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NOVEMBER 2008

AGRA CO-OPERATIVE LTD MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER
AGRA KOÖPERATIEF BPK SE LEDE NUUSBRIEF

AGRA NEWS

NAMIBIË SE NUWE ARBEIDSWET (NO. 11 VAN 2007)[1], HOE RAAK DIT DIE PRODUSENT

Die nuwe Arbeidswet (No. 11 van 2007) is op 12 Desember 2007 deur die Staatspresident onderteken en op 31 Desember 2007 in die Staatskoerant gepubliseer. Alhoewel die Wet reeds volgens Goewermentskennisgewing No. 236 afgekondig is, sal die datum van implementering deur die Minister in die Staatskoerant afgekondig word.

Die nuwe Wet maak voorsiening dat die bepalings stuk-stuk geïmplimenteer kan word op verskillende datums. Die datum van 01 November 2008 is geoormerk vir die implementering van die nuwe Arbeidswet. Dit is egter nie duidelik of die volledige Wet, of net sekere van die bepalings daarvan, op 01 November 2008 in werking gaan tree nie. In laasgenoemde geval (stuk-stuk implementering) sal die huidige Arbeidswet (No. 6 van 1992) steeds van krag bly behalwe vir die bepalings daarin wat vervang gaan word.

Die Ministerie van Arbeid het reeds in 1998 'n projek van stapel gestuur om die effektiwiteit van die huidige Arbeidswet (No. 6 van 1992) te ondersoek. Die resultaat hiervan was die afkondiging van 'n nuwe Arbeidswet in 2004 (No. 15 van 2004). Hierdie Wet kon egter nie volledig geïmplementeer word nie weens inherente tegniese tekortkominge.

Dit het gelei tot 'n totale tegniese hersiening van die Arbeidswet in 2005. Na 'n proses van konsultasie is 'n nuwe Arbeidswet (No. 11 van 2007) uiteindelik aanvaar en afgekondig. Alhoewel die beginsels van die nuwe Wet ooreenstem met die huidige Wet, asook die bepalings van Wet No. 15 van 2004, is daar tog omvattende veranderinge wat veral op landbouprodusente as werkgewers van toepassing is. Van die belangrikste waarop gelet moet word, is die volgende:

Definisie van basiese salaris ("basic wage"): In die nuwe Wet word 'n basiese salaris gedefineer as die vergoeding in geld-terme insluitend die kontantwaarde van enige in natura vergoeding ("cash equivalent of payment in kind"). Hierdie verandering gaan 'n invloed hê op die berekening van vergoeding ten opsigte van oortydbetalings, kraamverlof, uittreelone ("severence pay") en gepaardgaande verlofuitbetalings.

Bepaling van vergoeding en basiese salaris: Die nuwe Wet maak voorsiening vir betaling op 'n uurlikse, daaglikse, weeklikse, tweeweeklikse en maandelikse basis. Indien 'n wernemer vergoed word op 'n basis anders as tyd gewerk, word die vergoeding bereken op 'n weeklikse basis (Tabel 1 in die nuwe Wet). In die nuwe Wet word slegs 'n werknemer ("employee") gedefineer en nie meer los werkers of stukwerkers nie (dit kan 'n invloed hê op werkerregistrasie by die Social Security Commission sodra die nuwe Wet geïmplementeer word).

Jaarlikse verlof: Die nuwe Arbeidswet bepaal dat 'n werknemer wat ses dae per week werk, geregtig is op 'n minimum van 24 aaneenlopende werksdae (vakansiedae uitgesluit indien dit op 'n normale werksdag val) as jaarlikse verlof teen volle betaling. Hierdie verlof moet toegestaan word binne vier maande na die einde van 'n verlofsiklus (die tydperk mag egter verleng word na ses maande na die einde van 'n verlofsiklus indien die werkgewer en werknemer skriftelik daartoe ooreenkom).

Die implikasie hiervan is dat werknemers nie hul verlofdae mag ophoop ad infinitum nie, maar dat die verlofdae gebruik moet word binne die voorgenoemde tydperke. Sou 'n werknemer dus volgens eie keuse nie van hierdie verlof gebruikmaak binne die voorgeskrewe tydperke nie, gaan sodanige opgehoopte verlof verbeur word.

Werknemers mag op eie versoek aansoek doen vir geleentheidsverlof teen volle betaling deur die loop van 'n jaar. Indien toegestaan, mag die werkgewer sodanige verlof aftrek van die totale jaarlikse verlof waarop die werknemer geregtig is. Werkgewers mag nie verlof uitbetaal ten einde werknemers in aktiewe diens te hou nie (verlofuitbetalings kom slegs ter sprake by diensbeëindiging).

Siekverlof: Alhoewel die nuwe Wet voorsiening maak dat 'n mediese sertifikaat aangevra mag word na 'n afwesigheid van twee aaneenlopende dae voordat verdere vergoeding betaal word, is dit nie meer 'n vereiste dat die sertifikaat deur 'n mediese dokter uitgereik word nie. In die nuwe Wet word verwys na 'n mediese praktisyn wat insluit enige persone geregistreer in terme van die Mediese en Tandheelkundige Beroepswet (No. 10 van 2004), asook persone wat geregistreer is as verpleegkundige in terme van die Verpleegkunde Wet (No. 8 van 2004). Hierdie bepaling geld ook ten opsigte van kraamverlof.

Deernisverlof ("compassionate leave"): Die nuwe Wet bepaal dat elke werker geregtig is op vyf werksdae deernisverlof per jaar teen volle vergoeding. Dit geld in gevalle van dood of ernstige siekte in die familie ten opsigte van 'n biologiese of aangenome kind, gade, ouers, skoonouers, grootouers, broer of suster van die werknemer. Volgens die nuwe Wet moet die Minister die voorwaardes vir aansoek om deernisverlof en die inligting nodig om so 'n aansoek te staaf, voorskryf.

Kraamverlof: In die nuwe Wet is 'n vrou geregtig op 12 weke kraamverlof (vier weke voor bevalling en agt weke na bevalling) indien sy vir ten minste ses maande aaneenlopend/voltyds in diens was. Die vrou (as werknemer)

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moet 'n mediese sertifikaat, uitgereik deur 'n mediese praktisyn, voorlê wat aandui die verwagte datum van bevalling voordat kraamverlof toegestaan kan word. Daarna moet sy ook 'n mediese sertifikaat, uitgereik deur 'n mediese praktisyn, voorlê sodra sy weer in diens tree (na agt weke) wat die spesifieke dag van die bevalling aandui.

Vir alle praktiese doeleindes mag 'n vrou nie tydens haar kraamverlof afgedank word nie. Gedurende haar kraamverlof is die vrou steeds geregtig op volle betaling, uitgesluit haar basiese salaris, wat sy van die 'Social Security Commission' moet eis. Let weer op die definisie van 'n basiese salaris ("basic wage").

Indien daar komplikasies is tydens die swangerskap of geboorte, mag 'n vrou se kraamverlof verleng word met een maand, of indien haar beskikbare siekverlof meer is as 'n maand, tot die aantal dae wat 'n maand oorskry. In hierdie geval moet 'n mediese praktisyn die diagnose sertifiseer. Sodanige kraamverlof moet geneem word onmiddellik voor of onmiddellik na die vrou se toegestaande kraamverlof.

Voorsiening van behuising vs diensbeëindiging: Volgens die nuwe Arbeidswet moet werknemers van wie verwag word om op 'n plaas te bly ("an employee who lives on agricultural land"), van voldoende behuising, wat insluit sanitêre- en waterfasiliteite, voorsien word. Voorts moet die werknemer toegelaat word om lewende hawe aan te hou en om die grond te bewerk ten einde in die familie se bestaansbehoeftes te voorsien, of om (in terme van 'n ooreenkoms met die werknemer) voldoende voedsel te ontvang om in die familie se bestaansbehoefte te voorsien, of om die werknemer 'n addisionele bedrag te betaal om so 'n doelwit te bereik.

Die nuwe Arbeidswet bepaal dat indien 'n werknemer (volgens voorvermelde voorwaardes) se diens beëindig word, is dit die plig van die werkgewer om sodanige werknemer 'n drie maande skriftelike kennisgewing te gee om die behuising te ontruim.

In so 'n geval, sou die werknemer binne 30 dae vanaf datum van kennisgewing van diensbeëindiging 'n klag van onregverdige ontslag aanteken by die Arbeidskommissaris, mag die werknemer aanbly tot tyd en wyl daar 'n uitslag rakende die dispuut is.

Voorkoming en oplossing van arbeidsdispute: Die nuwe Wet volg 'n ander roete ten opsigte van arbeidsdispute. Enige dispuut rakende die fundamentele regte volgens die nuwe Arbeidswet, veral Hoofstuk 5 (Verbod op diskriminasie en seksuele teistering) en Hoofstuk 6 (Vryheid van assosiasie) of ander regte volgens Hoofstuk 3 van die Konstitusie ("Bill of Rights") kan skriftelik aan die Arbeidskommissaris gerig word.

