part of the Chemuniqué team since 2018. With diverse experience in dairy nutrition, feed mills, and veterinary support, she brings a holistic perspective to ruminant health and nutrition. Anri holds a BSc and MSc from the University of Pretoria, with her thesis focusing on exogenous enzymes in feedlot cattle digestion. She is especially passionate about trace minerals and integrating her love for animals into her family life.

Veldbrande & Lewendehawe

VETERINÊRE RIGLYNE

Deur LWCC (Livestock Welfare Coordinating Committee)

Veldbrande kan dikwels groot gebiede raak en honderde of duisende lewendehawe kan ernstig beseer word of hul lewens verloor.

Tydens die nadraai is spoedeisende en gepaste verstandige optrede noodsaaklik om beide verliese en dierelyding tot 'n minimum te beperk. Diegene wat boere behulpsaam is en vee-eienaars moet as 'n span saamwerk om die beste uitkomste te behaal. Indien die betrokke gebied 'n Rampbestuursplan en -span in plek het, is dit die beste manier om reaksies te koördineer. Indien daar nie so 'n plan is nie, behoort 'n Rampbestuursplan vir die gebied ingestel te word vir toekomstige gebruik.

Vir vee hang die prognose af van die erns van die brandwonde en dit is noodsaaklik om die assessering van die betrokke diere op 'n sistematiese wyse te doen. Gebaseer op navorsing wat in Australië gedoen is, behoort diere in drie groepe ingedeel te word.

Diere wat lig of matig geraak is

Dié diere sal maklik en normaal asemhaal, met min of geen hoes of kortasemheid nie. Die diere sal maklik kan loop en normaal kan eet en drink. Hare of wol mag geskroei wees en die vel mag slegs liggies geskroei wees (eerstegraadse brandwonde) oor beperkte gedeeltes van die liggaam. Dié matige, oppervlakkige brandwonde kan behandel word en indien diere goeie sorg, skuiling, voer en water kry, is die prognose baie goed.

Matig geaffekteerde gevalle

Dié diere mag kortasem wees, swaar asemhaal en hoes, maar nog steeds daartoe in staat wees om te loop, te staan en te vreet en drink. Hulle mag meer ernstige wonde (tweedegraadse wonde) oor groter gedeeltes en reaktiewe onderhuidse swelling toon. Die vel op die diere se pote mag matig geaffekteer wees of glad nie. Hoewe kan moontlik 'n mate van skade toon. As dié diere behoorlik behandel en versorg word tot hul op die pad na volkome herstel is, is hul prognose goed. Die besluit om diere meer intensief te behandel moet geneem word met inagneming van sekere faktore. Die getal diere, die beskikbaarheid van gepaste medikasie, die aantal verantwoordelike persone wat beskikbaar is om daaglikse evaluasies en behandelings uit te voer, die koste wat betrokke is en die waarde van die diere is alles faktore wat in ag geneem moet word. Skade aan speenopenings kan daartoe lei dat vroulike diere in die toekoms nie daartoe in staat sal wees om kalwers, lammers of boklammers te voed nie.

Photo: Vladyslav Dukhin

Diere wat ernstig geraak is

Dié groep sal gewoonlik ernstige asemhalingsprobleme toon en hoes weens die inasem van rook en/of nie kan loop, vreet of drink nie. Daar mag ernstige (derdegraadse) brandwonde oor verspreide areas wees, terwyl ernstige brandwonde op die laer bene 'n besonder slegte teken is.

Aangesien die prognoses in dié gevalle swak is, selfs met besonder goeie behandeling, word rasionale en menswaardige genadedood aanbeveel om 'n einde aan lyding te bring.

Behandeling

Die toewysing van gevalle aan dié drie kategorieë is noodwendig ietwat subjektief en dit moet gemaak word met inagneming van die diere sowel as die eienaars se beste belange.

Die getal diere, die beskikbaarheid van gepaste medikasie, die aantal verantwoordelike persone wat beskikbaar is om daaglikse evaluasies en behandelings uit te voer, die koste wat betrokke is en die waarde van die diere is alles faktore wat in ag geneem moet word.

Diere wat nie op behandeling reageer nie moet moontlik na 'n laer kategorie toegewys word.

Behandelings sal onderhewig wees aan die besluite van veeartse, maar die volgende mag van hulp wees:

Vir ligte tot matige brandwonde moet aktuele versagmiddels, rome, wondsalf of antiseptiese middels oorweeg word.

Vir ernstige wonde in baie waardevolle diere word geregistreerde produkte aanbeveel.

Sistemiese antibiotika (inspuitbare) word sterk aanbeveel vir alle gevalle waar die longe beskadig is, of waar 'n sekondêre infeksie 'n gevaar is. Baie lewens kan so gespaar word. Analgetika (inspuitbare) kan waar moontlik ingespan word om die ernstige pyn wat deur brandwonde veroorsaak word, te verlig.

As 'n dier wat met inspuitbare analgetika behandel is doodgaan, kan die karkas egter 'n bedreiding vir aasvoëls inhou en daarommoet daar op 'n veilige manier van diekarkas ontslae geraak word.

Ondanks oënskynlike swak prognoses, kan sommige van die diere herstel as hulle goed versorg word en die gepaste behandeling ontvang. Dit sluit beskermde verbande, antiseptiese middels, beddegoed, kos en water in. Die hoef kan weer binne 'n paar weke vorm, hoewel dit tot 'n mate misvorm mag wees.

Noodslagting

Slegs lewendehawe wat aan die Vleisveiligheidsregulasies voldoen in terme van die vereistes vir die aanvaarding van diere vir noodslagtings, mag vervoer word. Erg beseerde en onvanpaste diere mag onder geen omstandighede na abattoirs vervoer word nie, aangesien dit tot onnodige lyding en verwerping by die abattoir sal lei. Konsulteer vooraf met die naaste abattoir om te bepaal of lewendehawe gepas is vir slagting.

Plaaslike veearts

In al die hehandelings en besluitneming, konsulteer met u plaaslike veearts wat direk betokke sal wees met die behandeling van brandwonde waarvan die meeste produkte op voorskrif verskaf moet word. ▲

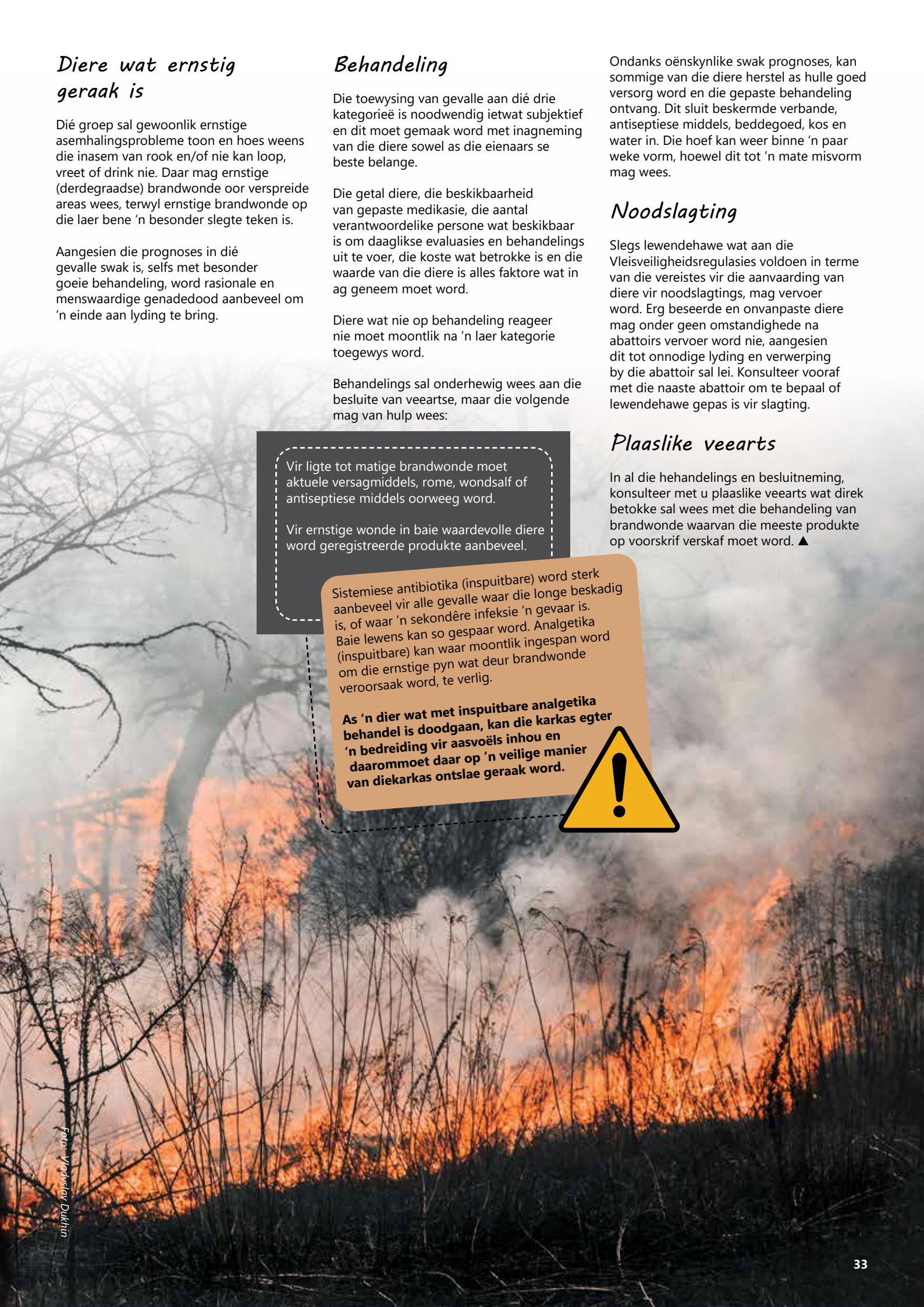

Foto: Vladyslav Dukhin

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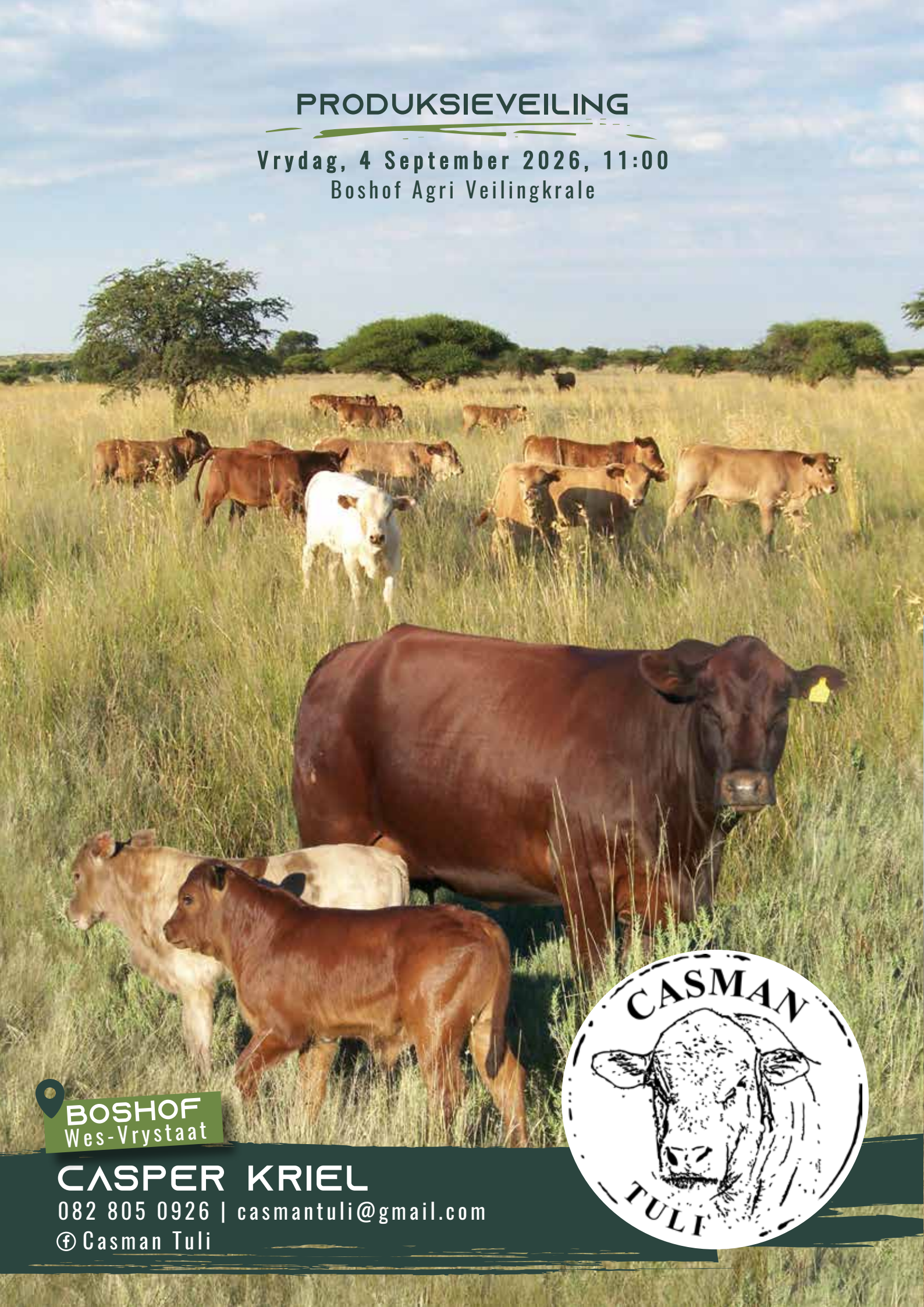

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- 'JY'S NIE 'N BOER' -NOU IS WILLIE 'N WEIDINGSPESIALIS

Deur Charl van Rooyen - Landbouweekblad-joernalis

Willie Storm se familie was nie oortuig dat hy moes kom boer nie, maar hy het deurgedruk en ná 'n wye draai met honderd Karakoele op 'opgefoeterde' grond begin. Vandag is hy 'n weidingspesialis wat die drakrag op dele van sy plaas deur ontbossing en weidingsbestuur al verdriedubbel het.

Foto: Charl van Rooyen

Willie Storm het in 1995 met 'n kampstelsel vir beweiding met veetroppe begin en het sedert 2009 indringerbosse begin uitroei.

Indringerbosse verdring nie net gras nie, dit kniehalter ook 'n veeboer se vordering. Die uitroei van sulke bosse is noodsaaklik, maar daarna moet sinvolle wisselweiding met die regte soort diere volg.

Willie Storm van Olifantshoek het hierdie strategie begin volg, in die proses waardevolle riglyne ontwikkel en sy veld die afgelope 36 jaar sodanig verbeter dat die drakrag al baie gestyg het. In sommige dele waar hy aan die begin net een bees op 21 hektaar kon aanhou, is die drakrag nou al een grootvee-eenheid (GVE) op 5 hektaar.

Iets moes gedoen word …

Willie vertel sy pa was 'n goeie skepper van infrastruktuur, maar was nie baie weidingsgeoriënteerd nie. Soms het die vee te lank in een kamp gewei.

"Ek het besef ek moet iets aan die weiding doen en het in 1995 met 'n kampstelsel begin. Daar was baie swarthaak en kapokbos op die plaas en in goeie reënjare was daar baie pioniersgras, wat die tipiese weiding was. Ek het nog nie die konsep van 'n weidingstrategie verstaan nie, maar het geweet ek moes kampe om die beurt laat rus."

Willie het gevolglik in nat jare van die kampe vir drie tot vyf maande laat rus. →

Bosindringing se plafon

"Vandag besef ek dit was nie voldoende nie. Wanneer swarthaak indring, plaas dit 'n plafon op die uitbreiding van die boerdery en die herstelvermoë van die weiding. Die effek is nie só duidelik te sien in 'n nat of gemiddelde jaar nie, maar in die droë jare kom jy agter iets haper. Ek kon sien ek beleef as't ware elke jaar 'n 'droogte'."

Sommige boere het destyds gedink dit is te duur om hul veld te ontbos en dat hulle eerder nóg 'n plaas sal koop.
Grond in daardie omgewing het toe sowat R200/ha gekos, maar ontbossing se koste was in werklikheid heelwat minder – R80-R90/ha. 'n Mens moes dus 'n kopskuif (en somme) maak.

"My familie het nie gedink ek is 'n boer nie en dat ek eerder na die Hoër Tegniese Skool Louis Botha in Bloemfontein moes gaan, waar ek goed in elektronika gedoen het. Ek het nietemin besluit om by die Neudamm-kollege (naby Windhoek in Namibië) landbou te gaan studeer, waar ek in 1981 'n diploma verwerf het."

Willie is toe weermag toe en het daarna, in 1985, vir 'n boer van Marble Hall, Danie Pretorius, gaan werk. Danie het intensief met 400 skaapooie geboer, 'n skaapvoerkraal gehad en met sitrus en saaigewasse geboer. Ná twee jaar het Willie 'n bemarkingspos by die Trans Oranje-koöperasie op Olifantshoek aanvaar.

Begin met 100 Karakoele

Hy het teen daardie tyd al opgehou om sy ouers, Goley en Vicky, te probeer oortuig dat hy eerder wil boer. In 1989 het pa Goley, wat intussen ook met Karakoele begin boer het, 'n Kalahari-plaas van 1 336 ha – met oorbeweide veld – daar naby gekoop. "As jy dan regtig wil boer, kan jy daar gaan boer, maar jy moet self vir jou vee koop," was sy aanbod.

Willie het R10 000 by 'n bank geleen en 100 Karakoel-ooie gekoop. Sy ou bakkie "het kort-kort gekook".

Toe sy pa omstreeks 1993 afgetree het, het Willie sý plaas, Elliesrust (4 070 ha) gehuur en dit tien jaar later gekoop. Deur die jare het hy nog plase aangeskaf en vandag boer hy met vleisbeeste op 10 155 ha eie grond en 5 000 ha huurgrond.

Daardie swaarkrydae en klein begin het hom gestaal vir boerdery in die algemeen en vir die volgende hoofstuk met veldverbetering in die besonder, vertel Willie.

"Ek het in 2008 besef ek moet 'n kopskuif maak toe ek nog 'n plaas by Postmasburg gekoop het. Ek het daardie plaas begin ontbos, wat my in die eerste jaar R200 000 aan chemiese middels gekos het. Dit was egter 'n noodsaaklike stap omdat ek met beeste 'in skaapwêreld' begin boer het. Een boer het voorspel ek gaan my agterent sien. Wel, vandag boer baie boere hier met beeste."

Hierdie vergelykende foto's van dieselfde deel van die plaas wys hoe die bosse (2011) vir gras (2022) plek gemaak het.

Hy doen slegs chemiese bosbekamping.

Hy het ook indringerbosse op Elliesrust, sy woonplaas, begin uitroei toe hy sien die ontbossing by Postmasburg is suksesvol. Op 'n deel was dit só dig dat hy nie eens op 'n perd daar kon ry nie. In 2009 het hy 900 ha ontbos, wat R80 000 gekos het, en in 2010 'n verdere 800 ha, wat hom R110 000 uit die sak gejaag het.

Die middels wat hy gebruik, is Limpopo 200 GG (reg.nr. L7795, Wet 36 van 1947; aktiewe bestanddeel: tebutiuroon) en Buschwacker GG (L7103; aktiewe bestanddeel: metsulfuroon-metiel, hoewel dit nie vir driedorings geregistreer is nie en nie vier uur voor reën aangewend moet word nie).

"Ek het passievol ingeklim en die bosse doodgemaak wat my boerdery se groei beperk het. Ek vertel altyd vir mense ontbossing is nie 'n towerding nie, maar 'n totale kopskuif. Jy moet ontbossing met die regte weidingsbestuur en regte diere opvolg, anders kan jy dit maar los."

Natuurlike seleksie

"Aanvanklik het ek op Elliesrust agtergekom in groter troppe het tien tot vyftien van die koeie uitgesak. Toe ek die troppe tot 50-60 koeie per trop verminder het, het minder koeie swaargekry. Die koeie het eintlik in 'n trop van 35 floreer.

"Dit was streng seleksie: Wanneer ek 'n trop koeie kraal toe geneem het, het ek die maer koeie uitgekeer en laat slag."

Namate die veld verbeter het, kon hy weer die koeitroppe stelselmatig groter maak. Sy troppe bestaan nou uit 90-120 koeie per trop. Waar hy eers net 175 koeie kon aanhou, boer hy nou met 450 koeie op 5 000 ha (terwyl die res van die weiding rus).

Dit is 'n getuienis van die sukses wat hy met bosbekamping, die gevolglike verbetering van die drakrag, 'n goeie weidingstrategie en die regte diere behaal.

Toe Willie terug Elliesrust toe is, het hy met 100 Simbra-Hereford-kruisbeeste begin boer. Hy het toe Santa Gertrudis-bulle gekoop omdat hy rooi beeste wou teel. Hy het egter deurlopend met geboorteprobleme gesukkel. Die verse is op 14-15 maande gedek en sommiges het gesukkel om te kalf. Vandat hy Tuli-bulle gebruik, gaan dit baie beter. Hy het ook begin om Tuli-koeie met Nguni-bulle te kruis.

Vandag het Willie steeds oorwegend groterige beeste – van 500 kg en meer, maar hy teel hulle nou kleiner. Die nuwegenerasie-koeie weeg maksimum 420 kg omdat beeste van dié grootte meer geskik is vir die bergagtige omgewing en vir hoëdrukbeweiding.

Wanneer kalwers gespeen word, gaan hulle na 'n uitgroeiplaas tot wanneer die verse gereed is om gedek te word. Hy rond sy speenkalwers in sy voerkraal af en laat slag die bulletjies self omdat daar by sommige voerkrale 'n onwilligheid is om Afrika-rasse te aanvaar. Hy handhaaf 'n uitslagsyfer van 55% en selfs meer nadat 'n kalf sowat 'n ton voer verbruik het. Die res van sy speenkalwers verkoop hy aan voerkrale.

Willie doen 'n mate van hoëdrukbeweiding, maar daardie wêreld se veld is nie geskik vir ultrahoëdrukbeweiding nie.

Selekteer anders

Hy het nooit op produksie ingeboet nie. Voordat hy die troppe groter gemaak het, was die kalfsyfer 93%. Dit het in die aanpassingstydperk tot onder 90% gedaal, maar dit staan nou weer op sowat 90%.

In die proses van seleksie het Willie 'n waardevolle les geleer. In die begin het →

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hy sy mooiste 10-15% koeie geselekteer. Toe kom hy agter die mooiste koeie is nie noodwendig die vrugbaarste koeie nie. Hy het in daardie stadium ook koeie by ander boere gekoop om sy beeskudde te vergroot en die skaapboerdery af te skaal. Van daardie nuwe koeie het sommer gou uitgesak.

"Dit was toe duidelik dat ek eerder my eie verse wat saam met hul moeders in die berge grootword, moet kies vir teeldoeleindes. Die les wat ek geleer het, is dat die 15-20 mooiste vroulike diere gewoonlik die swakste presteerders is. Vandag nog speen ek meer verse as wat ek nodig het en sit hulle op swak veld. Elke keer as hulle kraal toe kom, verkoop ek die swakste verse op grond van 'n algemene, visuele indruk. As 'n bees swakker as die res lyk, hoe sal sy vir 'n kalf kan sorg? Só selekteer ek vir vrugbaarheid: Die eerste 80 verse wat kalf, is my boerverse. As ek huurgrond het, boer ek self met die res, anders verkoop ek hulle as dragtige verse."

Die fyner dinge

Hy het die weidingspesialis dr. Louis du Pisani as raadgewer betrek nadat hy met ontbossing begin het. Dié het hom aangeraai om sy kampe van gemiddeld 220 ha kleiner te maak. "Dit het my bestuur vergemaklik."
Die plaas is in bergwêreld, en die proses om die beeste bymekaar te maak, bemoeilik bestuur. Daar is nou byvoorbeeld 60 kampe op Elliesrust (gemiddeld sowat 68 ha per kamp) en 14 kampe op een van die ander plase (1 014 ha, sowat 72,4 ha per kamp). In die berge is die kampe groter as op die vlaktes.

Troppe beeste word van kamp verwissel op grond van waarneming, gegrond op hul mis en lekverbruik. As die mis droër word en die lekverbruik styg baie, is dit tyd om die trop na die volgende kamp te neem.

Sommige kampe moet elke twee weke gewissel word. In ander kampe het die veld al só verbeter dat hy hulle ses weke lank kan bewei. Daar is die belading 6 ha/GVE, waar dit aan die begin van sy loopbaan 21 ha/GVE was. →

'n Saamgestelde foto van Willie se Santa Gertrudis-Tuli-kruisings. Die nat mis dui daarop dat die beeste nog in 'n kamp met volop kos is.

Willie gebruik 'n meerkampstelsel en het 5 kampgroepe en 14 koeigroepe. Elke koeigroep het 8-13 kampe tot hul beskikking. Elke koeigroep het kampe op die vlakte én in die berge.

Laat rus die kampe

Kampe moet genoeg rus. Aan die begin wou Willie 'n derde van die kampe vir 'n jaar (1 Julie tot 30 Junie) laat rus sodat die veld deur ál vier seisoene gaan. Dis egter soms moeilik in 'n droë omgewing, want soms rus 'n kamp, maar dit reën nie. Die volgende jaar moet daardie kamp weer bewei word om met die siklus met die verskillende kampe voort te gaan.

Willie het sy rusfases verleng weens gereelde droogtes. Die helfte van die kampe word deesdae vir 'n volle jaar gerus, en sommige kampe tot 18 maande. Die swakste kampe word net in die winter bewei omdat hulle die swakste verskeidenheid grasse en bossies het. Dan vreet die beeste aan die begin die beste grasse, wat dan sukkel om saad te maak. As dit die volgende jaar goed reën, maak die grasse saad en herstel die veld weer.

Leer van gras en bossies

Willie se hele boerdery wentel om gras. "Jy moet bereid wees om te leer. Aanvaar dit is moontlik om veld te verbeter, maar moenie verwag dit gaan onmiddellik gebeur nie."

Hy het sy doelwit eers in 2021 bereik, ná al die jare wat hy bosse uitgeroei en die bestuurstelsel, seleksie en wisselweiding verfyn het. "Daar is steeds ruimte vir verbetering. As jy geesdriftig bly oor waarmee jy besig is, hou jy aan om te leer en groei."

By Willie kom baie karoobossies voor, soos klappiesbrak en teesuiker, wat onder die karooplante tel wat by hom 10 uit 10 behaal. Dié bossies kom feitlik nêrens anders meer voor nie. "Ek het eendag vir Louis gesê dit kan 'n 'probleem' raak omdat hulle só vermeerder, en hy het gesê: 'Ja, maar dis 'n lekker probleem.' "

Dié twee bossies kom net in veld met uitstekende weidingtoestande voor. In 'n stadium het Willie hulle nie eens raakgesien nie, só min was hulle, maar hulle het darem in die gange tussen kampe voorgekom. Willie het gemeen "dit wat jy in jou gange sien, moet ook in jou kampe wees". Die bossies het stelselmatig toegeneem totdat dit nou op heelwat dele van die plaas voorkom.

Hy is die mees westelike boer waar swartvoetjie – "die Mercedes van alle grasse" – al gekry is. Dié gras kom reeds talryk by hom voor en beweeg af na die vlaktekampe.

Boeredae se waarde

Hy beskou boeredae as baie waardevol, want dan kan hy vir die boere wys watter grasse en bossies by hulle voorkom. Hul oë gaan dan oop oor die moontlikhede.

"As 100 boere my boeredae bywoon en net een 'koop' die gedagte van my stelsel van veldherwinning, is dit baie frustrerend, maar ek besef dit is die realiteit van die lewe." (Willie hou oral inligtingsessies, selfs in Botswana. Hy is onlangs besoek deur 'n groep van Namibië, waar die strewe ook meer na sy tipe boerdery is.)

"Dele van my grond was voorheen pioniervelde. Vandag het ek die tien beste grasse wat hier behoort voor te kom, met die uitsondering van rooigras, wat net anderkant die berg by Postmasburg groei. Sommiges het ek ingesaai en die res het spontaan opgekom.

"My boodskap aan boere is dat hulle oor moontlikhede beskik, maar elke dag wat hulle uitstel, is een wat vermors is. As ek in my eerste 13 jaar as boer al hierdie dinge begin doen het, dink net waar sou ek vandag met my boerdery gewees het." ▲

Die volledige artikel het oorspronklik in Landbouweekblad verskyn en word met goedkeuring hergebruik. Die spesifieke uitgawe, 10 Julie 2025, is ook hier beskikbaar: https://www.landbou.com/epublikasies

THE *Fundamentals* OF PROFITABLE BEEF FARMING

By Kobus Bester - Simbra Breed Director

Setting specific, measurable breeding objectives is critical to the success of any beef breeding operation. Being able to monitor the progress of those objectives over time, will allow the beef breeder to determine areas that require additional attention or areas that are thriving. →

One's primary goal, however, should be to be **sustainable** and **profitable** through beef breeding.

- An increase in turnover and a decrease in cost of production will result in profit, which is what is left after you paid all expenses out of the income that your beef breeding operation has earned.
- Sustainability is the balance between the profit you chase and your responsibility towards the long-term impact your profitable beef breeding operation/practices have on:
  - The environment
  - Animal welfare
  - The local community and other people involved in the beef value chain.

It is very important to ascertain what is within your control and what not. You need to optimise what is in your control and mitigate the risk of that which is outside of your control. →

Within your control

Natural resources – profitable beef breeding involves optimising the use of available natural resources, as the key to profit through beef breeding, is the conversion of a low cost, self replacing natural resource into high value product (beef). How you manage and utilise your natural resources (grazing/water) is within your discretion – act wisely!

In sync with nature – ensure that you manage your herd in such a way that their peak energy requirements coincide with the peak performance period (season) of the available grazing, in your region. Additionally, optimised carrying capacity is critical to open the door for synergy between the herd and the veld. Carrying capacity refers to the stocking rate of land at which animals can maintain optimal body condition score without harmfully depleting the natural resources.

Choice of breed – when deciding which breed to farm with, it is important to consider the following factors: adaptation to the climate and environment on your farm, production of the product you seek (weaner calves that meet buyer's preference), a frame size that will perform well in the environment on your farm, and appreciation for the breed. Choose the breed that ticks these boxes.

Choice of quality – it is easy to obtain inferior quality animals; they appear affordable but will be detrimental to the success of your breeding operation and your finances over the long-term. Low quality, underperforming animals take longer to become market ready, which is not cost effective in any production or reproduction system. Bulls are the drivers of genetic progress. Therefore, ensure that you exclusively make use of performance tested bulls (with estimated breeding values), that have passed visual inspection, are structurally sound, functional efficient, free from genetic defects, have tested clean from diseases like CA, trichomoniases and vibrioses, and have been certified as fertile.

Management practices – be disciplined in the implementation and execution of the correct business plan and strategy. Adapt your practices timeously, prepare for the unexpected (risk mitigation), measure and evaluate performance levels, and do what you can to achieve set goals and targets according to your pre-determined timeline. Pay special attention to record keeping (tagging system with details of reproduction, disease treatment, inoculation programs) and maintaining healthy animals in optimal body condition to produce and reproduce at optimal performance levels.

Outside of your control

Climate – weather conditions, extreme unexpected coldspells, heatwaves, drought. South Africa is not immune to any type of weather. Therefore, it is advised to always have a plan in place for the unexpected. Even predicted weather is unpredictable, but this should not deter you from educating yourself on weather patterns and trends. Building on that is to familiarise yourself with the ideal management practices for each potential weather wave.

Global disease outbreak – Foot and Mouth disease, even in another region that affects price and movement of animals. Mitigating risk is critical in the instance of disease outbreak. Ensuring the implementation of on-farm biosecurity as a basic, everyday practice, is sure to have positive returns.