Indien die dispuut handel oor beweerde diskriminasie, dan is versoening ("conciliation") die eerste stap om dit op te los. Indien die versoeningspoging faal, dan volg 'n proses van skeidsregterlike beslissing ("arbitration"). Dispute oor fundamentele regte is direk aan laasgenoemde proses onderworpe. Partye tot 'n dispuut kan ook skriftelik instem tot 'n privaat skeidsregterlike beslissing ("private arbitration").

Rekordhouding: Die nuwe Wet is voorskriftelik ten opsigte van rekordhouding van arbeidsaangeleenthede en dat arbeidsrekords vir 'n aktiewe periode van vyf jaar gehou moet word. Gegewe al die verwagte veranderinge sodra die nuwe Wet in werking tree, sal dit wys wees om deeglike en volledige rekords te hou van alle arbeidsaangeleenthede ten einde aan die vereistes van die nuwe Wet te voldoen en om onnodige vertragings ten tye van dispute te vermy.

Vir meer inligting rakende die nuwe Arbeidswet, skakel die Landbouwerkgewersvereniging: (061) 23 7838. 'n Publikasie oor die nuwe Arbeidswet (Understanding Namibia's Labour Law: A Guide to the Labour Act No. 11 of 2007) is verkrygbaar by die Labour Resource and Research Institute (LaRRI): (061) 21 2044.

Wallie Roux

(Endnotes)

1 Inligting verskaf deur die Labour Resource and Research Institute (LaRRI) en die Landbouwerkgewersvereniging.

REDAKSIONEEL

01 November 2008 is geoormerk vir die implimenteering van die nuwe Arbeidswet. Dit is egter nie duidelik of die volledige Wet of net sekere van die bepalings daarvan op 01 November in werking gaan tree nie. Ter inligting vir die produsente word sekere belangrike aspekte van die Wet op bladsy 1 en 2 deurgegee.

Dit het weer tyd geword vir lede om kennis te dra van die Algemene Jaarvergadering van Agra wat op 27 November in Windhoek gaan plaasvind. Lede kan hulself vergewis van die kennisgewing en agenda wat op onderskeidelik bladsy 4 en 6/7 in hierdie uitgawe van die Ring verskyn.

Die Algemene Jaarvergadering is een geleentheid waar lede ingelig word oor die aktiwiteite van die Koöperasie en waar die finansiële stand van hulle organisasie voorgehou word. Lede kry die geleentheid om teenoor die direksie en bestuur hulle menings te lug rakende noodsaaklike aangeleenthede in belang van die Koöperasie. Graag versoek ons alle lede om die vergadering bytewoon en daardeur 'n bydrae te lewer.

Agra was op verskeie terreine betrokke by die Windhoek Skou as borg, uitstaller en aanbieder van die gewilde grootvee stoetveiling. Agra is ook aangewys as die beste buite uitstaller tydens die skou. Die skoukomitee van Agra verdien 'n spesiale woord van gelukwensing en dank vir hulle harde werk en insette.

Graag wil ons ook van hierdie geleentheid gebruik maak om vir Ryno van der Merwe, Voorsitter van Agra se Raad van Direkteure hartlik geluk te wens met sy aanstelling as President van die Namibië Landbou Unie vir die volgende 4 jaar termyn.

Lede is baie welkom om te reageer op artikels wat verskyn of selfs 'n bydrae vir 'n uitgawe te lewer. Stuur u bydraes en reaksie aan die Bemarkingsbestuurder van Agra, Birgit Hoffmann by Privaatsak 12011, Windhoek of per e-pos aan birgith@agra.com.na

Groete tot 'n volgende uitgawe!

Alida Coertzen
Kommunikasiebeampte
Privaatsak 12011
Windhoek
Tel: 061-290 9234
E-pos: alidac@agra.com.na

NOTICE

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KENNISGEWING VAN 'n VERKIESINGSVERGADERING VAN DIREKTEURE VIR STREEK 2 (SENTRAAL)

KENNIS geskied hiermee van 'n verkiesings-vergadering vir Direkteure vir Streek 2 (Sentraal) wat gehou sal word op die plek en datum soos hieronder aangedui.

PLEK: Agra/Bank Windhoek Ring
Bell Straat, WINDHOEK

DATUM: 27 NOVEMBER 2008

TYD: 08:00 (Registrasie 07:30)

Slegs lede van Streek 2 (Sentraal) is geregtig om te stem: Karibib, Omaruru, Okahandja, Windhoek, Gobabis, Rehoboth

SAKELYS

1. *Opening & konstituering*
2. *Verkiesing van Direkteure*
   Streek 2 (Sentraal)
   Herkiesbaar: Mnr S Wilckens
   Genomineer: Mnr BS Siyambango

NOTICE OF AN ELECTION MEETING OF DIRECTORS FOR REGION 2 (CENTRAL)

NOTICE is hereby given that an election meeting of Directors for Region 2 (Central) will be held at the place and date as mentioned below.

VENUE: Agra/Bank Windhoek Ring
Bell Street, WINDHOEK

DATE: 27 NOVEMBER 2008

TIME: 08:00 (Registration 07:30)

Please note only members of Region 2 (Central) are eligible to vote: Karibib, Omaruru, Okahandja, Windhoek, Gobabis, Rehoboth

AGENDA

1. *Opening and constitution*
2. *Election of Directors*
   Region 2 (Central)
   Eligible for re-election: Mr S Wilckens
   Nominated: Mr BS Siyambango

IN OPDRAG VAN DIE RAAD / BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

L van Wyk - Sekretaris / Secretary
Privaatsak / Private Bag 12011, WINDHOEK
10 Oktober / 10 October 2008

KENNISGEWING VAN DIE AGT-EN-TWINTIGSTE ALGEMENE JAARVERGADERING VAN LEDE VAN AGRA (KOÖPERATIEF) BEPERK

KENNIS geskied hiermee van die agt-en-twintigste Algemene Jaarvergadering van lede van AGRA (KOÖPERATIEF) BEPERK. wat gehou sal word op die plek en datum soos hieronder aangedui.

PLEK: Agra/Bank Windhoek Ring
Windhoek Skougronde, Bell Straat,
Windhoek

DATUM: 27 November 2008

TYD: 09:00 (Registrasie 08:30)

IN OPDRAG VAN DIE RAAD:
L van Wyk - Sekretaris
Privaatsak 12011, Windhoek
15 September 2008

NOTICE OF THE TWENTY EIGHT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS OF AGRA (CO-OPERATIVE) LIMITED

NOTICE is hereby given that the twenty eight Annual General Meeting of members of AGRA (CO-OPERATIVE) LIMITED will be held at the place and date as mentioned below.

VENUE: Agra/Bank Windhoek Ring
Windhoek Showgrounds, Bell Street,
Windhoek

DATE: 27 November 2008

TIME: 09:00 (Registration 08:30)

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD:
L van Wyk - Secretary
Private Bag 12011, WINDHOEK
15 September 2008

AGENDA FOR THE 28TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF AGRA (CO-OP) LTD ON 27 NOVEMBER 2008

1. **Opening, welcome and constitution.**

2. **Approval of the minutes of the Twenty-Seventh Annual General Meeting of members held on 29 November 2007 in Windhoek.** (Refer to the abovementioned minutes, available for inspection at all branches)

3. **Overview of the financial year ended 31 July 2008 by the Chief Executive Officer of Agra**

4. **Approval** of:-
   - 4.1 Report by the Board of Directors
   - 4.2 Honoraria for Directors and Supervisory Committee members
   - 4.3 Auditors remuneration for the past financial year
   - 4.4 Financial statements as at 31 July 2008

5. **Budget 2008/2009**
   - 5.1 Overview
   - 5.2 Approval

6. **Election of Directors:**

Region 2 (Central)
Eligible for re-election: Mr. S Wilckens
Nominated: Mr. BS Siyambango

Appointment of Supervisory Committee:

Region 1 (North)
One vacancy
No nominations received

Region 3 (South)
One vacancy
No nominations received

7. **Withdrawal of shares** in terms of Section 10.3 of the By-Laws in respect of members who have **ceased farming activities** permanently. (Refer information available for inspection at all branches)

8. **Withdrawal of shares** in terms of Section 13 of the By-Laws in respect of members of Agra who **resigned** (Refer information available for inspection at all branches)

9. **Motions:**
   No motions have been received.

10. Subject to Section 22.1.5 of the By-Laws any other business that may be dealt with at an Annual General Meeting.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

L van Wyk - Secretary
PRIVATE BAG 12011, WINDHOEK
10 October 2008

REGISTERED ADDRESS:

8 Bessemer Street, Private Bag 12011, Windhoek
BANKERS: Bank Windhoek Limited
AUDITORS: PricewaterhouseCoopers
ATTORNEYS: Engling, Stritter & Partners

PLEASE NOTE:

General information relating to procedures applicable to the Annual General Meeting:

1. A discussion point submitted by a member should preferably be introduced by such a member in person to ensure proper motivation and discussion.

2. The result of the vote count for or against every motion and the result of the election of Directors and Members of the Supervisory Committee will be determined at the meeting.

3. Retiring members of the Supervisory Committee, who make themselves available for re-election as members of the Supervisory Committee or the Board, in whichever capacity, are deemed to be nominated automatically in the region he/she resides in.

4. Directors are elected according to the region he/she resides in.

5. The quorum will be determined at the meeting in terms of Section 22.10 of the Statute.

6. All proxies must be lodged not later than 25 November 2008 at 16:00 at Agra Head Office, Windhoek.

SAKELYS VIR DIE 28STE ALGEMENE JAARVERGADERING VAN AGRA (KOÖP) BPK OP 27 NOVEMBER 2008

1. **Opening, verwelkoming en konstituering**

2. **Goedkeuring van die notule van die Sewe en Twintigste Algemene Jaarvergadering van lede soos gehou op 29 November 2007 te Windhoek**
   (Bogenoemde notule sal by alle takke ter insae wees)

3. **Oorsig deur die Hoof Uitvoerende Beampte ten opsigte van die finansiële jaar geëindig 31 Julie 2008**

4. **Goedkeuring van:-**
   4.1 Verslag van die Raad van Direkteure
   4.2 Honorarium van Direkteure en Toesighoudende Komiteelede
   4.3 Ouditeursvergoeding vir die afgelope finansiële jaar
   4.4 Finansiële state soos op 31 Julie 2008

5. **Begroting 2008/2009**
   5.1 Oorsig
   5.2 Goedkeuring

6. **Verkiesing van Direkteure:**

   Streek 2 (Sentraal)
   Herkiesbaar: Mnr S Wilckens
   Genomineer: Mnr BS Siyambango

   Aanwys van Toesighoudende Komitee Lede:

   Streek 1 (Noord)
   Een vakature
   Geen nominasies ontvang

   Streek 3 (Suid)
   Een vakature
   Geen nominasies ontvang

7. **Intrekking van aandele** kragtens Artikel 10.3 van die Statuut ten opsigte van lede wat boerdery permanent gestaak het. (Vergelyk inligtingstukke wat by alle takke ter insae sal wees)

8. **Intrekking van aandele** kragtens Artikel 13.1 van die Statuut ten opsigte van lede van Agra wat bedank het. (Vergelyk inligtingstukke wat by alle takke ter insae sal wees)

9. **Mosies:**
   Geen mosies is ontvang nie.

10. Kragtens Artikel 22.1.5 van die Statuut, **enige ander besigheid** wat tydens 'n algemene jaarvergadering hanteer mag word:

IN OPDRAG VAN DIE RAAD

L van Wyk - Sekretaris
PRIVAATSAK 12011,WINDHOEK
10 Oktober 2008

GEREGISTREERDE ADRES:

Bessemerstraat 8, Privaatsak 12011, Windhoek
BANKIERS: Bank Windhoek Beperk
OUDITEURE: PricewaterhouseCoopers
PROKUREURS: Engling, Stritter & Vennote

LET WEL:

Prosedure van toepassing op die Algemene Jaarvergadering vir algemene inligting:

1. 'n Beskrywingspunt wat deur 'n lid ingedien is, moet verkieslik in eie persoon ingelei word sodat dit behoorlik gemotiveer en bespreek kan word.

2. Die uitslag van die stemmetal ten gunste van of teen elke mosie en die uitslag van die verkiesing van direkteure en lede van die Toesighoudende Komitee, word op die vergadering bepaal.

3. Uittredende lede van die Toesighoudende Komitee wat hulleself beskikbaar stel vir verkiesing as lede van die Toesighoudende Komitee of die Raad, in watter hoedanigheid ook al, word outomaties as genomineer beskou in die betrokke streek waarin hy/sy woonagtig is.

4. Direkteure word verkies volgens die streek waarin hy/sy woonagtig is.

5. Die kworum sal volgens Artikel 22.10 van die Statuut op die vergadering bepaal word.

6. Volmagte moet Agra se Hoofkantoor in Windhoek nie later as 25 November 2008 om 16:00 bereik nie.

NOTICE

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NOTICE OF A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING
(IMMEDIATELY AFTER CLOSURE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING)

AMENDMENT OF AGRA BYLAWS

NOTICE is hereby given that the Special General Meeting's approval is required to amend the Bylaws in execution of the following resolution:

Resolution 1:

1. ***Bylaw 11.5 be deleted altogether and replaced with the following text:***

"If a member had conducted business with the Co-operative for an aggregate amount of less than N$50,000 over an uninterrupted period of 5 years, such members' shares may, upon recommendation of the board, be withdrawn by resolution of members at the General Meeting. The aforesaid amount of N$50,000 shall be adjusted annually on 01 January each year (commencing January 2010) by the CPI as published by the Bank of Namibia, or at any other General Meeting of members including the Annual General Meeting".

AGRA NEWS

AGRA PROUD TO RECEIVE

SATISFACTORY BBBEE ACCREDITATION STATUS

The Namibia Preferential Procurement Council (NPPC) has a clear and comprehensive framework for the measurement of Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) across all sectors of the economy. Against this background, Agra is proud to announce that we have received satisfactory contributor status to our BBBEE from this Council. BBBEE has been adopted as an initiative of the NPPC aimed at promoting economic transformation in order to enable meaningful participation of former racially disadvantaged people, women in general and persons with disabilities in the economy.

Hanno Snyman, Agra's manager for tenders and special projects holding the certificate

Agra has been successfully measured by a generic scorecard in terms of its empowerment progress in targeted areas of development such as ownership, management, skills development, employment equity, preferred procurement practices, enterprise development and corporate social investment. These key development areas have measurable outcomes in ensuring a path to greater broad-based and effective economic participation, the right to equality, increased employment, more equitable income distribution, economic unity of the nation, equal opportunity and access to services and protection of the common market place.

The BBBEE accreditation status will be reviewed every 12 months with an ideal of increasing our score rating by implementing various initiatives pertaining to the elements of the scorecard.

The accreditation certification will be of great benefit to Agra as a preferred supplier when participating in tenders against opposition companies who might not comply with the framework for BBBEE as directed by the NPPC. This certification will be even more beneficial to Agra in the long run in the sense of aligning ourselves with proposed BBBEE and Employment Equity legislation to be introduced in the future.

(E)

AGRA NEWS

AGRA LOOKS BACK AT

SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION AT WINDHOEK SHOW 2008

Agra was once again very successful in its participation as exhibitor, sponsor of livestock events and auctioneer of the large stock auction at this year's agricultural and industrial show in Windhoek which took place from 26 September to 04 October 2008.

The livestock exhibitors' evening was thoroughly enjoyed by a number of invited guests, breeders and livestock producers. Agra was a co-sponsor of the evening's activities. In his sponsorship speech, Pieter Hugo, senior manager livestock emphasised in his speech that we should also look around us and take stock and then we'll realise how much we have to be grateful for:

Pieter Hugo

- We live in a beautiful country. There is peace and stability and we have a government that strives to create an ideal production environment.
- We have organised agriculture, people and organisations that work very hard to represent and negotiate for farmers of Namibia, co-ordinate agricultural activities and develop agriculture in line with Vision 2030.
- The producers in Namibia are people who know, who can and who want to.
- The genetic quality of Namibian animals is of the highest and time and again, on stud auctions and also at the shows, it is an absolute privilege and pride to see what the Namibian farmers bring to the table.
- We are also proud and grateful if we read or hear things like:
  - Simbra bull takes highest price
  - Swakara still in demand
  - Agra/Bank Windhoek Ring is one of the best auction facilities in Southern Africa.
- Agra is also grateful and proud to be able to say, we have been there all along, through good days and bad and we trust that we will always be there.

Kiep Lepen and Oliver Horsthemke

Kiep Lepen, Agra's manager for stud services received a special award during the evening for his outstanding contribution over the years to the stud services industry in Namibia. This award was presented by Oliver Horsthemke from First National Bank.

Agra was also a sponsor of various categories of the livestock championships at the show. Congratulations to all breeders who won prizes with their show animals.

(f.l.t.r.) Albe Snyman, Agra's PRO presenting the grand champion cow / heifer (dual purpose) prize to Junior Versfeld with his Braunvieh cow.

(f.l.t.r.) Albe Snyman, Agra's PRO presenting the grand champion bull (dual purpose) prize to Sidney Martin with his Simmentaler bull.

Sigi von Lüttwitz who won the prestigious "Select Cow" title with his Brahman cow with Kiep Lepen from Agra.

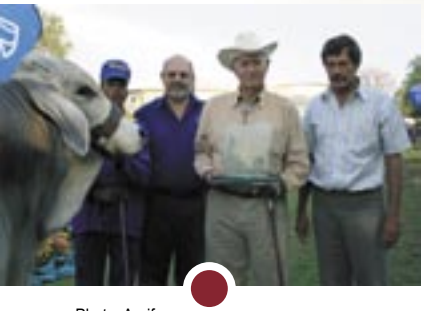


Photo: Agriforum

Photo: Agriforum

Agra especially congratulate our board members, Messrs Ryno van der Merwe and Sigi Wilckens who showed champions at the Windhoek show with their respective Brahman and Limousins who also kicked dust in the eyes of their competitors during the interbreed championships.

During the large stock auction, held by Agra at the Agra/Bank Windhoek Ring on Friday, 03 October 2008, a record price was recorded for a Brahman bull. This is also a record price for any breed.