Fire – the smallest spark can start a fire that burns for days, leading to heartbreaking losses. Plan and prepare for fires, build a reserve fodderbank in a safe place, train everybody on farm with basic f irefighting training and put necessary preventative measures in place.

Theft – brand your animals timeously and clearly with your registered brand mark. Check your fences every day and count your animals.

Prices – producers are always price takers, no matter the situation, for the price of their product as well as input costs. Familiarising yourself with annual price/cost trends will allow for preparation instead of surprise and panic. Prices/costs can change due to the "supply and demand" principle. Supply and demand are both influenced by outside factors, such as disease outbreak, seasonal celebrations (Christmas, Eid, or Easter), political factors (war in export countries or shifts in governmental), and climate extremes (drought). Fortunately, history repeats itself. Therefore, educate yourself on current events, both in and out of the agricultural sector, and study historic correlations between prices/costs and similar current events. Although current scenarios may not be the same, there are likely to be similarities and thus you can prepare accordingly.

Predators – plan where animals are when calving. Do not leave cows with calves in areas that are preferred and infested by predators. Something to consider, if possible, is to have a "maternity ward" (fenced off calving camp) that is close to home. This will not necessarily deter predators, but can aid you in stepping in to tend to predators more easily than if your cows and calves were out in the veld without any eyes on them, especially at night. ▲

To summarize a winning concept that is fundamental for profitable beef breeding:

- Choose a sought-after breed that you like, that can adapt well and that can utilise natural resources optimally to produce profitably.
- Understand your available natural resources and environment and learn how to utilise both optimally.
- Determine what is within and outside of your control.
- Have a plan with clear goals & objectives.
- Understand risks involved and how to mitigate them.
- Acquire only the best quality animals.
- Maintain optimal, production level condition score in your animals.
- Maintain good health in your animals.
- Happy, healthy animals tend to reproduce more frequently.
- Optimise stocking rate (carrying capacity) and maximise fertility/ reproduction to improve the likelihood of profitability.

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BREEDING FOR THE *balance sheet*

THE BUSHMAN'S MOUNTAIN TULI STORY

By Adria van Rooyen & Christo Rothmann

From his farm near Venterstad in the greater Gariep region, Christo Rothmann runs the Bushman's Mountain Tuli stud with a clear and practical objective: to breed cattle that make economic sense in the Karoo.

Foto: Bushman's Mountain Tuli

There is little room for sentimentality in this part of the country. Winters can be bitterly cold, summers relentlessly hot, and the rugged Nama-Karoo veld quickly exposes weaknesses in performance and genetics. In such an environment, only cattle that are truly functional survive and perform.
For Rothmann, the philosophy is simple: cattle is an investment that must generate returns. Cows must raise a calf every year, travel long distances in mountainous veld, and maintain fertility under extensive conditions. Genetics, in turn must improve continuously.

An Unconventional Path into Stud Breeding

Rothmann's entry into stud breeding did not follow the traditional route. A Chartered Accountant CA(SA), former turnaround specialist and founder of several successful IT companies, he approached agriculture with the mindset of a business strategist. Balance sheets, performance metrics and measurable outcomes shaped his thinking long before he entered the world of cattle breeding.

"You can't manage what you don't measure," he says - a principle that now underpins every aspect of the Bushman's Mountain operation. From the outset, Rothmann recognised that the foundation of any successful stud lies in superior genetics.
He invested in top-quality female genetics when opportunities arose in the market and continues to acquire carefully selected bulls from leading Tuli breeders each year.
This deliberate infusion of new bloodlines ensures continuous genetic progress and helps maintain world-class standards of productivity and profitability within the herd.→

A Long-Term Perspective

Perhaps the defining characteristic of the Bushman's Mountain stud is its long-term perspective.

Breeding decisions, grazing strategies and investment choices are all evaluated against one central principle: sustainable profitability over time.

Soil health and veld condition receive as much attention as genetics. Carrying capacity is carefully respected. Improvement is expected to be continuous, but always within the limits of the natural environment.

For fellow Tuli breeders and commercial farmers alike, Rothmann believes the lessons are straightforward. Success requires a clear vision, disciplined selection and rigorous measurement. Genetics and the environment must work together.

A Question that Defined the Vision

Like most successful ventures, the Bushman's Mountain stud was not built in isolation. Early in his breeding journey, Rothmann was mentored by the late Stefan van Wyk, a respected cattleman known for his exceptional eye for functional livestock. Rothmann still recalls the question Van Wyk asked him when he first considered establishing a stud: "What do you want to achieve with your stud?"
The simplicity of the question belied its significance. It forced Rothmann to define a clear objective: to breed exceptional cattle that are profitable, functional and suited to the harsh realities of the Karoo environment. That vision continues to guide every breeding and management decision on the farm.

Van Wyk emphasised the importance of phenotype: structural correctness, balance and overall functionality. Rothmann complemented this traditional stockman's approach by immersing himself in performance data and BLUP analysis. The result is a balanced breeding philosophy that combines a trained eye with objective measurement.

Letting the Environment Decide

Before establishing the Bushman's Mountain Tuli stud in 2006, Rothmann evaluated several breeds to determine which would perform best under the challenging conditions of the region. The Tuli breed stood out.

Known for its adaptability, fertility and ability to produce under extensive grazing conditions with minimal inputs, the breed proved ideally suited to the mountainous terrain and climate of the Karoo.

Today, Rothmann's cows traverse large camps across rugged veld, raising their calves and breeding naturally under extensive conditions. Even during prolonged dry cycles, the herd has maintained low mortality rates and strong weaning performance.

> ***"Genetics and the environment must work together.***

Grazing management also plays a key role. Rothmann employs high-density grazing with long rest periods across large camps to improve veld condition and maximise natural productivity. It is a system designed to work with nature rather than against it.

Identifying the Bulls that Truly Perform

An interesting aspect of the Bushman's Mountain breeding programme is the use of a multi-sire mating system. Instead of single-sire camps, cows run with multiple bulls.

DNA parentage testing is then used to identify the sire of each calf. The system provides valuable insight into which bulls are truly dominant and fertile under natural veld conditions. Bulls that consistently sire calves prove their worth not only in genetics but also in their ability to compete and breed successfully in a natural environment. "It's a very practical way of identifying the bulls that really perform," Rothmann explains.

The Discipline of Measurement

Data forms the backbone of Rothmann's breeding strategy. Every animal in the herd is measured and recorded, with information captured both in a custom-built database and in the SA Studbook Logix performance recording system.

Key data points include birth dates, parentage, weaning weights, fertility records and post wean growth performance
Two indicators are particularly important in evaluating cow efficiency: the weaning weight of the calf expressed as a percentage of the dam's body weight at weaning, and the inter-calving period.

Over the years, the Bushman's Mountain herd has maintained an average weaning efficiency of more than 50 percent. Heifer calves typically wean at around 210 kg, while bull calves average roughly 230 kg. For Rothmann, this efficiency ratio tells a far more meaningful story than growth figures alone.

Post-weaning growth also remains an important selection criterion, ensuring that animals suited to finishing on natural veld conditions are retained within the breeding programme.

In extensive systems such as the Karoo, cow efficiency ultimately determines profitability. A productive cow must maintain herself on natural grazing, raise a strong calf and conceive again, all without expensive inputs.

Cattle that Perform Where it Matters

Bushman's Mountain Tulis are not the result of quick gains or fashionable trends. Instead, they represent years of continues improvement, thoughtful management and strong mentorship. Ultimately, Rothmann measures success in the only way that truly matters in extensive livestock farming: cattle that perform in the veld and contribute positively to the balance sheet. In the demanding landscapes of the Karoo, that combination is the true mark of a successful stud. ▲

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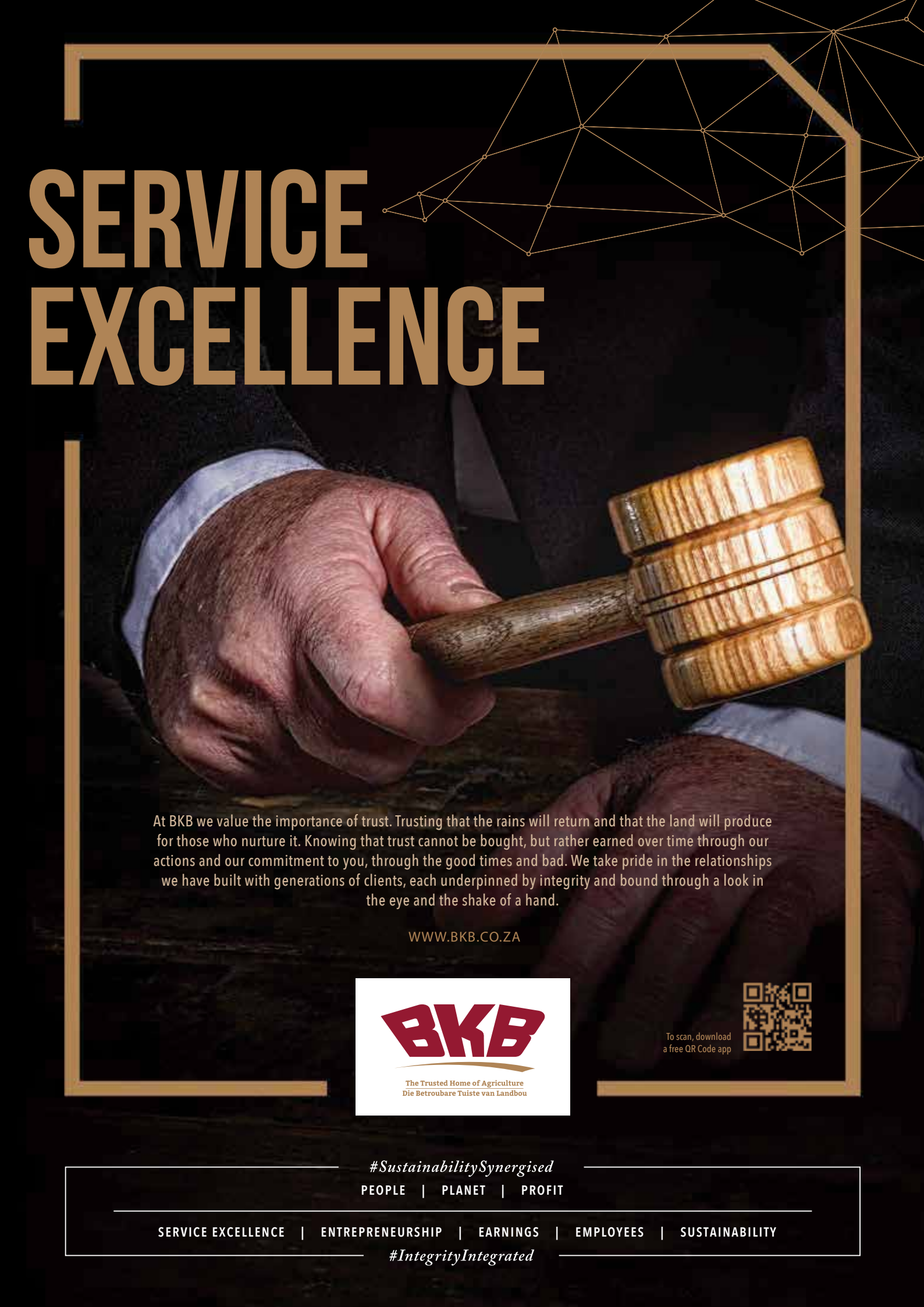

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Seleksie VAN VERVANGINGSVERSE

Deur Dr Louis du Pisani - Vryskut landbou adviseur - ldupisani@gmail.com

'n Vraag so oud soos beesboerdery, is of daar metodes bestaan om verse te kan identifiseer wat oor hul leeftyd goed sal reproduseer nog voordat hulle die eerste keer by die bul was? Dit is amper soos om van SARU se rugby keurders te verwag om 2050 se springbok rugbyspan reeds in 2030 uit daardie jaar se graad een seuns te kies. Die goeie nuus is dat daar wel sulke metodes beskikbaar is wat mens in staat stel om die kans op die regte keuse van vervangingsverse te maksimeer reeds voordat hulle die eerste keer gereproduseer het. →

Foto: Gouwsberg Tuli Stoet

Dr Johan Meaker het reeds in die 1980's aangetoon dat daar 'n hoë korrelasie is tussen 'n vers se reproduksie in haar eerste produksiejaar en die res van haar leeftyd (sien Tabel 1). Byvoorbeeld, verse wat met hul eerste kalfkans beset geraak het en 'n kalf geproduseer het, het oor die volgende 4 kalfkanse 'n gemiddeld van 3.2 kalwers gehad met 'n kalfpersentasie van 80%. Daarteenoor, het verse wat by die eerste paarkans oorgeslaan het en nie beset geraak het nie, het oor die volgende 4 kalfkanse net 1.5 kalwers geproduseer met 'n kalfpersentasie van 38%.

Getal kalwers gebore met eerste kalfkans	Getal kalwers gebore met die volgende 4 kalfkanse	
	Getal	Kalf %
0	1.5	38
1	3.2	80

Tabel 1 *Die verwantskap in die produksie tydens verse se eerste kalfkans en die daaropvolgende vier kalfkanse (Meaker, 1984)*

'n Tegniek wat goed werk is om verse wat vroeg in die kalfseisoen gebore is, eerste in ag te neem wanneer vervangingsverse geselekteer word. Verse wat vroeg in die kalfseisoen gebore word, is aansienlik meer produktief as verse wat laat gebore word. Studies deur Cushman en sy medewerkers in die VSA het in 2013 gewys dat verse wat vroeg in die kalfseisoen gebore word, meer geneig is om tydens hul eerste teelseisoen dragtig te raak en oor hul leeftyd 'n hoër reproduksiedoeltreffendheid het. Die resultate word in relatiewe terme in Tabel 2 aangetoon. As die verse wat in die eerste 21 dae van die kalfseisoen gebore is se kalfproduksie oor die res van hul leeftyd as 100% geneem word, het die verse wat tussen dag 22 en 42 gebore is net 89% kalwers oor die res van hul lewe geproduseer. Die ooreenstemmende syfer vir die verse wat laat gebore is, is 77%, wat 23 persentasiepunte swakker is as die vroeggebore verse. Die rede is dat vroeggebore verse meer tyd het om ordentlik uit te groei voor hul eerste teelseisoen in vergelyking met laat gebore eweknieë, wat hulle 'n voordeel gee om die teiken teelgewig van 65% tot 70% van volwasse gewig te bereik. Die vroeggebore verse het ook twee ander voordele gehad. Hulle kalwers se gemiddelde speenmassa per jaar was swaarder, asook die totale massa kalwers gespeen oor hul leeftyd.

Tyd van geboorte	Relatiewe verskil in getal kalwers oor leeftyd gespeen	Relatiewe verskil in gemiddelde speenmassa van kalwers	Relatiewe verskil in totale speenmassa oor leeftyd geproduseer
Eerste 21 dae	100%	100%	100%
Dag 22 - 42	89%	96%	85%
Dag 43+	77%	92%	71%

Tabel 2 *Verskalwers wat vroeg in die kalfseisoen gebore is, het 'n beter lewensproduksie as verse wat later gebore is. (Bron: Cushman et al. 2013) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/245029667 1984)*

Lesmeister et al. 1973 se studies het gewys dat verse wat vroeg kalf binne 60 dae gereed is vir herbesetting as tweedekalfkoeie. Verse wat in die middel van die kalfseisoen kalf neem sowat 80 dae om gereed te wees vir herbesetting, terwyl verse wat laat kalf sowat 100 dae neem. Die herbesetting van tweedekalfkoeie wat as verse vroeg gekalf het, was 90%, die wat in die middel gekalf het 75% en die wat laat gekalf het 50%. Sien Tabel 3 vir die resultate.