A new Namibian record was set when André Compion of Farm Elisenore in the Okahandja district paid N$170 000 for a Brahman bull, by name Makalani Mr Tralon from the Makalani Brahman stud of Kasper Günzel. Makalani Mr Tralon was also Brahman bul of the year at both Grootfontein and Windhoek Shows for 2007. The second most expensive bull came from the André Compion Brahman stud and were traded for N$110 000 and purchased by Dr Johan Rieckert and Niel du Plooy of Marco Farming in Windhoek. Two other Brahman bulls that also came under the hamer were sold for N$95 000 to Gunther Hellinghausen & Hagen Eggert and for N$66 000 to Benna van Wyk respectively. Both Brahman bulls are sons of the Brahman bull, Makalani Mr Tralon and sold by Kasper Günzel.

According to Kiep Lepen, manager stud services the white Brahmans is of exceptional high quality, which was proven by the record price obtained. “N$170 000 is the highest price ever paid for a Brahman bull, which certainly is a worthy Namibian record, “ Kiep Lepen said. The reserve Brahman breed champion and reserve inter-breed champion for 2008 at the Windhoek Show is also from the Makalani Brahman stud and will replace the renowned Mr Tralon as stud bull in future.

Another Brahman bull from the Savannah Brahman stud of Dirk Uys was also sold for N$66 000 to Mr E. Botha.

“In general the quality of all the bulls offered for sale at the Agra show auction this year was higher compared to the previous two years”, said Kiep Lepen, Agra’s manager for stud services.

Average prices recorded during the auction were as follows:

Brahman Bulls	N$ 63 727	(average)	vs	N$170 000	(highest)
Brangus Bul	N$ 18 000	(average)	vs	N$ 18 000	(highest)
Simmentaler Bulls	N$ 29 125	(average)	vs	N$ 52 000	(highest)
Braunvieh Bulls	N$ 28 000	(average)	vs	N$ 28 000	(highest)
Charolay Bull	N$ 20 000	(average)	vs	N$ 20 000	(highest)
Limosine Bull	N$ 31 000	(average)	vs	N$ 31 000	(highest)
Simbra Bulls	N$ 38 000	(average)	vs	N$ 60 000	(highest)
Braunvieh Heifer	N$ 33 000	(average)	vs	N$ 33 000	(highest)
Simbra Heifer	N$ 11 250	(average)	vs	N$ 11 250	(highest)

(E)

GOUD VIR AGRA BY WINDHOEK SKOU

AGRA NEWS

Agra het vanjaar ‘n goue toekenning en die wisseltroefee vir die beste buite uitstalling losgeslaan met sy stalletjie by vanjaar se Windhoek Skou.

Die uitstalling in Windhoek was van hoogstaande en professionele gehalte en het positiewe reaksie van die publiek uitgelok.

Die skoukomitee van Agra verdien ‘n spesiale woord van gelukwensing en dank vir hulle harde werk en insette. Die komitee het bestaan uit Erika Pienaar en Graeme Schaefer van die aankope kantoor, Tobie Barlow en Herman van Vuuren van Windhoek tak, Hennie Bergh en Gordon Kennedy van Safari Den, Morne Nell (Auas Wholesalers), Jaco Booysen (Auas Vet Med) en Ulandi Philander (Bemarking). Volgens die komitee is die prestasie te danke aan ‘n spanpoging deur al die betrokkenes.

Uitstallings het gewissel van veevoere, dieregesondheidsmiddels, watertoerusting, safari- en kampeertoerusting, om ‘n paar te noem. Die verskaffers was deurentyd beskikbaar om self hulle produkte bekend te stel.

‘n Spesiale hoekie is vir die lewendehawe produsente ingerig, waar die dag met ‘n heerlike koppie koffie begin kon word.

Nogmaals hartlik geluk aan die Agra span!

(R)

CALVING SEASON; HARVEST TIME

VELD MANAGEMENT

The calving season is upon those farmers who had their cows mated in the summer mating season (January to March) earlier this year. The birth of calves is the beginning of harvest time for farmers (see pictures below); when all their effort, planning and preparation starts to show and yields results. The measure of profitability of a beef cattle enterprise is the following:

Net income of enterprise = gross income – variable costs

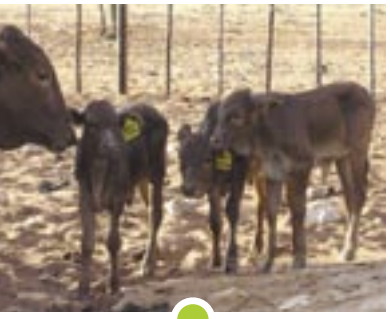
The farmer's inputs are contained in the term "gross income" and can be expressed as:

Gross income = fertility x stocking rate x productive lifetime x mass at marketing x unit price

whereas the variable costs associated with the beef cattle enterprise consist of:

Variable costs = inputs x unit price

Of all the components that influence the profitability of a beef cattle enterprise, the fertility of the herd is by far the most important factor. Beef cattle have to be slaughtered to obtain an income, so the more cattle can be slaughtered, the bigger the gross income. The higher the fertility, the more cattle are produced and can be slaughtered. Fertility is heritable (passed on via the genes) from parents to their offspring but only to a very small extent, so it is much easier to manage a herd well for improved fertility than to try to breed for it.



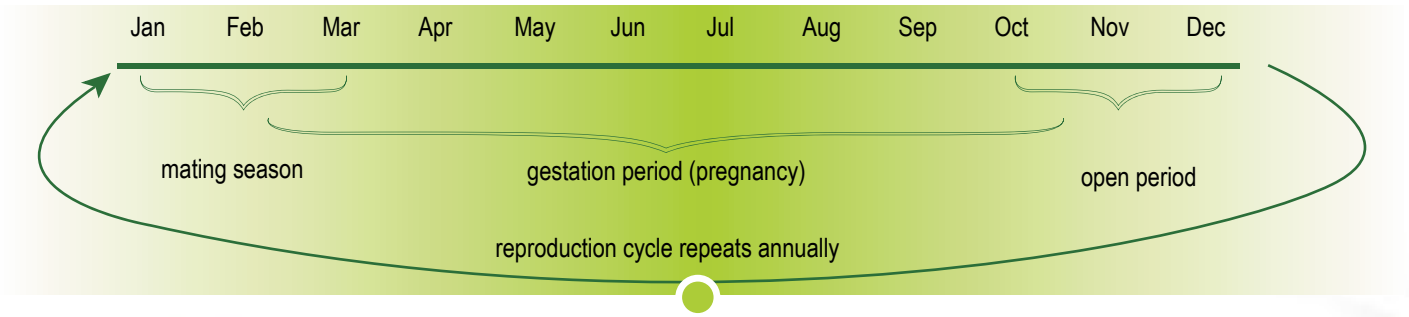
The number of calves born is the most obvious expression of fertility and also influences other components of profitability, such as the mass at marketing, the unit price achieved and, of course, the variable costs. This article will examine some factors that contribute to high fertility in peri-parturient cows (cows in late pregnancy and early lactation) while next month, proper care of the newborn calf will be discussed.

The calving rate of the national beef cattle herd is apparently only about 60%. But such a figure easily creates a wrong impression depending on how it is calculated. Calving rate should be calculated as the number of calves born alive divided by the number of cows exposed to the bull. This measures the efficiency of reproduction of cows. If 83 live calves were born from 121 cows that were joined with bulls during the mating season, then the calving rate is 83/121 x 100 = 68.6% and it shows that the reproductive rate of this herd is little better than average. Pregnancy determination performed at 1½ - 3 months after mating may find 90 cows pregnant or possibly pregnant and the calving rate can now be calculated as 83/90 x 100 = 92.2%. This is an excellent rate but in our case, conceals the fact that there is actually a problem with the fertility of this herd of 121 cows. There is more scope for error: at about 5 months after mating, an experienced farmer can see with his own eyes whether a cow is pregnant or not. So he might start culling some of those cows that are clearly not pregnant and be left with, for example, 97 "probably pregnant" cows. Now his calving rate is 83/97 x 100 = 85.6%, again an apparently excellent achievement that indicates that all is well when there is actually a problem! It is important that farm records inform the farm manager correctly and do not mislead him or conceal a problem!

What about calves born dead, or stillborn? They should be counted separately and not be included in the calculation of the herd's calving rate because again, it would conceal a problem. For the same reason twins should not be counted as two calves but only as one, even though both survived. If some of the 83 calves born in the example above are twins, the real calving rate is reduced further because even fewer cows had calved and the fertility problem becomes bigger, but is masked by the fecundity rate. Fecundity refers to how many offspring were born at the same birthing opportunity. It measures litter size and is not a reproductive rate per se. Fortunately, twinning is rare in cattle. The female member of a mixed pair of twins (one male, one female) in cattle is always infertile. She is called a "freemartin" and cannot reproduce. Since this is highly undesirable, twinning in cattle has been discouraged from time immemorial by culling and as a result, its incidence is very low. Freemartinism does not occur in small ruminants and that is why multiple births in sheep and goats are encouraged.

Why all this fuss about statistics? Well, if you didn't measure what you intended to measure, you are not managing what you thought you managed!

Cows are pregnant for roughly 9 months; from 283 days for early-maturing British beef breeds to 291 days for the larger Zebu-type breeds. If cows conceived in February, they will calve in November. Under ideal conditions, this pattern should repeat itself every year and cows should calve annually, thus maintaining a calving interval (also known as inter-calving period, ICP) of less than 400 days. This implies that cows have to re-conceive within 2-



3 months of calving, otherwise they will not be able to give a calf a year. To be able to re-conceive such a short time after calving, peri-parturient cows have to be managed correctly and be readied for the next mating season in the open period following parturition (calving). In other words, re-breeding management starts in late pregnancy already!

Most of the foetal growth occurs in the last third of gestation, from August onwards. At this time of year, the grazing is limited in both quantity (how much is available?) and quality (how nutritious is it?). Towards the end of pregnancy, the foetal products (calf and placental fluids) can weigh as much as 12-18% of the dam's own weight. All this development has to occur on dry winter grazing. It is thus of critical importance to keep pregnant cows well fed during the winter, on a condition score of 3 out of 5 (see photo 1), without over-fattening them. Over-fat cows (see photo 2) will have trouble giving birth and producing milk, as surplus body fat tends to accumulate in the reproductive tract and the udder. Pregnant cows should be rotated through the winter camps first so that they can pick off the most nutritious grazing. The camp can later be "cleaned up" by cattle at a less critical stage of their life cycle, e.g. growing steers, which defoliate the grasses to the desired level. Ensure that pregnant cows receive a winter lick that supplies the nutrients that are in short supply in veld grazing, primarily phosphorus and proteins, with some energy added to stimulate fermentation in the rumen and voluntary feed intake. If the winter grazing is very poor, the farmer might consider supplementing his pregnant cows with more than just winter lick. A small amount of an energy or production lick might be given to cows each day or even a small amount (200 g/cow) of whole maize or a similar coarse energy concentrate. A production lick provides more nutrients than a winter lick and is more expensive, with a higher daily intake. Weigh up the extra cost of supplementation against the expected benefit of earlier re-breeding and regular, annual calving.

Ripe camelthorn pods are often used as an energy supplement in Namibia, and save on costs. They should be fed whole to cattle, forcing them to chew the pods well and resulting in a large volume of saliva secreted into the rumen. This, together with the relatively slow fermentation of coarsely-chewed pod fragments minimizes the risk of acidosis poisoning ("suurpens"). The same reasons apply to feeding maize whole rather than ground. Don't be alarmed by the appearance of whole maize kernels in the dung. If the maize had been ground to a meal, more of it would have ended up in the dung but it is not noticed because it blends in, being a meal. Kernels stand out. Ripe camelthorn pods should not cause prussic acid poisoning ("blousuurvergiftiging", "geilsiekte") but just to be on the safe side, introduce pods gradually and don't feed more than 200 g of pods per cow per day. Reduce the amount fed immediately if you smell almond on the breath of cows, or add "hypo" to the lick (10%) or drinking water (1 kg on 500 l) as long as the pods are fed. Of course, if the farmers practices good grazing planning and rangeland management that ensures an adequate supply of nutritious grasses left over at the end of winter, these costs can be contained and risks need not be taken.

At birth, the calf should weigh 6-9% of the dam's own weight**. Calves weighing less than 6% of their dam's weight are relatively underdeveloped and die easily, while calves weighing more than 9% get born with great difficulty. This is called dystocia and often results in the death of the calf and even the dam. Large size of the calf at birth is the most common cause of dystocia. Body mass and size is highly heritable in all species of domestic livestock and if a big bull was used to mate relatively small cows, the resultant calves will also be big and may cause dystocia. Since most Namibian cows calve naturally in the veld, unattended, a calf that gets born with difficulty often dies for lack of assistance. Its umbilical cord ruptures early in the birthing process while its muzzle is still covered by the foetal sack and the calf suffocates or drowns in the placental fluids. Or, if it gets born alive, it is so weakened by the struggle that it dies soon after birth, or gets eaten by predators because it cannot get up and walk away with the dam. Sometimes, the dam also becomes so weak that she cannot get up and jackals may start eating her rear parts bloodied by parturition while she is still alive. Therefore, dystocia should be prevented by matching bull size to cow size. This is especially true for heifers, which have never given birth before and whose unstretched birth canal and inexperience combine to make parturition a harrowing experience. Never use large bulls on heifers. If the bull's own birth weight is known, don't use bulls that weighed more than 45 kg at birth on large-frame heifers or more than 40 kg on small-frame heifers. This implies that you have to weigh the bull calf as soon as possible after birth if you are raising them for sale as breeding stock; otherwise this vital piece of information is lost. All you need is a spring scale and a bag. More statistics; but I hope you realize that without proper information, it's difficult to take decent decisions, and this could cost you a lot of money!

Another common cause of dystocia is incorrect presentation of the calf at birth. Calves have to be born with their forelegs out first, followed by the head between the shoulders. If the forelegs are bent backwards at the elbow or the shoulder, the birth process will be prolonged. If the farmer observes a difficult birth process, he has to intervene by correcting the presentation of the calf and pulling it out, if need be, if the cow herself does not expel the calf within 8 hours of the start of contractions. Put on a shoulder-length plastic glove to prevent cross-infestation between man and animal, lubricate the glove with liquid paraffin or clean water and push the calf back into the uterus if possible, where it can now be turned and manipulated until its position is corrected and it can either be pushed out by the cow or pulled out with the aid of two ropes tied around the front ankles. Be careful: you are working in the soft, unprotected inner reproductive organs of the cow! Internal damage to these organs will decrease the cow's future fertility or cause infection that could cost her life. Afterwards, disinfect the uterus by inserting pessaries.

Cows can also experience dystocia because they are underfed and weak, or because they are too old or too young. However, correctly matching the bull's size to the cows he is mating will prevent most incidences of dystocia.

Once the calf is born, the afterbirth, consisting of placental tissues, should come off by itself within a short time. Free-roaming cows often eat the afterbirth and thus dispose of a potential source of infection that attracts predators as well as getting a nourishing meal. If a difficult birth was experienced, the afterbirth sometimes does not dislodge by itself and again, the farmer has to intervene if the placenta is retained for longer than 12 hours after the calf was born. Please do not pull it out by force or attach a weight (like a brick) to it: this will damage the uterus internally and may reduce the future fertility of the cow. Rather insert a foaming pessary into the uterus, again by putting on a long glove and lubricating it. The foaming action of the pessary will gently loosen the attached placental tissues, facilitating their ejection and disinfect the uterus. Burn or bury ejected afterbirths to maintain a healthy environment. If ejected in this manner, retained placentas should not have an effect on the future fertility of cows, but it is safest to cull cows with a habit of retaining placentas. The extensive farming method of Namibian beef ranchers does not lend itself to 24-hour observation of problem animals and they should be culled rather than pampered.

Placentas are also retained due to a low vitamin A status of the cow, which is caused by the winter grazing providing extremely little vitamin A to the grazing ruminant. Vitamin A is a fat-soluble vitamin that is abundant in green feeds and actively growing grasses. Free-ranging cattle accumulate a good supply of vitamin A in summer, during the rainy season, and store it in body fat. These stores last through early winter but get depleted towards late winter and the hot-dry season; just when pregnant cows need it the most. Thus, vitamin A has to be replenished from mid-winter onwards

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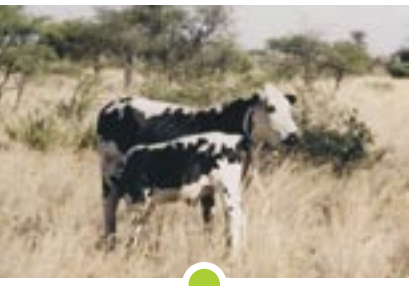
to prevent retained placentas, improve re-conception after calving and maintain tissue integrity and health of the cow and to prevent skeletal abnormalities in the developing fetus. The maize in winter lick is a good source of vitamin A but unfortunately, it is oxidized rapidly after a few days of exposure to the sun. It is much more effective to supplement vitamin A by sub-cutaneous injection (under the skin) in June and again in September.

A cow that gives birth easily and does not suffer an infection of the reproductive tract after parturition is already well underway to re-conceive early during the next mating season and has a good chance of calving annually. After calving, her body condition drops dramatically to as low as 1.5-2 out of 5 (see photo 3) due to the 15% weight loss at calving and because she is secreting milk to feed the rapidly growing newborn. For the first two months of its life, the calf is completely dependent on mother's milk (see pictures below). The thick, yellowish milk secreted for the first couple of days after parturition, colostrum ("biesmelk"), is critical to the survival of the calf. The calf needs to drink as much of it as it can and as often as possible. Colostrum contains a lot of nutrients and vitamins that give the calf a good start in life, as well as antibodies that give it immunity against a large number of diseases and infectious conditions. This passive immunity is passed on by the dam to its offspring and is a gift of nature! If the calf for any reason was unable to drink colostrum on the first day after birth, the farmer can give it colostrum through a stomach tube.



After about three days, the udder starts secreting regular milk. Under Namibian grazing conditions, milk production of beef cows seldom exceeds 8 kg/day and the calf can drink it all, growing about 500 g/day and more as it grows bigger. Early lactation therefore is a crucial stage in the cow's production cycle, when she has to produce milk for her calf and recover body condition lost after calving. Feeding her well is absolutely essential to ensure good calf growth and early re-breeding. The cow's body condition has to recover to at least 2.5 out of 5 at the start of the mating season early next year, and keep on improving, to be able to re-conceive and maintain a steady rhythm of annual calving. Cows that skip calving in one year require all the usual expenses but don't earn any income. They do not earn their keep and should be culled, unless her skipping is not her fault but due to poor management or a drought.