Tyd van kalwing	Dae vanaf kalf tot gereed om vir twedee keer gedek te word	Besetting as tweedekalfkoeie
Verse wat vroeg kalf	60	90%
Verse wat in die middel kalf	80	75%
Verse wat laat kalf	100	50%

Tabel 3 *Vervangingsverse wat vroeg kalf is meer geneig om herbeset te word as tweedekalfkoeie. (Bron: Lesmeister et al. 1973) https://doi.org/10.2527/jas1973.3611*

Die navorsing van Cushman en sy medewerkers het ook aangetoon dat verse wat vroeg kalf ook 'n heelwat langer leeftyd in die kudde het (sien Tabel 4). Byvoorbeeld, gemiddeld 70% van die verse wat vroeg kalf gekalf het was na 5 jaar steeds in die kudde, terwyl die ooreenkomstige syfers van die verse wat in die middel en laat gekalf het slegs 50% en 30% was.

Tyd van kalwing	% Steeds in kudde na 3 jaar	% Steeds in kudde na 5 jaar
Verse wat vroeg kalf	85%	70%
Verse wat in die middel kalf	70%	50%
Verse wat laat kalf	55%	30%

Tabel 4 *Vervangingsverse wat vroeg kalf se tyd in die kudde versus uitskotpersentasie (Bron: Cushman et al. (2013) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/245029667*

Samevattend, verse wat vroeg gebore is en wat dan self ook vroeg kalf, is aansienlik meer winsgewend as verse wat later gebore is, na aanleiding van Lesmeister se navorsing (sien Tabel 5). Byvoorbeeld, as mens die leeftyd-inkomste van die koeie neem wat as verse vroeg gekalf het as 100% neem, is die winsgewendheid van die wat later kalf slegs 71%. Netso, is die koste om verse wat laat gekalf het en later die kudde verlaat het, te vervang, aansienlik. As die netto wins van koeie wat as verse vroeg gekalf het as 100% geneem word, is die koeie wat as verse laat gekalf het slegs 47%.

Tyd van kalwing	Relatiewe inkomste oor leeftyd	Relatiewe vervangings-koste	Relatiewe netto wins
Verse wat vroeg kalf	100%	100%	100%
Verse wat laat kalf	71%	240%	47%

Tabel 5 *Die relatiewe winsgewendheid van verse wat vroeg en laat kalf. Bron: Lesmeister et al. (1973) https://doi.org/10.2527/jas1973.3611*

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Kortom, verse wat vroeg gebore word, het 'n aansienlik beter kans om in top koeie te ontwikkel en moet die basis vorm van die vervanging wat terug gaan in die kudde. Natuurlik sal daar uitsonderings wees, maar die waarskynlikheid om 'n top koeikudde met vroeg geboer verse op te bou, is baie goed.

Die volgende beste praktyke word dus vir die seleksie van vervangingsverse aanbeveel:

- **By speen word daardie verse wat in die eerste 42 dae gebore is, uitgevang en geëvalueer.**
- **Almal met konformasie foute word afgekeur.**
- **Selekteer uit die oorblywende groep die getal verse wat vir vervanging benodig word, plus 'n ekstra 10% tot 15%. Gee voorkeur aan die verse met die beste kondisie.**
- **Maak hierdie verse ordentlik groot. Hulle hoef nie bogemiddeld te groei nie, maar hulle moet standhoudend groei sodat hul (1) voor hulle die eerste keer gepaar word sowat 65% tot 70% van hul volwasse massa bereik en (2) hul reproduksie-organe volledig ontwikkel het.**
- **Op 12 maande ouderdom word hulle weer geëvalueer. Gooi die uit wat uitgesak het en wat nie in goeie kondisie is nie.**
- **Die res word op hul beplande tyd gepaar en aan 'n dragtigheidsondersoek onderwerp. Doen die finale seleksie uit die wat in die eerste twee siklusse beset geraak het. As daar meer is as wat benodig word, gee voorkeur aan die wat in die eerste siklus beset geraak het. Die res word opgemaak uit die wat in die tweede siklus beset geraak het en die beste kondisie het.**

Hierdie metodiek werk uit die aard van die saak slegs vir kuddes wat paarseisoene volg.

Foto: Gamna Tuli Stoet

Hierdie artikel is geneem uit die boek Vee-, veld- en geldbestuur vir veeboere deur die outeur van hierdie artikel.

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BREEDING BEEF CATTLE IN A TIME OF *climate change*

By M M Scholtz & G M Pyoos - ARC Animal Production, Irene, South Africa

Producers of beef cattle in a time of a changing climate must consider numerous factors. Breeding climate-smart cattle requires animals that are adapted to shifting environmental conditions, resilient and capable of withstanding extremes, while also producing lower greenhouse gas emissions. →

Introduction

There's no one-size-fits-all solution for tackling the effects of climate change on beef cattle in Southern Africa. What works in Europe or North America won't necessarily suit local conditions. Experts have identified 14 interventions for making beef production more climate-smart.

They focus on three areas: adaptation, mitigation and resilience.

The goal is straightforward:
raise cattle that keep producing,
leave a smaller carbon footprint, and
recover quickly when extreme weather strikes.

If these interventions were to be implemented in a coordinated way, they could help Southern Africa achieve sustainable animal production in the era of climate change. →

Foto: Emre Akyol

Conformation traits that matter

Whether cattle are bred or bought, lighter hair colour with darker skin pigmentation is desirable. Body size should be moderate so the animals can dissipate heat more easily. Attention should also be given to larger ears and a longer navel or sheath, as well as a greater skin surface area and longer legs. Note that a prolapsed sheath should not be confused with a longer sheath. Prolapse remains an undesirable trait and should still be selected against.

The challenge lies in convincing breeders to select for smaller-framed animals with longer legs, as the preference has traditionally been for heavier, stockier cattle. In the past, longer navels and sheaths were also viewed negatively.

Use indigenous or adapted genotypes

Southern Africa is fortunate to have a wide variety of indigenous and adapted beef cattle breeds. These breeds have been shaped by local conditions over generations, making them hardy, disease-resistant and well suited to tough environments. Indigenous breeds like the Tuli, Nguni and Afrikaner, as well as the locally developed Bonsmara are especially valuable for food security in the region.

Develop early warning systems

Heat stress is one of the biggest threats to beef production in a warming climate. That's why accurate short-, medium- and long-term forecasts are becoming essential tools for farmers.

If farmers can access reliable 7–14 day forecasts, they can adapt rations and mineral supplements in time, making sure animals get the right cation/anion balance to help counteract heat stress.

Seasonal forecasts, stretching for 6–12 months ahead are just as valuable. They give farmers time to plan, whether by reducing herd size ahead of drought, or arranging alternative feeds such as bush meal or "boskos" (dried and ground woody plants, leaves and pods).

Heat stress doesn't just affect growth and weight gain – it also affects reproduction. Bull fertility drops sharply in extreme heat and is a common cause of reproductive inefficiency in beef cattle. With the right warning in place, farmers can plan around this, using multi-bull matings or selecting bulls from tropically adapted genotypes to keep herds productive even in challenging conditions.

Alternative production systems

The choice of a production system in Southern Africa depends largely on management capacity and the production environment. In the commercial farming sector, where management skills are generally good, terminal crossbreeding using indigenous cows can boost outputs. These cows are well adapted to the warmer climate and are more efficient, since smaller cows consume less feed than larger ones. The Tuli fits well in this category.

In the less developed farming sectors, however, purebred breeding or back-crossing with indigenous or adapted breeds may be more practical and sustainable. An example would be rotational crossbreeding between Tuli x Afrikaner or Tuli x Nguni.

Breed for better cow-calf efficiency

One of the most effective ways reduce the carbon footprint of beef production is to get more out of every animal. If each cow produces more efficiently, less greenhouse gases are emitted per kilogram of beef – making productivity itself a powerful climate-smart strategy. To achieve this, breeding goals need to be adjusted with tough environments in mind. By selecting for animals that thrive under local stressors, farmers can build herds that are both productive and resilient.

Carbon sequestration

When vegetation regrows after being grazed by ruminants, carbon dioxide is absorbed from the atmosphere as part of the natural cycle. In other words, carbon dioxide is effectively "sucked" out of the air. Agriculture is uniquely positioned to do this through soil carbon conservation, carbon sequestration and the careful use of short-rotation grazing systems. In the Southern African context, protecting and restoring natural resources, together with proper land management, are essential for environmentally friendly and sustainable beef production. The challenge lies in how these practices can be implemented in communal grazing areas.

Carbon footprint within resource environments

In Southern Africa, ruminant meat is produced in feedlots (mainly cattle) as well as by commercial and communal (small-scale) farmers using production systems where grass is the primary feed source. More research is needed to understand the factors that influence methane emissions across these different systems.

It is especially important to determine whether low-input systems generate high greenhouse gas emissions. Increasing evidence suggests that current models are inadequate for estimating emissions from such systems. Dedicated models tailored to low-input conditions therefore need to be developed.

Feeding and grazing

Ration formulation and nutrition play an important role in methane emissions. Feed should be designed to enable animals to produce more protein from less feed, thereby reducing their carbon footprint.

> ***"Research priorities include exploring alternative pastures (such as tannin-rich legumes), the use of algae and seaweed, feed additives, and dietary fibre in rations, as well as incorporating indigenous plants.***

Rumen manipulation

Diet is widely recognised as the most important driver of rumen microbial diversity. However, research also suggests that host genetics play a significant role in shaping the composition of the rumen microbiota. In fact, studies in ruminants have shown that microbial diversity can differ between breeds.

While much research has focused on how diet influences the rumen microbiome, the links between the microbiome, production traits and breeding stock in beef cattle are still not fully understood.

Certain rumen microorganisms are known to reduce the release of enteric methane. This means that a more favourable rumen microbiome could be established by identifying microbial markers linked to lower methane production and then creating the right conditions for those microbes to thrive. Preliminary studies also suggest that cows may play a role in passing on beneficial microbiota to their calves.

Land use and greenhouse gas emissions

Ruminants largely graze on grassland, trees and shrubs that are not consumed by humans. In contrast, intensively farmed monogastric animals, such as pigs and poultry, rely on feed grown on arable land and can therefore be seen as competing directly with humans for food. →

This difference is often cited as a reason to reduce ruminant production, as cutting methane emissions may accelerate the reduction of overall greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. It is important to note that ruminants produce methane, which has a relatively short atmospheric lifetime of around 12 years, compared with 100-200 years for carbon dioxide.

Herd management

Improved herd management increases productivity and promotes better herd health, which can reduce the need for antibiotics. Greater production efficiency also lowers the carbon footprint per unit of product. Enhancing pasture management and restoration – through higher-quality grass varieties and rotational grazing – can further contribute to reduced methane emissions.

Resilience to climate variability

Genomic selection markers indicate that the Afrikaner and Brahman breeds are well adapted to the South African environment. In the case of the Afrikaner no genes associated with production were detected, even though some breeders selected for production, whereas only 11% were detected in the Brahman. One possible explanation is that, although breeders selected for production, natural selection increased the frequency of genes for adaptation, enabling the animals to survive and reproduce in South Africa's harsh environment. Selection for growth rate in a stressful environment may therefore be achieved by enhancing resistance to environmental stress. Since the Tuli has also been exposed to stressful environments, it may have the same characteristics.

Breed and genotypic plasticity

Plasticity refers to the variation in the performance of a breed from year to year. Breeding for less plastic, more climate-resistant genotypes may therefore be important. Plasticity increases when genetic effects vary significantly between years and decreases when these variations are minimal. The breeds such as the Afrikaner and Nguni exhibit lower plasticity and the Tuli may be in the same category.

Farmers with sufficient resources can potentially use external inputs to offset environmental variation – for example, by providing supplementary feed in dry years. However, it may be advisable for many commercial farmers, and probably all subsistence farmers, to prioritise breeds that can perform well even under less favourable environmental conditions.

Epigenetics

Epigenetics refers to changes in DNA function that occur without altering the DNA sequence. These changes affect gene expression and can influence the appearance and other traits of an animal.

Epigenetic effects have been linked to growth, development, health, reproduction, and environmental adaptation – including improvements in immune response, feed efficiency and growth performance. These modifications are influenced by environmental factors and can be passed on to offspring. In this way, "soft" or epigenetic inheritance provides a more flexible system for fine-tuning the next generation to changing environments compared with the slower response of Mendelian, "hard" inheritance.

Both genetic and epigenetic mechanisms influence gene expression. Further research is needed to determine how epigenetics can be integrated into breeding programmes to optimise performance under changing environmental conditions. Epigenetics has the potential to revolutionise the livestock industry by offering additional insights for improving animal production efficiency, health and welfare. ▲

The original article was published in African Farming https://www.africanfarming.com/2025/08/22/breeding-beef-cattle-in-a-time-of-climate-change-14-interventions/

CRYPTOSPORIDIUM IN *beef calves*: IMPACT ON DIARRHEA INCIDENCE AND TREATMENT STRATEGIES

By Dr. Petrus Engelbrecht - Veterinarian

Every beef farmer knows the frustration of walking into the calving area and finding a once-thriving calf with its tail up and covered in muck. Beyond the immediate mess and extra labour, outbreaks of calf diarrhoea can quietly erode growth rates, increase treatment costs, and reduce overall herd profitability.

Understanding the Problem

Cryptosporidium, particularly *Cryptosporidium parvum*, remains one of the most significant protozoal pathogens affecting neonatal ruminants worldwide. In beef calves, this parasite primarily targets the small intestine, leading to cryptosporidiosis, a condition characterized by watery diarrhea, dehydration, lethargy, and reduced growth rates.

While much research focuses on dairy systems due to higher stocking densities and earlier calf separation, beef calves in cow-calf operations are also susceptible, though prevalence may be lower in extensive grazing systems compared to intensive dairy setups (Merck Veterinary Manual, 2025).

C. parvum is the dominant species in pre-weaned calves, including beef breeds, causing infections typically in the first few weeks of life. Oocysts are highly resistant in the environment and spread via fecal-oral transmission through contaminated bedding, water, feed, or direct contact. In beef herds, risk factors include group penning, poor hygiene, and exposure to contaminated environments during calving. Global meta-analyses indicate *Cryptosporidium* prevalence in cattle varies widely, but in pre-weaned calves it often ranges from 27% to 37.5%, with *C. parvum* predominant and strongly linked to diarrhea (Buchanan et al., 2025). In diarrheic samples, positivity can reach 36–38%, underscoring its role as a major contributor to neonatal scour (Zhao et al., 2023; various studies cited in reviews).

The impact on diarrhea incidence is substantial. Infection disrupts intestinal epithelial cells, causing villus atrophy, crypt hyperplasia, and malabsorption, resulting in persistent watery or mucoid diarrhea that is often self-limiting in immunocompetent calves but can be severe when combined with other pathogens like rotavirus or *E. coli*. In beef calves, early infection (within the first 8 days) significantly elevates diarrhea risk, up to fourfold, and prolongs episodes beyond three days (Lombardelli et al., 2025). This leads to dehydration, electrolyte imbalances, and impaired average daily gain, with affected calves potentially gaining less than 500 g/day, increasing nearly eightfold in early-infected cases. Economic consequences include higher mortality in severe outbreaks, veterinary costs, and delayed weaning or reduced carcass quality.

Treatment

Treatment remains challenging, The Merck Veterinary Manual emphasis es supportive care as the cornerstone: fluid and electrolyte replacement (oral or parenteral) to combat dehydration, along with antidiarrheal agents and nutritional support until recovery. Infections are often mild to moderate and self-resolve in 7-14 days with good husbandry, but severe cases require intensive intervention.

Several compounds can be used for reducing severity, oocyst shedding, or diarrhea duration.

Parofor (Paromycin sulfate) , administered prophylactically or therapeutically (e.g., 7-day courses), delays diarrhea onset by several days and lowers incidence in treated groups (Jarvie et al., 2005; meta-analyses support reduced shedding and mortality when started early). Paromomycin has demonstrated efficacy in reducing diarrhea duration and oocyst output in field and experimental →

settings, often outperforming halofuginone in some comparisons. Azithromycin and other agents like lasalocid have shown variable success in alleviating clinical signs (Constable, 2009).
Emerging options, such as hyperimmune colostrum or novel vaccines (e.g., colostrum from gp40-vaccinated dams), reduce severity and incidence significantly in trials (Timmermans et al., 2024). However, antibiotics are not routinely indicated unless secondary bacterial infections occur, and resistance or limited efficacy against *Cryptosporidium* persists.