Any amount of milk that is diverted for human use slows down the growth rate of the calf. Our natural veld grazing is simply too unproductive and of too poor quality to support dairying, i.e. milking cows for commercial purposes, unless substantial amounts of supplements are fed. A generation or two ago, farmers could still sell cream off the veld and raise strong calves but on our current weakened veld, dairy ranching is not a proposition anymore. I dare say that the current poor veld condition in Namibia is a consequence of, amongst others, the dairy ranching systems popular in the 1960's.

To summarize: late gestation and early lactation is a critical time for the beef cow, not only because it determines the future well-being of the calf, but also her own early re-conception and lifetime productivity. Proper management at these two stages revolves mainly around adequate nutrition. In fact, on the cost side of the profitability equation, feed is the single biggest expense and can make up as much as 75% of the variable costs of a beef enterprise. Make sure that this cost is applied wisely and to maximum effect, i.e. regular annual calving. AGRA takes pride in keeping all the equipment, licks and remedies that you need to manage your herd for improved lifetime productivity at all its branches, countrywide!

For enquiries about the specific situation on your farm, please contact Dr Axel Rothauge at telephone 061-290 9354. In the next RING, proper calf management will be discussed.

Condition Score 3: Ribs and hip-bones still show, but not as prominent as in score 2.

Photo 1 (Johan Swanepoel, Sandveld Research Station): Body condition score 3/5: just right for re-breeding

Condition Score 5: The animal is extremely fat and appears round, with no ribs and hip-bones visible at all. Note the fat at the base of the tail.

Photo 2 (Johan Swanepoel, Sandveld Research Station): Body condition score 5/5: too fat for re-breeding

Condition Score 2: The animal is still lean, but in a relative better condition than in score 1. Notice the prominence of the ribs and hip-bones.

Photo 3 (Johan Swanepoel, Sandveld Research Station): Body condition score 2/5: too thin for re-breeding

**By the way, do you weigh your cattle, so that you are able to calculate the birth mass and other ratios? So you cannot afford a cattle scale? Well, you can use the animal weigh band, which is a tape measure that measures girth of cattle behind the shoulders and converts it into mass. Not as exact as weighing, but good enough for management purposes. These weigh bands can be acquired as part of AGRA's Veterinary First Aid Kit or bought loose off the shelf; a very handy tool.

Dr Axel Rothauge
Special Projects Consultant

AGRA NEWS

AGRA'S SOCIAL FUND GIVES

N$ 20 000 TO "HAVE A HEART" BENEFICIARIES

In the spirit of Christmas, Agra's Social Fund will again make N$20 000 available for charity this festive season through our "***have a heart this Christmas***" campaign. Funds will be split on a pro-rata basis, based on the actual sales of each specific branch over the promotional period which will run from 06 October until 06 November 2008. Each Agra branch will identify a charity organisation of their choice. Funds will then be distributed to charity organisations after the promotional period has come to and end.

"Christmas is a very special time in our lives and also in the lives of under privilege people in our country. It is a time of love, caring and giving especially to those who are not privileged to join in the spirit of Christmas. At Agra we are no different", said Albe Snyman.

According to Albe Snyman, Agra's public relations officer and co-ordinator of Agra's social investment portfolio, the "***have a heart this Christmas***" campaign is an initiative in which Agra can give something back to the communities in which we operate.

The more you buy at Agra, the more we can give to a charity organisation in a town where we have an Agra branch. The role of good and sustainable corporate citizenship is finding the balance between the interests of all role players while at the same time ensuring our own commercial significance. Agra continue to strive to offer value for money and good customer service to our shoppers, yet remain in a position where we can give back to the communities who support us.

"Branch managers have been asked to identify one development project in their community whom they would like to get to know, interact and support with this special campaign. That means our managers and staff goes out into the communities, see and learn about the challenges and fears of fellow citizens. Our team will experience more about some of the issues facing their community, and learn a lot about the good work that is happening out there. In this small way we can show that we care, we can learn from each other and we can remain mindful about the plight of those less fortunate than us."

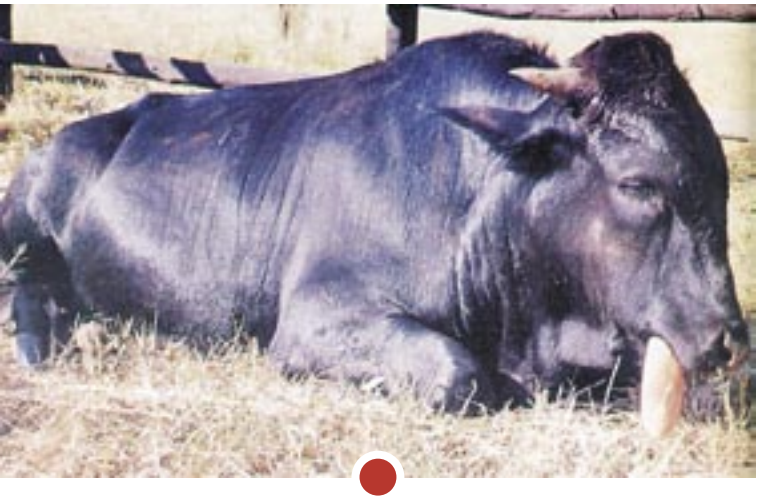
TWO IMPORTANT DISEASES CAUSED BY NEUROTOXINS

Neurotoxins are toxins or poisonous substances which affect the nervous system of the body, mostly the central nervous system and can give rise to symptoms like muscle tremors, staggering, inco-ordination, spasms, convulsions, blindness and various forms of paralysis. Some examples of neurotoxins include lead, strychnine, organic compounds of arsenic, organophospherous compounds, toxins contained in tick saliva, plant poisons produced by plants like ***Helichrysum*** (Wild Everlasting "Sewejaartjie"), cobra and mamba snake venom, botulinum toxin and tetanus toxin.

The latter two, produced by bacteria belonging to the group of ***Clostridia,*** give rise to important animal and human diseases. These bacteria in general are responsible for the production of potent toxins and well known clostridial diseases include the various forms of enterotoxaemia, like Necrotic or Haemorrhagic Enteritis, Lamb Dysentery ("Bloedpens"), Struck and Pulpy Kidney or Overeating Disease ("Bloednier"), caused by ***Clostridium perfringens A***, ***B***, ***C***, and ***D*** respectively. Likewise the disease complex referred to as the muscular gas gangrene complex is caused by toxin producing clostridial bacteria like ***Clostridium chauvoei*** (most common cause of Black Quarter and Quarter Evil), ***Clostridium septicum*** (Post Lambing Gangrene, Braxy, Malignant Oedema and occasionally Quarter Evil), ***Clostridium sordelli*** (Black Quarter and Quarter Evil), and ***Clostridium novyi*** ("Big Head", Malignant Oedema, occasionally Black Quarter).

1. Botulism

("Lamsiekte" Afr., "Lahmkrankheit" "Botulismus" Ger.)



Generalised flaccid paralysis due to Botulism.

Botulism is classified as an infectious disease since it is caused by a micro-organism, but the symptoms are actually the result of a neurotoxin produced by the bacterium ***Clostridium botulinum***. The bacteria occur normally in the digestive tract of healthy cattle, horses and chicken (also birds and fish) and are excreted in large numbers in the faeces, contaminating the soil where they form spores which survive for a long time in the environment. In decomposing animal carcasses the bacteria multiply rapidly and produce a strong toxin which causes flaccid paralysis and eventually death, and it can affect cattle, sheep, goats, horses, donkeys, mules, and very occasionally pigs. The various types of botulinum toxin are some of the most potent toxins known to man. Humans and other species of animals, such as dogs, mink and many species of domestic and wild birds, including turkeys, domestic fowls, water fowls, pheasants and ostriches are also susceptible. Cattle and to a lesser degree sheep and goats, ingest botulinum toxin when they eat old bones and tortoise shells in the veld, referred to as pica. Pica is usually the result of phosphate deficiency, which can be worse under drought conditions. Animals can also ingest the toxin when they are fed silage or hay containing the carcasses of rats, mice, birds or cats. When animal carcasses decompose in sources of drinking water, botulism can also occur. The symptoms are the result of a progressive flaccid paralysis of the throat, tongue, muscles of the limbs and tail and eventually the respiratory muscles. This gives rise to the typical appearance of the affected animal not being able to get up, the head turned onto the flank, protruding tongue and flaccid tail, all due to muscular paralysis. Important differential diagnoses in sheep and goats are plant poisonings called "Krimpsiekte", in sheep tick paralysis and twin lamb paralysis ("Domsiekte") and in ruminants in general Geigeria poisoning ("Vermeerbos", Vermeersiekte"), organophosphate poisoning, lead poisoning, rabies, Three Day Stiffsickness and Coenurus cerebralis infection. There is no specific treatment, (apart from hyper immune serum specific for the toxin type involved, which is not available locally), and once symptoms occur, the animal usually dies. For all practical purposes the disease is invariably fatal, and prevention is therefore very important. The disease is prevented and controlled by vaccination and regular supplementation with a phosphate containing lick. Animal carcasses and especially old bones should be removed from the veld and sources of drinking water should be kept free from animal carcasses as well. Regular vaccination and routine phosphate supplementation over the years has greatly reduced the incidence of the disease on commercial farms in Namibia. Initial vaccination is usually followed by a booster vaccination 3 – 4 weeks later, with subsequent annual revaccinations. Commercially available vaccines for the protection against botulism include ***Botulism*** and ***Combined Botulism/Black quarter (OBP)***, ***Botuvax***, ***Duovax*** and ***Supavax (Intervet)***.

Botulism and its association with the ingestion of improperly preserved food have a long history in humans. The main sources of intoxication are meat and fish products, as well as vegetables such as beans, peas and beets. It was first described in humans in Western Europe by the German physician and poet Justinus Kerner (1786 – 1862), who associated the occurrence of botulism, which was also referred to as Kerner's Disease with improperly prepared German sausages, including "Schlackwurst", "Leberwurst", "Blutwurst" and "Presskopf". In 1912 van Ermengem isolated the causative organism from spoiled meat and suggested that the bacterium be called Bacillus botulinum, the latter name being derived from "botulus", the Latin word for sausage, and the disease became known as botulism. Although it is the most toxic protein known, botulinum toxin or "Botox", it is used in human medicine in minute doses to treat painful muscle spasms and as a cosmetic treatment in some parts of the world. As of 2007, Botox

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injection is the most common cosmetic operation and Botox cosmetic providers include dermatologists, plastic surgeons cosmetic physicians and medical spas.

2. Tetanus

("Klem-in-die-kaak" Afr., „Wundstarrkrampf" Ger.)

This is another clostridial disease giving rise to a serious intoxication by a neurotoxin, tetanospasmin, causing the rigidity of muscle spasms, resulting in a spastic paralysis. The toxin is produced by the spore forming bacterium ***Clostridium tetani***. Since the symptoms are quite distinctive and typical, tetanus is usually easy to recognize, especially in the advanced stage. It was described by Hippocrates in the early records of human medical history and even in modern day human and veterinary medicine it remains an important disease that requires prophylactic vaccination. In developing countries it is a serious public health problem, with 50,000 fatalities being reported each year. Sporadic cases or outbreaks of tetanus occur in humans and animals throughout southern Africa.
The disease is very difficult to treat and by the time symptoms occur, it is too late and the animal usually dies. Susceptibility varies considerably among different mammal and bird species. Humans and horses are the most sensitive to the effects of the toxin, followed in order of sensitivity by sheep and goats, mice, rats, rabbits, monkeys, dogs, cats, pigs and cattle, while birds are most resistant.

Tetanus occurs wherever animals are farmed. The spores produced by ***Clostridium tetani*** are present in soil, dust and the faeces of most herbivores. The fact that ***C. tetani*** is part of the normal intestinal flora of many animals plays an important role in the dissemination of the organism. Tetanus occurs when wounds, especially deep penetrating wounds such as those caused by a nail penetrating a horses' hoof, are contaminated by ***Clostridium tetani***. Necrotic or dead tissue in these wounds creates ideal conditions for the organisms to grow. The bacteria multiply rapidly in the wounds and produce the toxin which is then absorbed into the body. The bacteria do not invade the body and will remain in the wound and produce toxin as long as conditions are favourable. The toxin spreads via the nerves or the lymph and blood streams to the spinal cord and the brain. The bacteria can also cause infection of the umbilical stump (navel) in the newborn. Other wounds commonly associated with tetanus are castrations with rubber rings, tail dockings, shearing wounds, injections with contaminated needles, bite wounds, eruption of permanent teeth, compound fractures of bones and frostbite. In cattle it rarely occurs after penetration of the reticulum by a foreign body like a wire and as a result of retention of the placenta after birth. Sometimes wounds may already have healed for some time, before the onset of symptoms.

Wounds caused by rubber ring-castration can lead to Tetanus.

The incubation period of tetanus can be as short as three days, but usually varies from one to three weeks after infection has occurred. Initially, all voluntary muscles show increased stiffness, followed by tetanic spasms all over the body particularly when affected animals are disturbed by handling, touching or noise. Restricted jaw movements, spasms of the nostrils and tail, prolapse of the third eyelid, increased sensitivity to touch and stiffness of hindlegs are other common signs. Death follows within 12 – 72 hours, but the course may be prolonged. In very exceptional cases some animals may recover. In sheep and goats lambs do not suckle, have a grinning facial expression due to contraction of facial muscles, and hold their heads high and their legs wide apart. Bending of the joints becomes virtually impossible and animals move with great difficulty. If the animals are startled, they fall down on their side and go into spasms, bending their neck backwards with the legs stiffened and outstretched. Death occurs after three to ten days in 100% of animals showing symptoms.

Spastic paralysis due to Tetanus.

In horses the clinical signs are characterised by flared nostrils, a sawhorse stance, severe muscle spasms, clamping of the jaws (trismus) and prolapse of the third eyelids. When trismus occurs, the mouth is held tightly shut and all attempts to separate the jaws are generally unsuccessful. Other signs include colic, retention of urine inability to feed off the ground, twisted neck, sweating, difficult breathing, hyperaesthesia, and anxious facial expression. The ears are erect and the tail is very rigid and usually held sideways. Saliva can dribble profusely from the mouth. Affected animals eventually go down on their side and go into spasms. The muscle spasms occur with greater frequency and have longer duration as death approaches. The clinical signs in cattle include an extended head, a raised tail, a sawhorse stance, prolapse of the third eyelids, ruminal stasis, constipation, marked stiffness and in some animals bloating. There is also pronounced dullness and depression. Prognosis of an animal with tetanus is generally very poor and it is most unfavourable, once signs of tetanic spasms occur. If a wound is present it should be debrided, cleaned, disinfected and locally infiltrated with Penicillin G. Penicillin G should also be given systematically and the animal kept very quiet in a dark stable and treated with muscle relaxants. Circulating tetanospasmin can be neutralised by administration of an antitoxin, but this is not available in this country for animal use, only for human use. Administration of antitoxin will only neutralise the toxin present in the blood circulation. The antibodies in the antiserum cannot cross the

blood-brain barrier to reach the brain and therefore the treatment is without effect once the clinical manifestations of tetanus are present.
Prevention and control consists of preventing the various types of wounds mentioned above and vaccination with a toxoid vaccine. Tetanus vaccines are very effective. Animals vaccinated for the first time must receive a booster vaccination 4 weeks later. Revaccination is done annually. If tetanus occurs in lambs younger than 3 months due to ring castration, tail docking or as a result of navel infection, the ewes must be vaccinated during pregnancy 8 weeks and again 4 weeks before lambing and then annually 2 – 4 weeks before lambing. In that way the lambs will be protected by a passive immunity via the colostrum of the ewe for about 5 weeks. At three months the lambs can then be vaccinated. As horses are highly susceptible to tetanus, they should be vaccinated on a regular, annual basis, whereas other species should only be routinely vaccinated in those instances where the disease has become a persistent problem on a farm. Vaccinated mares with high levels of circulating antitoxin provide protective passive colostral immunity to their foals up to an age of 10 weeks. Foals can then be vaccinated from 12 weeks onwards. Foals of unvaccinated mares can be vaccinated at an earlier age. Active immunisation is effective 12 to 14 days after the initial injection, but a second vaccination three to four weeks later is required to sustain sufficiently high levels of protection. Commercially available single antigen or combination vaccines that contain tetanus toxoid include ***Proteqflu-TE (Merial)***, ***Prequenza T (Intervet)***, ***Tetanus (OBP)***, ***Coglavax (CEVA Animal Health)***, ***Cydectin Ewe guard (Fort Dodge)***, ***Multivax-P and Multivax-P Plus (Intervet)*** and ***Ovivax 6 (Cooper, Afrivet)***.

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KNOW YOUR PRODUCT

EFFEK VAN INWENDIGE PARASIETE IN DROË TYE

Gereeld word ons gevra wat die effek van inwendige parasiete is in droë tye. Daarom het ons besluit om hierdie onderwerp onder die soeklig te plaas in hierdie artikel:

Inwendige parasiete het 'n groot effek op skape se produksie en groei, en as gevolg van dit, neem boere stappe om hulle te verwyder op sekere tye deur middel van doseermiddels.

In droë tye is daar min of geen reën, die plant groei is swak, daar is dus 'n verswakking in voer produksie. Die kwaliteit van die voeding is dan ook swakker as normaal. Al die faktore dra by tot swakker produksie by skape en sit die diere onder stres.

Wat belangrik is om te onthou, is dat die parasiete op die weidings minder sal wees (alhoewel die derde stadia larf redelik gehard is), maar as daar inwendige parasiete binne die diere is, is hulle redelik beskerm teen die droogte.

Wat belangrik is, is dat sekere parasiete 'n verswakking in die eetlus van die skape veroorsaak, en terselfdetyd eet hulle minder voer, wat van swakker gehalte is. Hierdie kombinasie van faktore sit die skape onder geweldige stres, en hierdie stres veroorsaak dat die skape se weerstand teen die parasiete verswak word. Al die faktore dra by tot verswakking in produksie, wat erger gemaak word deur die teenwoordigheid van inwendige parasiete.