Prevention: The real game-changer

Prevention outweighs treatment in beef operations and is where producers can make the biggest difference.

Key management practices include:

- Maintaining clean, dry calving areas with individual pens initially
- Prompt removal of feces and and biosecurity - limits spread
- Good colostrum intake ensures passive immunity, while avoiding overcrowding reduces challenge.
- Disinfection with agents like hydrated lime can delay onset, though not always incidence (Björkman et al., 2018).

Conclusion

In summary, Cryptosporidium poses a notable threat to beef calf health, driving diarrhea and performance losses. Supportive therapy, targeted use of approved antiprotozoals where available, and rigorous management practices are key to mitigation. Ongoing research into vaccines and therapeutics offers hope for better control in beef production. ▲

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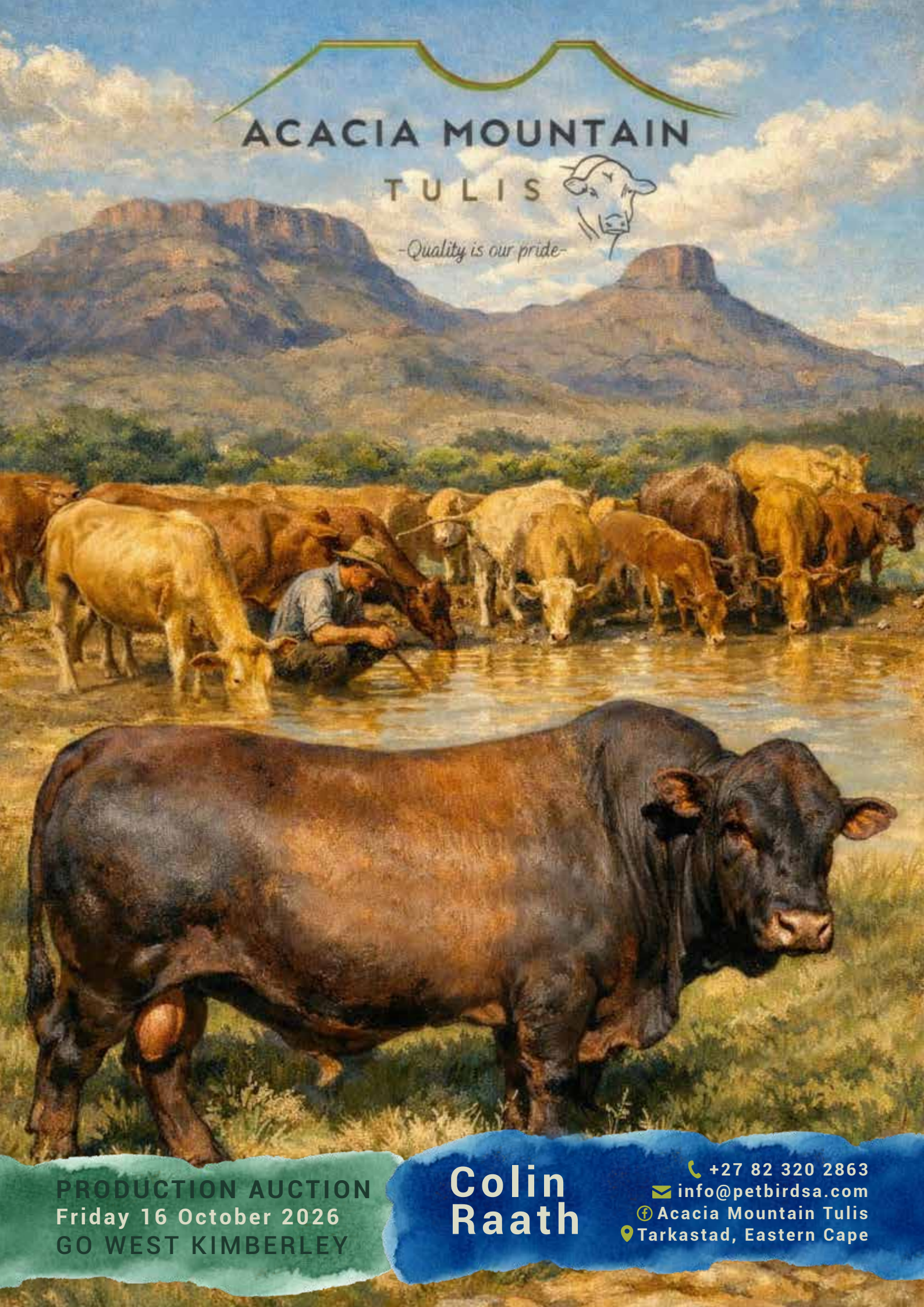

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VOORGESTELDE WYSIGINGS AAN *waterwet*

Deur Carien Kruger - Landbouweekblad-joernalis

Die voorgestelde Waterwysigingswetsontwerp sal die ekonomie van grondverhandeling drasties raak en kan selfs op "onteiening" neerkom·

Kenners sê die voorgestelde wysigings aan die Nasionale Waterwet (Wet 36 van 1998) kan verreikende gevolge vir plaaswaardes inhou·→

Die artikel is 'n verkorte weergawe van 'n artikel wat vroeër deur Landbouweekblad gepubliseer is. Lees die volledige weergawe hier

Pemmy Majodina, Minister van Water en Sanitasie, het die hersiene wysigings in Oktober 2025 in die parlement ingedien en teen druktyd is verwag dat dit vroeg in 2026 voor die portefeuljekomitee vir water en sanitasie sou dien.

Verskeie organisasies, ook van buite die landbou, sal na verwagting voorleggings oor die kommerwekkende knelpunte indien.

Vier belangrike voorgestelde wysigings waarvan boere moet weet, is:

1 Geen koop, verkoop of oordrag van waterregte

Ingevolge die wysigings sal boere nie waterregte kan koop, verkoop of oordra nie. Gregory Smith, uitvoerende hoof van die Suid-Afrikaanse vereniging van watergebruikersverenigings (SAAFWUA), sê dit sal veroorsaak dat watergebruiksregte hul waarde as ekonomiese bate verloor, wat 'n regstreekse nadelige invloed op plaaswaardes en toegang tot finansiering sal hê.

Volgens Janse Rabie, hoof van beleid en wetgewing by AgriSA, is 'n plaas sonder waterregte "in werklikheid onkoopbaar".

Boere het vir waterregte betaal toe hulle hul plase gekoop het en as hulle dit nie meer saam met die plaas kan verkoop nie, sal hulle 'n waardevolle bate verloor.

Smith sê sonder water verloor grond 'n groot deel van die produksiepotensiaal, markwaarde en finansierbaarheid. Dit blyk verder uit die voorgestelde wysigings dat daar baie klem gaan wees op transformasie en hertoewysing van waterregte.

2 Onteiening sonder vergoeding?

Volgens Smith maak die wetsontwerp geen duidelike voorsiening vir vergoeding wanneer boere nie meer hul waterregte saam met 'n plaas kan verkoop nie. "Wanneer 'n reg waarop vir produksie en finansiering staatgemaak is, sonder vergoeding weggeneem word, ontstaan ernstige grondwetlike vrae. In wese kan dit as 'n vorm van onregstreekse of regulerende onteiening beskou word."

Adriaan Groenewald, prokureur en waterregkenner van Humansdorp, sê 'n aanspraak op watergebruik "is 'n eiendomsreg, en die voorgestelde verbod op die oordrag daarvan, asook verskeie ander artikels in die konsep-wysigingswetsontwerp, druis direk in teen die Handves van Menseregte en kom neer op kruipende onteiening".

Rabie meen dat die kwessie van die presiese aard van watergebruiksregte as synde private eiendom, waarskynlik binnekort in die howe getoets sal word.

3 Gebruik dit of verloor dit

Ingevolge die wetsontwerp sal boere water wat hulle nie gebruik nie, kan verloor – die sogenaamde gebruik-dit-of-verloor-dit-beginsel.

Hoe sal bepaal word hoeveel water 'n boer verloor? Smith sê die departement van water en sanitasie sal moet staatmaak op meting, monitering en administratiewe rekords. "Die probleem is dat hierdie stelsels in baie gebiede onvolledig, onbetroubaar of ongelyk toegepas is. Klimaatwisselings, reënval, beurtkrag, infrastruktuurprobleme en boerderybesluite kan daartoe lei dat 'n boer in 'n bepaalde jaar minder water gebruik, sonder dat dit beteken dat die water permanent oorbodig is."

Die gevaar dat ongebruikte water weggeneem kan word, kan boere boonop ontmoedig om water te spaar en eerder onregstreeks aanmoedig om water te gebruik bloot om hul regte te beskerm, sê Smith.

Die wetsontwerp neem volgens hom ook nie in ag dat boerdery inherent dinamies is en waterbehoeftes oor tyd verander nie. " 'n Boer met jong boorde, soos jong lemoenbome, kan aanvanklik minder water gebruik met die wete dat die waterbehoefte aansienlik sal toeneem namate die bome volwasse raak.

"Daar is ook gevalle waar 'n boer besproeiingsinfrastruktuur wil aanlê, maar eers kapitaal moet opbou. Die wetsontwerp erken nie hierdie langtermynbeplanning en sikliese aard van die landbou voldoende nie. Dit hou die risiko in dat waterregte wat tydelik nie benut word nie, permanent verlore kan gaan."

Vereistes vir houer van waterlisensie

Rabie sê die wetsontwerp bepaal dat "geskikte en gepaste persone" waterlisensies kan kry, maar is vaag oor wat dit beteken. Verder moet "historiese oortredings" in ag geneem word wanneer aansoeke om lisensies oorweeg word.

Volgens Smith kan sulke oortredings selfs wyer strek as bloot die nie-betaling of laat betaling van 'n waterrekening. Dit kan 'n wye reeks moontlike waterverwante nie-nakomings insluit, soos die oorskryding van toegelate volumes.

"Die kernprobleem is nie dat nakoming in beginsel in ag geneem word nie, maar dat die wetsontwerp onvoldoende voorsiening maak vir konteks, proporsionaliteit, rehabilitasie," sê hy. "In 'n sektor waar administratiewe kwessies, kontantvloeiprobleme en institusionele tekortkominge algemeen voorkom, is daar 'n werklike risiko dat watergebruikers met 'n enkele of ou oortreding onbillik benadeel kan word."

Kernprobleme sal beveg word

Rabie sê AgriSA se standpunt is duidelik: "Die wetsontwerp en verwante prosesse skep groot onsekerheid en risiko vir boere en watergebruikersverenigings. AgriSA beklemtoon die noodsaak van regsekerheid, vergoeding waar regte ingekort word, en praktiese beleidsbepalings wat boere se beleggings- en produksiesiklusse erken.

"Ons sal die proses aktief betree en die belange van die landbou en plattelandse gemeenskappe verdedig," sê Rabie.

Volgens SAAFWUA is daar ruimte vir gesprek en aanpassing, maar daar is sekere aspekte wat fundamenteel problematies is en waarop die organisasie nie kan toegee nie.

Smith sê dit sluit bepalings in "wat die ekonomiese waarde en oordraagbaarheid van bestaande watergebruiksregte ondermyn, die moontlikheid skep dat water sonder vergoeding gesedeer of herverdeel kan word, en die gebrek aan duidelike oorgangsbepalings wat regsonsekerheid veroorsaak.

"Indien die finale wet hierdie elemente onveranderd behou en dit lei tot die ontneming van gevestigde regte sonder billike proses of vergoeding, kan dit grondwetlike implikasies hê.

"In só 'n geval sal regstappe nie uitgesluit word nie aangesien dit gaan oor die beskerming van regsekerheid, eiendomsbelange en die volhoubaarheid van die sektor," sê Smith.

Omdat die impak van die wysigingswetsontwerp wyer as net die primêre landbou strek, sal ander organisasies, sake-ondernemings en sektorliggame na verwagting ook voorleggings indien. "Hoe breër en meer divers die insette is, hoe groter is die kans dat die wetgewer bewus sal wees van die volle ekonomiese en maatskaplike impak van die voorgestelde wysigings," sê Smith. ▲

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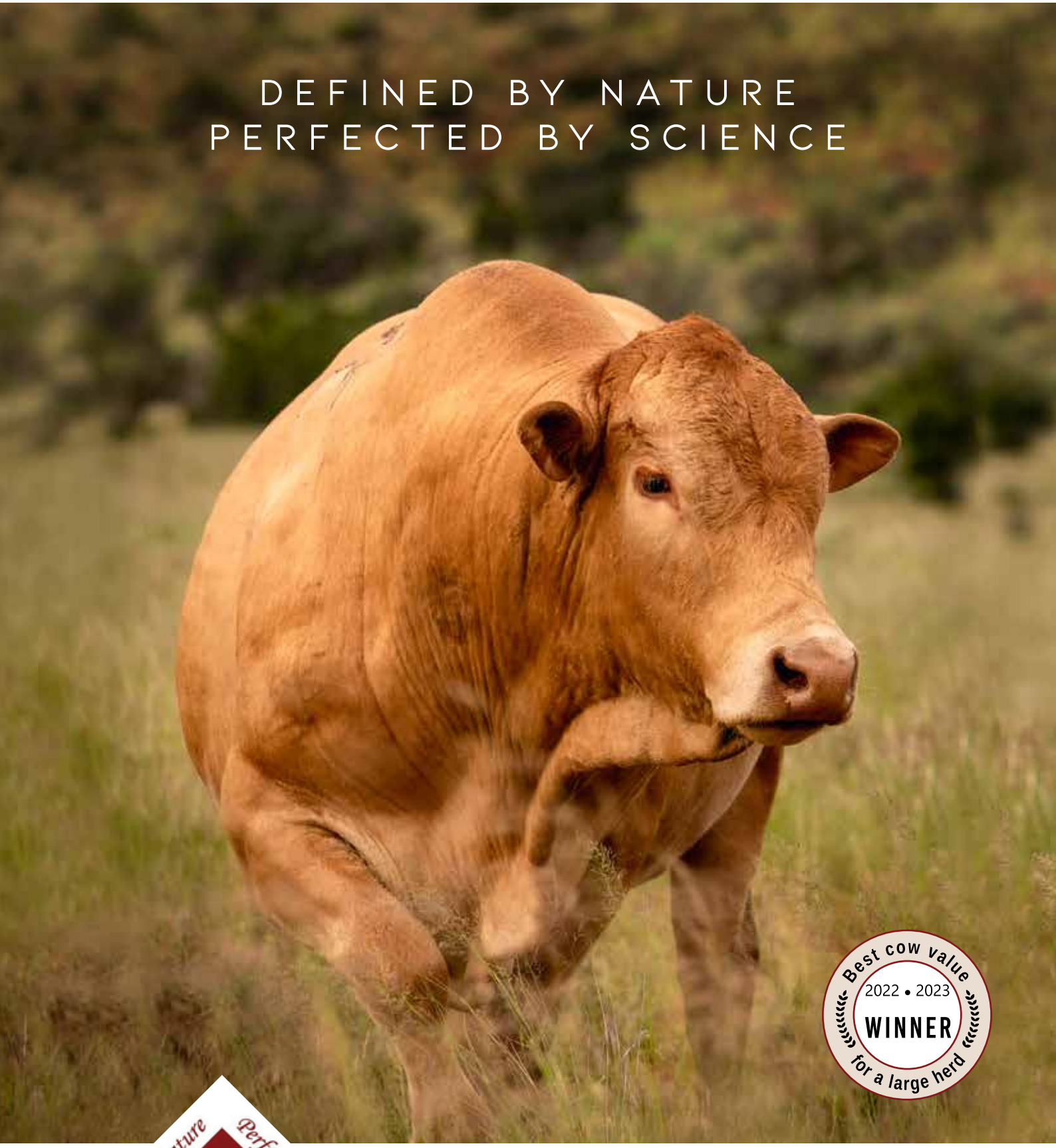

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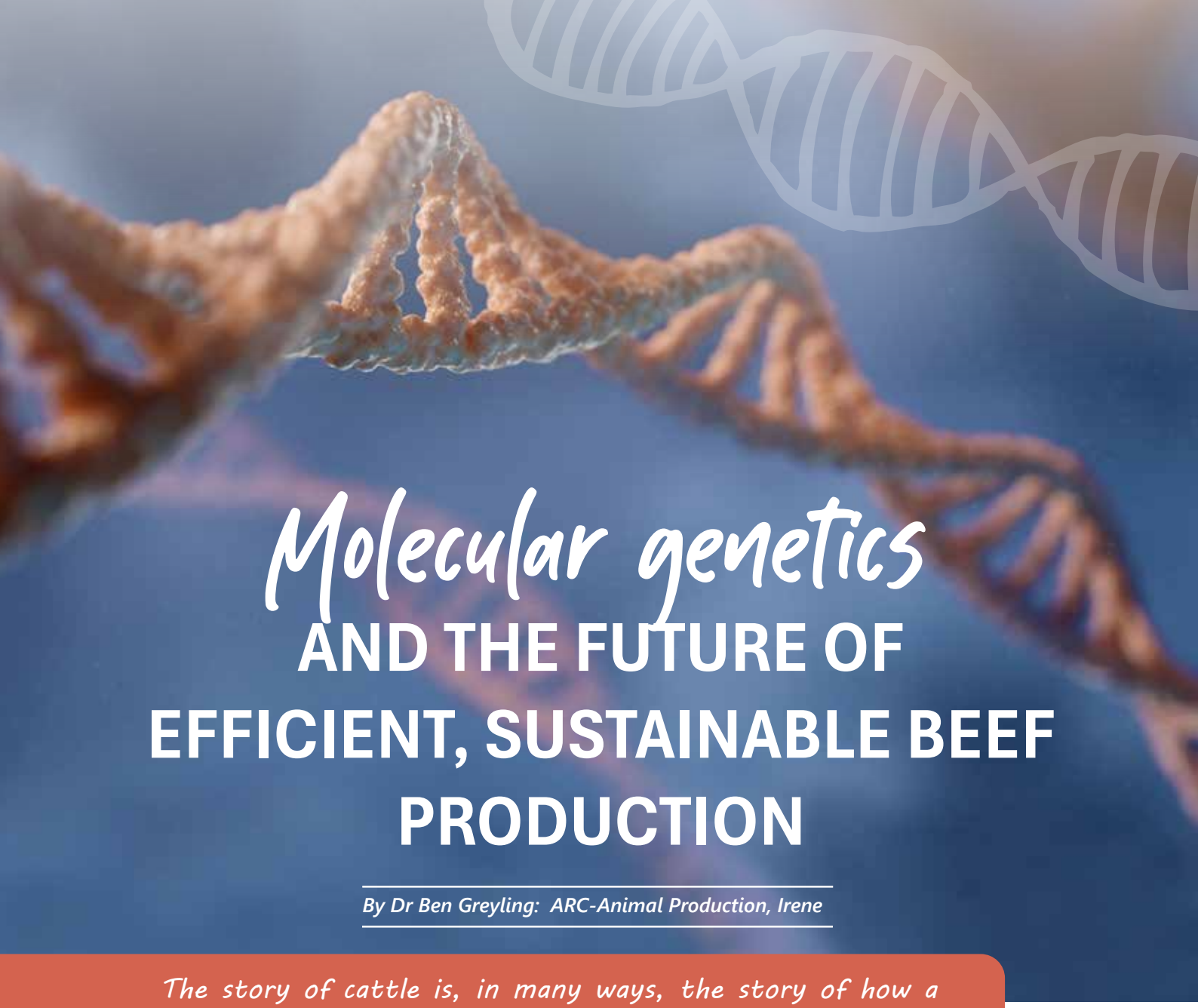

Molecular genetics AND THE FUTURE OF EFFICIENT, SUSTAINABLE BEEF PRODUCTION

By Dr Ben Greyling: ARC-Animal Production, Irene

The story of cattle is, in many ways, the story of how a partnership with nature has shaped human progress. The progress made was largely due to the application of information and selection by farmers for thousands of years with the aim of producing cattle in line with the demands from both humans and nature.

Over the last century in particular, farmers have been able to implement more targeted approaches made possible by information and technology to ensure they keep up with the demands exerted by the many factors that affect their sustainability and profitability. These factors include climate change, disease prevalence and socio-economic status of our country and the dynamics of market forces, all of which require a more focused approach for producing the desired product. In the modern era of cattle breeding and production, technologies and information derived from crucial performance data of their animals has become almost an indispensable tool used by farmers for decision making and management. The ultimate aim is to ensure continuous genetic improvement which is vital for being resilient to the many factors that affect the beef industry. Information is furthermore crucial for ensuring we grasp the opportunities presented by industry.

What is interesting is that we are so focused on the bigger picture of our industry, that we often lose track of the relevance and significance of the smaller picture when it comes to beef breeding. For now, the smaller picture refers to the genetic makeup of our animals and how we can utilise the information to our benefit.

What is important to remember is that the performance of our animals depends on both Nature and Nurture. Nurture on the one hand encompasses nutrition, environmental factors (such as temperature fluctuations), disease prevalence and overall management. Nature, on the other hand refers to the genetic makeup (DNA and genes) of the animal – an area we frequently overlook. The fascinating and complex world of livestock genetics deserves far more attention. After all, performance can only be accurately interpreted when we consider the formula:

Phenotype (observable traits) = genotype (DNA/genetic makeup) + environment

The following is a small but important glimpse of the fascinating picture our genetics and that of our animals, to put Nature into perspective:

The genetic material in both animals and humans is organized into structures known as chromosomes, which are like organized packets of DNA that contains our genes and that of our animals. The genes in DNA is the biological code that tells the cells in our bodies and that of our animals how to do the biological processes - like growing, digesting food or feed, performing under different environments, our capacity to survive and to produce offspring and many more traits.

An average human and cow have approximately 37 trillion and more than 300 trillion cells respectively. An incredible fact is that just one of our cells contains about two meters of DNA. When added up across all the cells in a single person, the total length of DNA is enough to stretch to the sun and back - around 80 times (the sun is roughly 150 million kilometers away from earth)!

In mammals (humans, cows, etc.), it takes about 6 to 8 hours to replicate the entire DNA in one cell. This is absolutely amazing considering the number of codes within the DNA that needs to be "re-typed" - a process that would take a typist a few decades! This phenomenon is of particular relevance in view of "mistakes" that could possibly be made within our cells and that of our animals during DNA replication. These mistakes (also called mutations) may result in undesirable traits, including genetic diseases and syndromes such as Curly Calf Syndrome, dwarfism and many others. Of course, some beneficial mutations may also be created that result in traits such as polledness, increased milk production and double muscling.

The most astounding ability of nature is how it generates genetic variation, an aspect that forms the basis of our selection options for certain traits. To put it into context, we need to focus on how genes are arranged and passed down through generations. For example, humans have 46 chromosomes, while cattle have 60, and this number plays a key role in determining the amount of genetic diversity an individual can inherit from its parents. Remember that genetic variation is essential and forms the basis when aiming to breed animals with superior traits and adaptability. Remarkably, a human couple can produce a child with over 70 trillion possible chromosome combinations - and when you factor in processes like recombination (where chromosomes exchange sections during the formation of reproductive cells), the number of potential variations becomes astronomically large, in fact exceeding the number of stars in the universe.

Let's take a closer look at our cattle. With 60 chromosomes in each cell, cattle possess over 22,000 genes. When a bull and cow reproduce, the resulting calf could inherit one out of more than a million trillion (10^{18}) possible chromosome combinations - highlighting nature's incredible capacity to generate genetic variation. These mind-blowing levels of variation clearly show the vast potential we must harness and make use of the genetic information carried by our animals from a selection and genetic improvement point of view.

So what is the significance and application of the smaller picture?

The smaller picture, referring to the genetic makeup (DNA composition) of our animals, has a huge application. Livestock farmers have been using DNA technology and genetic information for many years in various ways. It has assisted them to identify animals with beneficial or harmful genetic traits, including those linked to diseases like curly calf syndrome, Pompe's Disease or chromosomal translocations that cause fertility problems. Scientists have also found genetic markers related to traits that affect profitability, such as how efficiently animals use feed, how fast they grow, and how much milk they produce, to name but a few. There are also genetic (DNA) tests that can be done to identify genetic mutations/variants that are linked to specific traits e.g. polledness, double muscling and meat tenderness. DNA testing is also widely used to confirm the parentage of calves, which is vital for pedigree records and registering stud animals. Another key use of DNA technology is evaluating an animal's genetic potential using Genomic Breeding Values, which has become a valuable tool for breeders aiming to improve the genetics of their herds.

Another key application of genetic information is the assessment of genetic structure and diversity within and between breeds. This provides insight into gene flow across populations, as well as levels of genetic variation and inbreeding – important indicators of population fitness and adaptability. These genetic indicators form the basis of informed breeding, management, and conservation strategies.

Genetics: The Blueprint for Tomorrow's Herd

The genetic makeup of cattle reveals a remarkable history shaped by domestication, adaptation, and intensive breedi over millennia. Advances in genetic technology have uncov fascinating facts about how these animals have evolved an specific genes influence their resilience, physiology, and be and performance. Investing in technology that characterize genetic makeup of cattle allows farmers to make highly inf and strategic decisions for enhanced productivity and grea profitability and efficiency. Instead of relying solely on visu appraisal and historical performance, genetic data provides blueprint for an animal's potential from a young age and b unlocking this blueprint of cattle, farmers can transform po into precision, driving unprecedented productivity, profitab progress in livestock breeding. ▲

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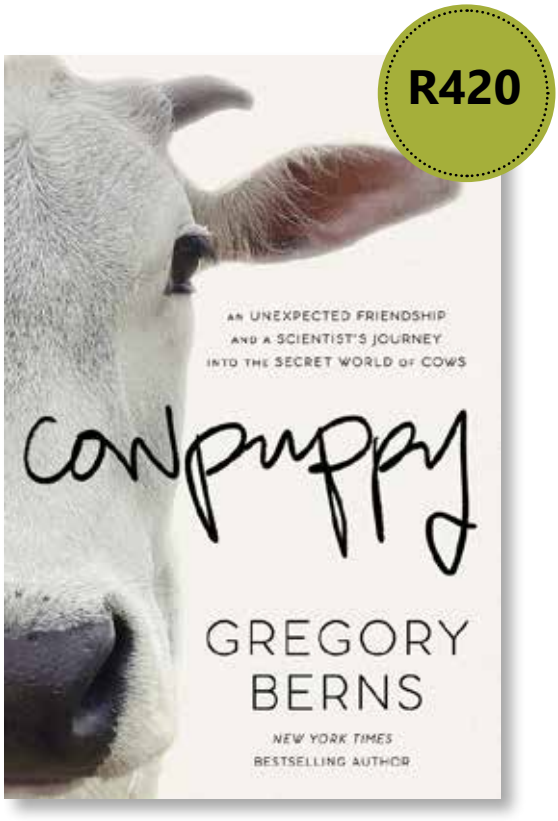

Cowpuppy: An Unexpected Friendship and a Scientist's Journey into the Secret World of Cows

by Gregory Berns

From the author of the bestselling How Dogs Love Us, a fascinating glimpse into the cognitive and emotional lives of cows.

When Emory University neuroscientist Gregory Berns and his wife began sustainable farming in rural Georgia, cows quickly became central to the venture—though his knowledge of them was minimal. With three miniature zebus, Berns learned cattle care firsthand while applying his scientific eye to their behavior.

Previously, he had studied dogs through neuroscience, producing two books and reshaping our understanding of canine emotions. Now, he turned that curiosity toward cows, exploring their inner worlds.

In Cowpuppy, Berns blends personal experience, accessible science, and vivid portraits of his herd—Ricky Bobby, Lucy, Ethel, and calves BB, Cricket, Princess Xena, Luna, Walker, and Texas Ranger.

Whether you're familiar with farm life or simply curious, this memoir offers fresh insight into the complexity of cows and what they can teach us.

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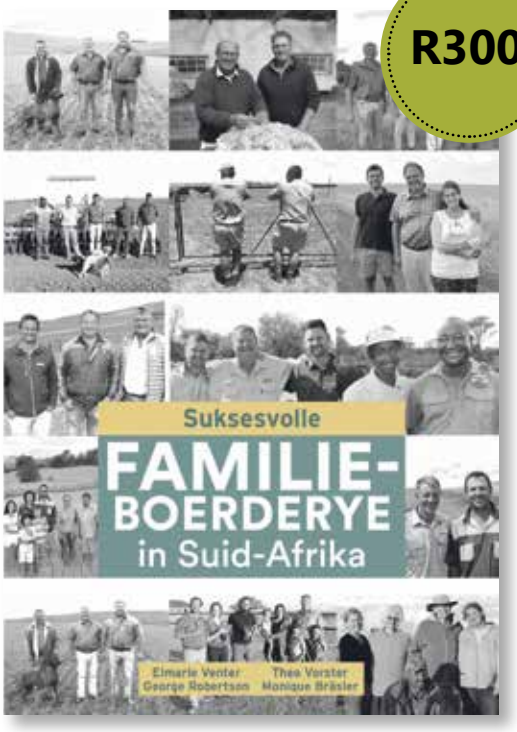

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deur Elmarie Venter, Theo Vorster, George Robertson, Monique Bräsler

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BEHIND EVERY THRIVING FARM

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This year, we would like to introduce you to Lethusani Mangali from HBH Tuli Stud

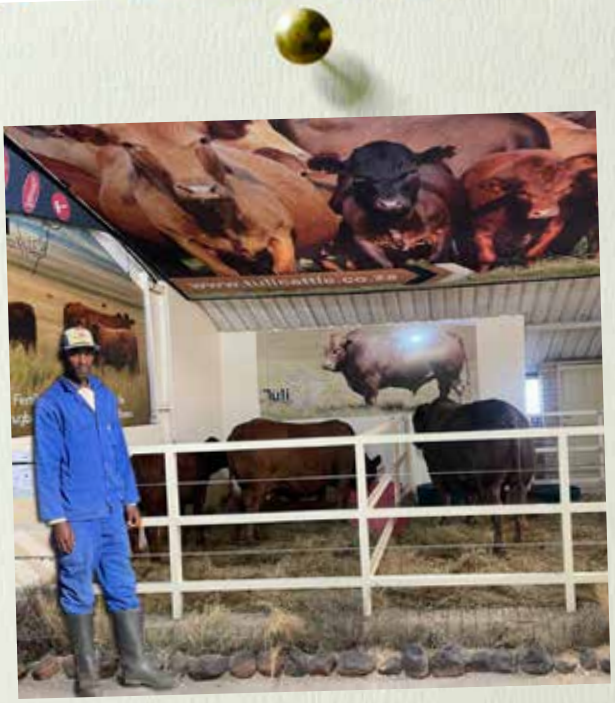
By Ed Clark & Lethusani Mangali

My name is Lethusani Mangali, I grew up on a 'veepos' in the Waschbank District of Dordrecht. At an early age I would help collect and feed the cattle with my grandfather.

My first job was at the HBH Tuli Stud where I am currently employed. I like working with cattle as they are easy care animals and one doesn't have to struggle with them. If you look carefully and attentively you can see when an animal is not well. If you want your cattle to have a good temperament you have to work peacefully with your stock and not use loud shouting and sticks when working with them. They become afraid and you lose their trust when you get impatient with them by being forceful.

We like to check the stock at least twice or even three time per week to make sure that are all healthy and present. At least one can have early warning if there is a problem. The situations that I am most weary of is when it involves something internally with the cow like a prolapse or a really difficult birth. Luckily the Tuli breed has very small calves so this situation doesn't happen often. Although we do farm commercially with Brahmans and Herefords.

A cow often tells you that she is not well, by the behaviour like being anti-social and separating from the rest of the herd, by body signs of a dry nose/or by lazy ears or by obvious loss in body condition.



Lethusani at Nampo

Tuli cattle are very hardy with excellent temperament and have longevity of live by having longer lasting teeth than other breeds. They handle the harsh winters of Dordrecht and the occasional drought and don't require being spoilt to ensure they produce their next calf. We have had cows that have been up to 18 years old. They are an intelligent breed and quickly understand the routine when working with them.