Daar is 'n proef in Suid Afrika gedoen om die verskil te meet tussen skape wat in 'n droogte behandel is teen inwendige parasiete, en 'n groep wat nie behandel is nie. Die verskil was soos volg:

Groep	Verskil teenoor begin massa
Ooie onbehandel teen inwendige parasiete	3.2% laer as begin massa
Ooie behandel teen inwendige parasiete	2.5% hoër as begin massa

Die verskil tussen die 2 groepe ooie was 2.8 kg. Die enigste verskil was dat een groep behandel is teen inwendige parasiete. Dus, as daar parasiete teenwoordig is in droogte tye, sal daar beslis produksie verliese wees as die situasie nie na gekyk word nie.

Hoe om te besluit of u moet doseer in hierdie tye:
Die ideale situasie sal wees om mis monsters te neem na die plaaslike veearts om te bepaal of dosering nodig sal wees. Onthou: skape wat onder stres is, is meer vatbaar vir die parasiete, selfs al is daar minder parasiete teenwoordig.

Moet asseblief ook nie onnodig doseer nie.

Produk keuses vir die tyd van die jaar:
Vir lammer dosering beveel ons **Virbamax First Drench** aan op lammers ouer as 6 weke ouderdom. **Virbamax First Drench** bied kragtige omvattende aksie teen parasiete wat lammers se groei effekteer.
Agravet Orange vir die groot skape bied breë spektrum beheer van inwendige parasiete, en bied selfs 5 weke nawerking teen haarwurm.

Vir enige navrae - kontak gerus u plaaslike Virbac verkoopspersoon.

ANIMAL HEALTH

NATKARKAS-SINDROOM BY SLAGLAMMERS DALK SELENIUM/VITAMIEN E TEKORT?

Natkarkas-sindroom by slaglammers dalk selenium/vitamien E tekort?

Die groot aantal afkeurings en afgraderings van slaglammers by die Suide se twee uitvoerabattoirs weens die sogenaamde natkarkas-sindroom is regtig kommerwekkend en moet so vinnig moontlik opgelos word om finansiële skade te beperk. Die toestand word gekenmerk deur 'n nat, slymerige onderhuidse vetlaag en vererger mettertyd na regte watersug onder die vel. Dit kom veral voor by slaglammers uit die suidelike Kalahari, waar die eenjarige grasse verlede seisoen baie geil gegroei het as gevolg van gunstige reënval. Dit beteken egter ook dat hierdie grasse se voedingswaarde hierdie tyd van die jaar (Oktober – November) baie swak is. Vinnig groeiende lammers wat voor Kersfees vanjaar bemark moet word, vereis 'n baie voedsame dieet juis omdat hulle so vinnig groei. Ongelukkig oorvleuel die skape se hoë voedingsbehoefte dus tans met 'n lae aanbod aan voedingstowwe deur die veld. Boonop vererger die natkarkas-sindroom blykbaar as die slaglammers stres ondervind, soos byvoorbeeld tydens speen.

Al hierdie tekens herinner aan die klassieke tekortsimptome wat met 'n ligte selenium- en vitamien E-tekort gepaardgaan. Selenium en vitamiene E volvul baie dieselfde funksies in die herkouer se liggaam en kan dus nie eintlik van mekaar geskei word nie. Selenium is ook 'n bestanddeel van vitamien E. In die diereliggaam verhoed hierdie twee voedingstowwe dat vry radikale (chemies skadelike afvalprodukte) soos peroksied tydens die sel se normale metabolisme vrygestel word en die selwand oksideer. As dit wel gebeur, word die selwand dermatig beskadig dat die vloeibare selinhoud vrygestel word. Dit veroorsaak 'n siektetoestand wat as "exudative diathesis" bekendstaan en ook as gevorderde natkarkas-sindroom beskryf kan word. Indien die sel vinnig metaboliseer, byvoorbeeld omdat 'n lam vinnig groei, word meer radikale vrygestel en word meer selenium en vitamien E benodig om hulle te neutraliseer en om die selwand te beskerm. Soortgelyk neem die behoefte aan metaboliese beskerming toe as die dier onder stres ly, soos wat byvoorbeeld onvermydelik tydens speen gebeur, ongeag of dit nou die lam is wat van die ooi verwyder word of omgekeerd.

Ongelukkig het ons geen ontledingsdata van die selenium- en vitamien E-inhoud van die suidelike Kalahari se grasse nie, maar tekortsimptome is uit soortgelyke dele van Suid-Afrika bekend waar swak weiding op laag vrugbare grond groei. As hierdie data op Namibië se suidelike Kalaharigronde van toepassing is – en dit moet nog eers deur middel van ontledings bewys word – kan ons 'n baie lae selenium- en vitamien E-inhoud in die eenjarige grasse verwag. Dit wil dus voorkom asof vinnig groeiende slaglammers se reeds hoë selenium- en vitamien E behoefte verder verhoog word deur die speenstres wat hulle na speen ondervind, en dit op 'n tyd van die jaar wat die weiding waarskynlik bittermin selenium- en vitamien E bevat. Vitamien E is 'n vetoplosbare vitamien wat in vetterige liggaamsweefsel opgeberg word. Ons weet egter van ander vetoplosbare vitamienes soos vitamien A, dat die liggaam se natuurlike voorraad teen hierdie tyd van die jaar opgebruik is en die diere 'n tekort sou ondervind as dit nie kunsmatig aangevul word nie. Ouer skape wat nie meer so vinnig groei nie en lankal gespeen is, ondervind nie hierdie tekort nie omdat hulle voedingsbehoeftes aan selenium en vitamien E laer is. Verder weet ons dat skape meer gevoelig is vir 'n seleniumtekort as beeste en bokke, asook dat 'n hoë swael- en waarskynlik ook kalkinhoud van die dieet selenium se absorpsie uit die spysverteringskanaal onderdruk. Nou kyk 'n bietjie hoe deurspek is die suidelike Kalahari se rooi sandgronde met kalkriwwe! As die natkarkas-sindroom dus wel aan 'n tydelike selenium- en vitamien E-tekort toegeskryf kan word, en weereens moet dit eers deur 'n deeglike wetenskaplike studie ondersoek word, sou 'n aanvulling met hierdie twee voedingstowwe die sindroom kan verhoed en skade kan voorkom.

Die uitdaging is dus om vas te stel of natkarkas-sindroom regtig aan 'n selenium- en vitamien E-tekort gekoppel kan word of nie. Dit is eintlik baie maklik. Al wat nodig is, is 'n vleisskaapboer wat bereid is om 200 skaaplammers vanaf vier weke voor speen beskikbaar te stel vir 'n proef op sy plaas, onder sy normale bestuursomstandighede. Helfte van die lammers word op vier weke voor speen met selenium en ook met vitamien E ingespuit en die ander helfte nie. Die twee groepe loop saam en moet dieselfde behandeling ontvang, behalwe vir die twee inspuitings. Selenium kan nie met vitamien E in dieselfde inspuiting gekombineer word nie omdat hulle organiese draers verskil; hulle moet dus afsonderlik ingespuit word, maar dit kan terselfdertyd plaasvind. Wanneer die 200 lammers geslag is, word hulle karkasdata vergelyk en daaruit sal blyk of die inspuitings 'n verskil gemaak het aan die voorkoms van natkarkas-sindroom, of nie. Enige skaapboer uit Aranos, Stampriet, Mariental, Gochas en Koës se wêreld wat bereid is om aan so 'n boereproef deel te neem, moet so spoedig moontlik met Dr Axel Rothauge by AGRA hoofkantoor in Windhoek (061-2909354) in verbinding tree. AGRA sal die twee inspuitings borg, want hulle kom in elk geval van ons rakke af, naamlik "Multimin + Se" wat die selenium verskaf en "Oral-Vit-A" wat naas vitamien A ook 'n goeie dosis vitamien E verskaf. Skadelik kan dit nie wees nie omdat al hierdie voedingstowwe bydra tot goeie gesondheid omdat hulle liggaamsselle se integriteit behou en ook vir normale voortplantingsprosesse benodig word. Die konsentrasie van selenium in "Multimin + Se" is laag genoeg om hoegenaamd geen vergiftiging toe te laat nie. Dit is nogal belangrik omdat voedingkundiges se aandag vier dekades gelede oorspronklik op selenium geval het omdat dit in sommige dele van die noordelike halfrond in oormaat in natuurlike weiding voorgekom en dus tot vergiftiging van vee aanleiding gegee het. Sedertdien word die seleniumpeil in aanvullingsmiddels baie laag gehou – so laag dat dit waarskynlik nou in tekort is.

Met hierdie vinnige reaksie wil AGRA geensins 'n deeglike wetenskaplike studie in die wiele ry nie. Dit sal steeds die uiterste bewys wees en kan ons boereproef as omstandigheidsgetuienis gebruik. Ons kan egter nie wag totdat iemand eendag iets doen nie want ons is in wese pro-aktief, hopelik tot groot voordeel van Namibië se landboubedryf.

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