We look for functional cattle when selecting cattle, they mustn't be too tall and must have good constitution and capacity to be able to produce enough beef and a calve annually while grazing the mountains of the Stormberg, as most of the farm is mountainous. Our bull calves must be masculine, and our heifers must be feminine as they are our future.

There are lots of things we have changed and implemented on the farm since I first started working here. The water setup was mainly for sheep, but now we can run large herds of cattle in all our camps. I also really like using the RFID and Smart scale system to weigh and record the cattle. It is comforting to know the cows have put on weight since they were last weighed as the information is now available.

My favourite time of year is calving time when one sees the calves being born from the cows having been mated to specific bulls. I have my favourite cows and it is great see when they raise a "mooi" calf that turns out to be a very good bull or heifer.

There is never a boring day on the farm as every day is so different with different challenges all the time. I have been lucky to go to Nampo with our cattle and to the Bloem Show and it is always interesting to see the different breeds of cattle and sheep and all the huge machinery and equipment.

I look forward to teaching my children one day and maybe they will learn to love working with cattle particularly with Tuli cattle. ▲

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TULI GROWTH INITIATIVE: BUILDING *resilient* BEEF HERDS FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA

By Dr. Florence Nherera-Chokuda (CEO: Tuli Growth Initiative Project)

The strength of the Tuli breed lies in its ability to perform under extremely hardy climatic conditions. Across Southern Africa's dry and variable environments, Tuli cattle continue to demonstrate fertility, adaptability, and efficiency - traits that make them a dependable choice for both emerging and established farmers. The Tuli cattle breed, known for its adaptability and hardiness, has long been a symbol of resilience in Southern Africa - enduring heat, extended dry periods especially in the Karoo, and water scarcity. In many ways, the Tuli reflects the same resilience seen in the Nguni, Ankone, Landini and West African Breeds like the N'Dama and Muturu cattle and Ankole, Boran, and East African Zebu.

The Tuli Growth Initiative (TGI) builds on these strengths through investing in farmer support and practical mentorship.

Water First: The Foundation of Productivity

For many farmers, improved water access has been the turning point. Investment in pumps, pipelines, storage, and rainwater harvesting has stabilised production systems and enabled better grazing control. Reliable water reticulation systems have reduced pressure on natural resources and improved herd condition during dry periods.

Growing Herds with Purpose

Targeted support has enabled farmers to expand their herds with intention. Mike Ceza purchased additional 21 heifers and a bull. Ismail Ameen and the Hlanganani farmers invested in breeding bulls. Prudence Mniki, Collen Morodi, Puswe, Nthando, and Johny Swart are building toward 50 breeding cows, while Ismail, Mathemba, Gert Fortuin, Hlanganani, and Grancia have passed the threshold. This structured growth is improving both herd size and quality, with a focus on productive, veld-adapted cows. The Tuli's natural strengths remain central - fertility, heat tolerance, and efficiency. Through alignment with the Beef Genomics Project, farmers will be able to use performance data to guide selection. The approach remains practical for selecting bulls suited to local conditions, improving fertility and calving ease and maintain adaptability.

Veld Management in Action

Improved grazing practices are already visible across farms. Ismail Ameen (KZN) uses electric fencing to protect wetlands and manage grazing. Waka Temenga (Venterstad) subdivided camps and restored water systems after repeated damage. Nthando Thembani (Eastern Cape) installed 6 km of fencing, reducing disease risk and stock losses and Hlanganani Association (KZN) implemented rotational grazing systems. These interventions are restoring veld condition and improving carrying capacity.

Women Strengthening the Breed

Women are playing an increasingly important role in Tuli production systems. Farmers such as Prudence Mniki, Grancia Fortuin, Leah Fortuin, and Lutfiyya Ameen are actively managing herds across diverse environments - from the Karoo to the Kalahari.

Mentorship that Makes a Difference
A defining strength of TGI is the role of experienced breeders. Stud breeders including Stephen Mains-Sheard, Dave Mullins, Christo Rothmann, Ben Raath, Jim Bredenkamp, and Ed Clark have supported farmers through Bull selection, Herd management and practical record-keeping. Training such as "Know Your Breed" and veld management has further strengthened farmer skills.

> ***The strength of the Tuli breed lies in its ability to perform under extremely hardy climatic conditions.***

Mentorship and Institutional Collaboration

Equally important are partnerships with key industry bodies. Collaboration with the Tuli Society and organisations such as SA Studbook, the Livestock Registration Federation, ARC-Kaonafatso ya Dikgomo (KyD) project and the Milk Producers Organization on reproductive technologies are supporting more accurate animal recording and performance tracking, genetic evaluation and breed improvement and farmer training and capacity building.

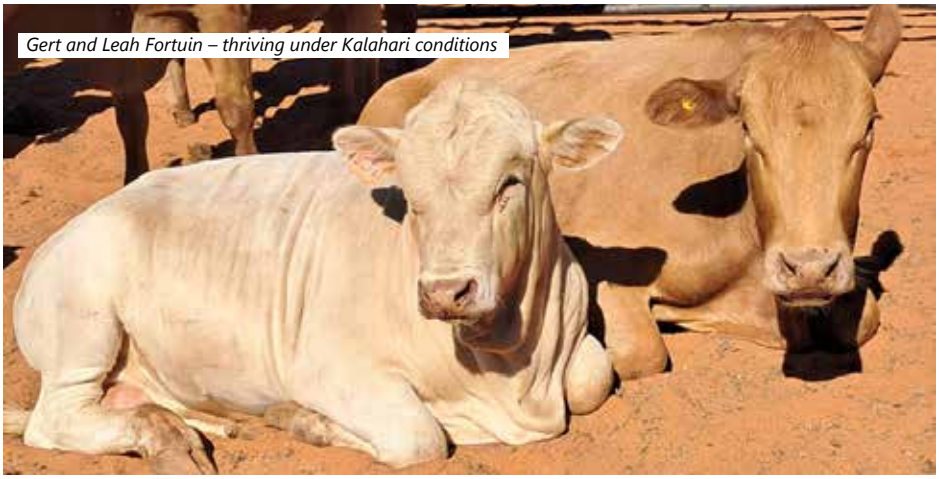
Animal Health and Market Realities

TGI herds have maintained strong health, with no reported cases of Foot-and-Mouth Disease - reflecting disciplined biosecurity practices. However, external challenges, including disease-related movement restrictions and market disruptions in Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal, have affected sales. Despite this all farmers recorded sales in 2025, trading continues into 2026 and herd growth remains on track.→

Ismail Ameen – integrating grazing management, conservation and religion

Moses Mniki setting up a weighing platform and scale

Waka Temenga and family – Venterstad



Gert and Leah Fortuin – thriving under Kalahari conditions

Grancia Fortuin – Free State Production System

Collen Morodi's calves – demonstrating tick resistance

New loading ramp for Nthando Thembani and Mathemba Maphuma in the Eastern Cape

Looking Ahead

As climate variability increases, demand for adaptable, efficient cattle will continue to grow and strategic policy messages
are imperative.

Strategic Policy messages

1. Implementation of the One Health approach - Prioritise the eradication Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD),

2. Better and funded public-private partnerships investment in beef cattle value chain development primarily feed systems, animal health, and genetics

3. Harmonise regional standards and implementation of digital traceability to move livestock genetic resources across borders

4. Access to adaptation funds and carbon markets to reward TGI sustainable rangeland management and

5. Digital and financial inclusion of youth and women. The TGI has empowered women farmers and youth through the FREF Internship program. ▲

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REGENERATION IN ACTION: AN *inspiring* STORY OF FARMING WITH TULI CATTLE

By Fidelis Zvomuya - Journalist

It is a crisp morning in Newcastle in northern KwaZulu-Natal; the air smells of damp earth and the promise of a new day. Standing by the paddock on his family farm, 34-year-old Ismail Ameen surveys the horizon. His prized Tuli cattle, with their rich red-brown coats gleaming in the early sun, graze contentedly. To Ismael, these animals are far more than livestock – they are his legacy, his passion, and his promise for a sustainable future.

Born into a lineage of farmers, Ismael's journey has been anything but typical. From his grandfather's tales of resilient indigenous cattle to the trials of rebuilding a farm in an era of climate unpredictability, his story weaves a narrative of heritage, perseverance and innovation.

"Farming is not just about producing food; it's about respecting the land," he says, his voice firm with conviction. This philosophy, instilled by his parents and grandparents, underpins every decision made on his farm, named iFarm. A third-generation farmer, Ismail recalls the lessons imparted by his parents, Shabeer and Zarina Ameen: a deep reverence for the environment, the value of community, and resilience to weather the many storms that come with farming.

A Facebook post and a family legacy

Ismael's love for Tuli cattle began unexpectedly while scrolling through Facebook. "I saw a post about Tuli cattle in Bronkhorstspruit," he recalls with a nostalgic smile. "It immediately reminded me of my grandfather's fascination with the breed. I didn't think twice about persuading my father to join me on a trip to see them." That visit marked a turning point. They returned to the farm with nine animals – seven cows, a heifer and a bull – which became the foundation of Ismael's Tuli herd. "These cattle didn't just survive the harsh winter – they thrived," he says. "I knew I had found something extraordinary."

Why Tuli cattle?

Tuli cattle, native to Zimbabwe, are no ordinary breed. Renowned for their resilience, fertility and adaptability, they thrive in tough conditions with minimal maintenance. "These animals are built for Africa," Ismael says. "Their beef quality is exceptional – finely marbled, tender, and sought after in the market."

But for Ismael, Tuli cattle represent more than profitability. "They're a living testament to our region's agricultural legacy," he says. By focusing on this indigenous breed, he is preserving genetic diversity while promoting sustainable farming practices.

iFarm: A vision for regenerative agriculture

At the heart of Ismael's philosophy lies iFarm, his family-run operation dedicated to regenerative farming. "Our focus is on soil health, biodiversity and ecosystem services," he says. "The cattle are an integral part of a larger, balanced ecosystem. We work to ensure the land benefits as much as we do."

In a country facing increasing climate challenges, hardy, low-maintenance and disease-resistant breeds like the Tuli are proving invaluable. "Every decision we make is data-driven," Ismael says. "It's not just about tradition; it's about science and sustainability working together."

A partner in farming

Behind many a great farmer is a partner who is equally remarkable. For Ismael, that person is his wife, Lutfiyya. At only 29, she balances her career as a speech-language therapist with an active role on the farm. "Despite having no background in farming, she's jumped in with both feet," Ismael says. From maintaining meticulous cattle records to offering emotional support during tough times, Lutfiyya has been integral to iFarm's success.

"She is my biggest supporter," Ismael adds with a smile. "Her daily encouragement reminds me to stay focused and grounded."

→

Florence Neherere-Chokuda and Ismael Ameen in conversation on the farm.

Dave Marais sharing practical advice.

Challenges and triumphs

Like many other farmers, Ismael has faced his share of challenges, from droughts to fluctuating markets and the ever-present threat of climate change. Yet he remains resolute. "My proudest moment?" he reflects. "Watching my first herd of Tuli cattle thrive. It was a powerful reminder of what hard work and faith can achieve."

Ismael is convinced that livestock farming holds the key to addressing South Africa's twin crises of food security and climate change. "When done responsibly, cattle farming improves soil fertility, promotes biodiversity, and provides communities with high-quality protein."

Tuli cattle, in particular, offer significant advantages: their adaptability results in lower feed costs, and their higher fertility rate and disease resistance reduce veterinary expenses. "They're the future of sustainable livestock farming."

Looking ahead

2025 marked a major milestone for Ismael: registering as an official Tuli cattle breeder. "It's the next step in our journey," he says. With this designation, iFarm will play a crucial role in preserving the Tuli breed and inspiring the next generation of farmers.

> ***Farming isn't just a career – it's a calling. It's about leaving the land better than you found it.***

Empowering farmers: The Tuli Growth Initiative

Ismael's work is part of the Tuli Growth Initiative, supported by the FirstRand Empowerment Foundation (FREF). Last year, a FREF team visited iFarm and the Hlanganani Stud Group in Mooi River to witness first-hand the transformative impact of their investment.

"Through our agri-systems portfolio, we're not just funding projects; we're also building a sustainable future for South Africa," says FREF project manager Nokulunga Gasa.

Founded in 2021, FREF identified agriculture as a critical sector for reducing poverty and inequality. Its initiatives focus on empowering black farmers, promoting climate-resilient farming practices and bolstering food security.

One standout initiative is the Tuli Growth Initiative, which aims to commercialise black-owned Tuli cattle farms while preserving this indigenous breed.

Nokulunga highlights the collaborative spirit that drives the initiative's success: "'Hlanganani' means 'come together', and that's exactly what these farmers have done. They've pooled resources and knowledge to create something remarkable."

A brighter tomorrow

Through its R200 million investment in 11 organisations, FREF is transforming South Africa's agricultural landscape. From the Vine Academy, which supports black raisin farmers, to the Siyazisiza Trust, which advances rural food security, these projects showcase the power of partnerships in driving meaningful change.

"Farming is more than profits – it's about people, potential and a better tomorrow," Nokulunga says.

For Ismael, Lutfiyya and iFarm, the journey is just beginning. Their work stands as a powerful testament to resilience, passion and the transformative potential of sustainable agriculture. ▲

Tuli GROWTH INITIATIVE

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A RESEARCH-STYLE STUDY OF TULI CATTLE:

ADAPTATION, PRODUCTIVITY AND ROLE IN SUSTAINABLE BEEF PRODUCTION

By Andrew Webster

Abstract

Tuli cattle are an indigenous African beef cattle breed recognised for their adaptability, fertility, and efficiency in extensive grazing systems.

Developed in the mid 20th century in Zimbabwe, the breed originates from ancient Sanga cattle that evolved under harsh environmental conditions in southern Africa.

This paper examines the historical development, genetic background, physical characteristics, productivity, and role of Tuli cattle in modern beef production systems. The findings highlight the breed's exceptional adaptation to heat, disease pressure, and low-quality grazing, making it particularly valuable in sustainable livestock production in regions such as South Africa, Australia, and the United States.

Introduction

Indigenous cattle breeds play an important role in global livestock production, particularly in environments where climate, disease pressure, and limited feed resources challenge productivity. Among these breeds, Tuli cattle have emerged as one of the most successful examples of selective breeding from locally adapted African cattle.

Originally developed from Sanga-type cattle in southern Africa, Tuli cattle are valued for their reproductive efficiency, adaptability to harsh climates, and ability to produce quality beef under extensive grazing conditions.

The breed has gained international recognition and has been exported to several countries where heat tolerance and grazing efficiency are important production traits.

The objective of this study is to review the development, biological characteristics, and production performance of Tuli cattle and to evaluate their role in modern sustainable beef production systems.

Historical Development of the Breed

Origins in Southern Africa

The genetic foundation of Tuli cattle lies within the Sanga cattle group, a type of African cattle believed to have originated from ancient crossbreeding between Bos taurus and Bos indicus populations thousands of years ago.

Sanga cattle developed natural adaptations to the African environment, including:

- Heat tolerance
- Parasite resistance
- Ability to survive on sparse grazing

These characteristics formed the genetic base from which the Tuli breed was later developed.

Foto: Netta van Niekerk

Development of the Modern Breed
The modern Tuli breed was established in the 1940s at a government breeding station in the Tuli Block of Zimbabwe. Agricultural researcher Len Harvey led a breeding program aimed at improving indigenous cattle through careful selection rather than crossbreeding with imported European breeds.

Animals were selected based on:
- Fertility
- Adaptability
- Growth performance
- Coat colour and uniformity

Through systematic selection, a stable and productive breed known as the Tuli was established.

Breed Characteristics

Physical Characteristics
Tuli cattle are medium-framed beef cattle with physical traits typical of Sanga breeds.

Common characteristics include:
- Coat colours ranging from golden yellow to reddish brown
- Smooth and short hair coat
- Small cervico-thoracic hump
- Strong legs and durable hooves
- Often naturally polled

Adult weight ranges typically include:
- Mature Bulls
  750–850 kg
- Mature Cows
  400–500 kg

Their moderate size contributes to efficient grazing and lower nutritional requirements compared with larger European beef breeds.

Environmental Adaptation

Heat Tolerance
One of the defining features of Tuli cattle is their ability to tolerate high environmental temperatures. Physiological adaptations include efficient thermoregulation, smooth hair coats, and metabolic efficiency under heat stress.

This adaptation allows the breed to maintain productivity in hot climates where many temperate breeds experience reduced fertility and growth.

Resistance to Parasites and Disease
Indigenous cattle breeds have evolved resistance to parasites and endemic diseases common in tropical environments. Tuli cattle demonstrate relatively strong tolerance to tick infestations and certain internal parasites, reducing the need for chemical treatments and lowering production costs.

Grazing Efficiency
Tuli cattle have excellent grazing behavior and are capable of walking long distances in search of forage. They efficiently convert low-quality veld grazing into body weight and maintain good condition during seasonal feed shortages.

This trait is particularly valuable in extensive livestock systems across southern Africa.

Reproductive Performance

Fertility and Reproductive Efficiency

Reproductive efficiency is considered one of the most valuable traits of the Tuli breed.

Research and field observations indicate that Tuli cattle display:
- High conception rates
- Early puberty
- Short calving intervals
- High calf survival rates

These factors contribute significantly to herd productivity and profitability.

Maternal Ability
Tuli cows are widely recognised for their strong maternal instincts and good milk production relative to their body size. Calves generally exhibit strong vigor at birth and good early growth rates.

Ease of Calving
Due to moderate birth weights and pelvic structure, calving difficulties are rare. This trait is particularly beneficial in extensive systems where supervision during calving may be limited.

Growth Performance and Beef Production

Growth Rates
While Tuli cattle may not grow as rapidly as specialized European beef breeds under intensive feeding systems, they perform exceptionally well under grazing conditions.

Growth advantages include:
- Efficient feed conversion
- Moderate but consistent weight gain
- Ability to maintain growth on natural forage

Carcass and Meat Quality
Carcass characteristics of Tuli cattle include:
- Moderate carcass weight
- Good dressing percentages
- Acceptable meat tenderness

Studies comparing Sanga and Zebu cattle have shown that Sanga-derived breeds such as Tuli can produce beef with desirable eating quality and adequate carcass composition.

Role in Crossbreeding Programs

Tuli cattle have been widely used in crossbreeding systems worldwide.

The breed contributes several valuable traits to crossbred offspring:
- Heat tolerance
- Fertility
- Adaptability to harsh environments
- Hybrid vigor

Crosses with European breeds can produce animals that combine growth performance with environmental resilience.

Global Distribution

Although originally developed in southern Africa, Tuli cattle have been exported to several countries. Significant populations exist in:
- South Africa
- Australia
- United States
- Argentina
- Mexico

The breed was introduced internationally using embryo transfer technology to prevent the spread of African livestock diseases. →

Foto: Accacia Tuli Stoet

Importance for Sustainable Livestock Production

Modern livestock production faces challenges including climate change, feed shortages, and increasing disease pressure. Breeds such as the Tuli provide valuable genetic resources for addressing these challenges.

Their advantages include:
- Adaptation to harsh environments
- Low input requirements
- Efficient use of natural grazing
- Reliable reproductive performance

These traits make Tuli cattle well suited for sustainable beef production systems.

Conclusion

Tuli cattle represent one of southern Africa's most successful indigenous beef breeds. Developed through selective breeding of Sanga cattle in Zimbabwe, the breed combines environmental adaptability, reproductive efficiency, and practical beef production characteristics.

Their ability to perform under extensive grazing conditions has made them valuable not only in Africa but also in other warm regions around the world. As global livestock systems increasingly prioritise sustainability and resilience, the genetic traits of the Tuli breed will likely play an increasingly important role in future cattle breeding programs. ▲

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GANNA tuli's

GANNA BOERDERY

Michiel van Niekerk
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Epos: giel@isat.co.za

GA 160115

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ACCOLADES

2025 ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

Dr Bobby van der Westhuizen presents the trophy to Christo Rothmann.

TULI HERD OF THE YEAR

A REMARKABLE FOUR-PEAT

Bushman's Mountain Tuli Stud once again proved its excellence at the annual gala in Bloemfontein, taking home the Tuli Herd of the Year title for an impressive fourth year in a row.

The award is based on the SA Studbook Elite Herd evaluation system, where performance is measured across three equally weighted components: accurate data recording, fertility performance (including days since last calving), and the overall average value of the cows in the herd.

What an achievement - well done, Christo!

Tuli herd with the most awards notified on Logix

WINNER **HBH Tuli Stud** - Ed Clark

Tuli herd with the highest percentage of bulls born

(That participated in a farm growth test)

WINNER **Tiptree Tulis** - Stephen Mains-Sheard (100% - 18 bulls)
Bloodline Tulis - Zippo Lambrecht (100% - 9 bulls)

Best cow value (herds with less than 100 female animals)

Calculation will be based on all female animals in the herd, two years and older.

1ST **Profyt Tuli Stud** - Abel Rautenbach
2ND **Bona Bona Tuli Stud** - MJ Ernst
3RD **Carroll Tuli Stud** - Herlu Rautenbach

Best cow value (herds with 100 and more female animals)

Calculation will be based on all female animals in the herd, two years and older.

1ST **Nonnie Tuli Stud** - Cornelis Rautenbach
2ND **Donkerhoek Tuli Stud** - Ben Raath
3RD **Bushman's Mountain Tuli Stud** - Christo Rothmann

Best fertility value (herds with less than 100 female animals)

Calculation will be based on all female animals in the herd, two years and older.

1ST **Rentz Tuli Stud** - Petrus Engelbrecht
2ND **Vivi Tuli Stud** - Vivien Peche
3RD **Zweibach Tuli Stud** - Dr Coenraad Slabber

Best fertility value (herds with 100 and more female animals)

Calculation will be based on all female animals in the herd, two years and older.

1ST **Langlyf Tuli Stud** - Albie Rautenbach
2ND **Nonnie Tuli Stud** - Cornelis Rautenbach
3RD **HBH Tuli Stud** - Ed Clark

Ed Clark receives his award from Dr Bobby van der Westhuizen.

Zippo Lambrecht (left) and Stephen Mains-Sheard (right) with Dr Bobby van der Westhuizen.

Christo Rothmann, Ben Raath, Werner Gouws, Marietjie Campbell, Teresa Rust, Stephen Mains-Sheard, Jim Bredenkamp, and Ed Clark received 2024/25 service certificates from the Society.

Fotos: Netta van Niekerk

ARC NATIONAL ELITE COW

(Sponsored by Farmer's Weekly)

GA 16115, a Tuli cow from Giel van Niekerk's Ganna Aar Stud, was named breed winner. At 9 years of age, she has delivered 7 calves and demonstrates outstanding reproductive efficiency, reflected in an average intercalving period of 363 days.

For 47 years running, the outcome has been driven purely by the proven performance of the cows themselves. Each year, females from across all breeds compete, but only one per breed rises above the rest to be crowned the top cow.

GA 16115
Ganna Tuli Stoet

ARC NATIONAL BEEF CATTLE IMPROVEMENT HERD OF THE YEAR

(Sponsored by Plaas Media and Stockfarm Magazine)

Taking the title of 2025 ARC National Beef Cattle Improvement Herd of the Year is Christo Rothmann from Bushman's Mountain Tuli Stud.

Bushman's Mountain Tuli Stud

Entry into this distinguished category requires breeders to exhibit outstanding performance across several critical herd traits. The ARC National Beef Cattle Improvement Herd of the Year award is recognised as one of the most respected accolades in the industry. Assessment is grounded in quantifiable herd performance criteria, including:

- Reproductive efficiency of the herd.
- Participation in and application of performance testing for herd improvement.
- Cow efficiency (including post-weaning performance).
- Completeness and accuracy of performance records.
- Cow herd size (minimum of 50 cows).
- Calving performance.
- Genetic progress and trends within the herd.
- Use of modern, science-based breeding techniques

VLEISSENTRAAL SA STUD BOOK ELITE BULL GROWTH TEST CLASS

ADM 230042 a bull from Dave Mullins's Avondale Tuli Stud, was nominted to represent the Tuli breed at the 14th Vleissentraal SA Stud Book Elite Bull Growth Test Class for Phase C & D tested bulls.

Bulls that qualify, on achievements, in central and farm growth tests are nominated through the Tuli Cattle Breeders Society and participates in this competition.

The purpose of this test class is to bring the right perspective to a valuable contribution in performance testing and to advance the correct and balanced use of performance data in the show ring.

ADM 230042
Avondale Tulis

TRAILBLAZER / LOGIX REGIONAL AWARDS 2025

The Beef Cattle Logix winners were crowned on 30 October 2025, following presentations by a number of experts on topics such as biosecurity, meat markets, risk management, ethical data analysis, and traceability. Congratulations to each and every recipient on their awards. Thank you to all breeders who diligently record their animals' data for the benefit of the livestock industry as a whole. Here are 2025's trailblazers:

DOUBLE GOLD

Ben Raath - Donkerhoek Tuli Stud
Christo Rothmann - Bushman's Mountain Tuli Stud

GOLD

HBH Tuli Stud - Ed Clark
Malu Tuli Stud Helena Malherbe
Tiptree Tuli Stud - Stephen Mains-Sheard

SILVER

Acacia Mountain Tuli Stud - Colin Raath
Avondale Tuli Stud - Dave Mullins
Bloodline Tuli Stud - Zippo Lambrecht
Carroll Tuli Stud - Herlu Rautenbach
Glen Heath Tuli Stud - Gordon Gilfillan
Gouwsberg Tuli Stud - Werner Gouws
Langlyf Tuli Stud - Albie Rautenbach
Nonnie Tuli Stud - Cornelis Rautenbach
Red Grass Valley - Theodor Oosthuizen
Wolhaarkop - Jim Bredenkamp

BRONZE

Bona Bona - MJ Ernst
Casman Tuli Stud - Casper Kriel
Lekkerdroom Tuli Stud - Lucas Robertson
Orangeview Tuli Stud - Willem Pretorius
Shashi Tuli Stud - Margi Harvey, Russel & Joanne Kruger

MERIT

Brenhindy Tuli Stud - De Wet Human
Ganna Tuli Stud - Giel van Niekerk
Profyt Tuli Stud - Abel Rautenbach

SA STUD BOOK ELITE PLATINUM COW

DKH 1631
Acacia Mountain Tulis

We are delighted to congratulate Colin Raath of Acacia Mountain Tuli Stud on the remarkable achievement of his cow, DKH16031, being recognised as one of SA Stud Book's Elite Platinum cows in this year's National Elite awards. She was bred from SW13 052, a cow that Colin bought from the late Stepan Weltz. SW13 052 was in calf, from HBH12 043, a Buffel son.

DKH16 031 has an exceptional set of figures:
ICP 358
Cow value 148
Heifer fertility index 147
Eye muscle area 126
Calve growth index 115

This honor is reserved for one cow per breed, selected based on outstanding production, reproduction, and genetic merit as evaluated through the Logix Beef database. Such an accomplishment is truly commendable.

Alpha & Omega

TOMORROW'S NEWS TODAY

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AM9-25

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AUCTION RESULTS

2025

NEXT GEN TULI GROUP — *14 February 2025*

	Average price	*Highest price*
Registered bulls	R42 250	R60 000
Registered heifers	R23 000	R23 000
Registered heifers (pregnant)	R20 000	R23 000
Registered cow	R21 000	R23 000
Registered cow & calf	R27 818	R64 000
Registered cows (pregnant)	R19 750	R22 000
3-in-1 Cow & calf	R24 000	R24 000
Commercial bulls	R30 000	R30 000
Commercial cow & calf	R19 923	R22 000
Commercial 3-in-1 cow & calf	R22 000	R22 000
Commercial cows (pregnant)	R16 500	R17 500
Commercial heifers (pregnant)	R20 095	R22 500
Commercial heifers	R13 740	R17 000

Lot 22 sold for R64 000 to Jim Bredenkamp of Wolhaarkop Tuli's

TULI NATIONAL OPEN — *1 May 2025*

	Average price	*Highest price*
Registered bulls	R50 000	R50 000
Registered heifers	R17 000	R22 000
Registered heifers (pregnant)	R23 700	R32 000
Registered cows (pregnant)	R21 000	R25 000
3-in-1 Cow & calf	R22 250	R25 000

ALPHA & OMEGA — *21 May 2025*

	Average price	*Highest price*
Registered bulls	R42 900	R90 000
Registered heifers (pregnant)	R21 400	N/A
3-in-1 Cow & calf	R24 562	N/A
Commercial cows (pregnant)	R16 412	N/A

LANGLYF & NONNIE — *3 June 2025*

	Average price	*Highest price*
Registered bulls	R101 111	R240 000
Registered cows	R23 273	R38 000
Registered heifers	R29 063	R34 000
Commercial bulls	R50 313	R85 000
Commercial cow (pregnant)	R22 526	R23 000

Most expensive Bull R20 208 sold to Theodor Oosthuizen of Red Grass Valley Tulis

HBH — *27 August 2025*

	Average price	*Highest price*
Registered bulls	R65 000	R165 000
Registered cows (pregnant)	R19 250	R21 500
Registered heifers	R14 000	R14 000

Lot 34 HBH 230005, achieved a top price of R165 000

CASMAN

3 September 2025

	Average price	*Highest price*
Registered bulls	R48 500	R70 000
Registered cows (pregnant)	R17 000	R17 000
Registered heifers	R12 900	R14 500
Registered heifers (pregnant)	R17 500	R19 000
Commercial bulls	R47 500	R65 000
Commercial cows (pregnant)	R13 200	R17 000
Commercial heifers	R12 000	R12 000
Commercial heifers (pregnant)	R16 500	R16 500

Most expensive Bull CHK18-210 sold to Ed Clark of HBH Tulis

DONKERHOEK

11 September 2025

	Average price	*Highest price*
Registered bulls	R56 579	R120 000
Registered heifer (pregnant)	R24 000	R24 000
Registered heifer	R19 604	R42 000
Commercial cows (pregnant)	R17 000	R18 500
Commercial heifer	R13 000	R13 000

TIP TREE & AVONDALE

16 September 2025

	Average price	*Highest price*
Registered bulls	R69 630	R115 000
Registered heifer	R14 500	R16 000
Registered heifer (pregnant)	R19 000	R24 000
Registered cows (pregnant)	R18 833	R18 000
Registered cow & calf	R15 000	R15 000
Commercial heifer	R9 250	R10 250
Commercial heifer (pregnant)	R16 094	R17 500
Commercial cow (pregnant)	R13 400	R14 000
Commercial cow & calf	R15 909	R17 000
3-in-1 Cow & calf	R16 500	R16 500

GLEN HEATH

24 September 2025

	Average price	*Highest price*
Registered bulls	R52 353	R95 000
Registered cows (pregnant)	R16 333	R17 000
Open heifers	R15 000	R17 000
Commercial cows (pregnant)	R17 700	R19 000

AM180079 sold to Ben Raath from Donkerhoek at Go West auction

GO WEST

17 October 2025

	Average price	*Highest price*
Registered bulls	R60 909	R180 000
Registered cows	R24 000	R24 000
Registered cows (pregnant)	R21 200	R22 000
Registered heifers (pregnant)	R21 400	R28 000
Registered heifers	R19 900	R32 000
Commercial cow (pregnant)	R16 636	R18 000
Commercial heifer (pregnant)	R15 978	R17 500
Commercial cow & calf	R18 167	R18 500
Heifers	R12 250	R13 250
Heifers (pregnant)	R16 250	R16 500

Top price bull TT 2368 sold to Conrad Rautenbach from Zimbabwe

WILD ROCK & GUESTS

7 November 2025

	Average price	*Highest price*
Commercial bulls	R33 600	R47 000
Commercial cow & calf	R17 594	R18 000
Commercial heifers	R14 113	R16 000
Cows (pregnant)	R16 200	R17 000
Heifers (pregnant)	R17 441	R18 000

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South Africa

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SEDERT 1982

TULI

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