



# Tekulima Nentfufuko

*Agriculture and Development*

4th Quarter 2012/13



Page 2-3  
State Of The Art Abattoir Ready For Operation

Page 3-4  
Fet College Gives Farmers Hope

Page 4-5  
Unemployed Graduates To Help Unshackle Failing Projects

Page 5-6  
Ploughing For Subsistence In Rural Areas Is The Order Of The Day

Page 6-7  
Crdp Benefiting The Previously Disadvantaged

Page 7-8  
Hod Assesses Progress At Junior Landcare Schools

Page 9  
Agriculture- Economic Growth Path

Page 10  
Lca Produces Yet More Academics

Page 11  
Youngster Takes Up Agriculture As A Career



**dardla**  
 Department:  
 Agriculture, Rural Development  
 and Land Administration  
 MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT







# STATE OF THE ART ABATTOIR READY FOR OPERATION

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**Final checks before systems go!!!**

**The meat was donated to the local community**

The Nkomazi Red Meat Abattoir was declared ready for operation and this was revealed after the Department of Agriculture Rural Development and Land Administration has successfully conducted a trial slaughter at the site. The trial took place on the 30th January 2013 at Nkomazi Red Meat Abattoir situated in Mzinti.

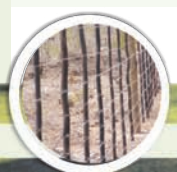
The trial slaughter was aimed to test the state of readiness of the abattoir to check whether it could be able to do the function it was intended for and to test whether the contractors have done the work according to the set standard by the Red Meat Abattoir Association.

Giving thumbs up to the Nkomazi Red Meat Abattoir after the department successfully conducted a trial slaughter was the Training Manager for Red Meat Abattoir Association, Mr. Neels Nel. Nel also stated that his association was responsible to provide abattoirs with services among of those was training and they also assist with the start ups of new abattoirs. He said, "we were invited and requested by the Dardla to come up to provide the services of the trial slaughter, to make sure that any problems on the production line up were sorted and all the equipment is working before the start of the actual slaughter processes". People who will be working at the abattoir will be trained at the site, alluded Nel.

According to Nel, the trial slaughter was successful and went very well no major problems encountered and all the equipments worked very well. An advice to the department from him was that every abattoir has got its unique way of operating, therefore people should be trained very well from the beginning particularly in regards to hygiene issues otherwise the abattoir will be a mess.

The beneficiaries of Nkomazi Red Meat Producers Organisation came in numbers to witness the trial slaughter of two cows donated by the department, and they were given an opportunity to see the facilities of the abattoir. The Chairperson of the Cooperative Ms Zodwa Mkhumbane said she was pleased with the progress made after many years of selfless efforts to see the abattoir operating.

The Nkomazi Red Meat Abattoir was the brain child of the Nkomazi cattle farmers, upon realising that they were struggling with marketing their cattle, they started an organisation called Nkomazi Red Meat Producers in 1999. The Nkomazi Red Meat Abattoir was initially registered as a cooperative with 350 beneficiaries and now there were 163 active members, with 105 males, 58 women and 25 youth. The abattoir is located on a 530 ha land at Mzinti in (Ward 19) under Matsamo Traditional Council and in one of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) sites in Nkomazi Local Municipality.





The state of the art abattoir is one of the many important interventions that the Dardla aimed to improve the lives of the rural areas through infrastructure development. Among the department's goals with the establishment of the abattoir was to create a sustainable market for livestock farmers in order to promote the commercialization of livestock production in the municipality. It also aimed to create job opportunities for the locals and beneficiaries.

The Director for Ehlanzeni South District Services, Mr Oneday Magagula, also reported that the trial slaughter was conducted very successfully. He added that according to the specification provided by the

department's consultant, the abattoir was ready for operation, however, the few outstanding issues will be dealt with by the appointed Strategic Partner. He further said it must also be noted that following the trial slaughter the Veterinary Public Health and Foot Safety Unit raised certain issues that will be dealt with by the current contractor.

The department has appointed a strategic partner, who will be responsible to ensure that there was direct link to market, production inputs and logistics. The strategic partner was expected to come with capital investment, capacity building and skills transfer as well as technical and business management expertise.

## FET COLLEGE GIVES FARMERS HOPE

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### Vegetable production practical training conducted by FET Unit at KaHoyi vegetable project

Immediately after the grade 12 results were released for 2012 examination by the National Department of Education, the provincial Department of Agriculture Rural Development and Land Administration did not sit back instead it took various farmers from the Gert-Sibande District to a two weeks training course on vegetables production in Mzinti Training Centre at Nkomazi municipality on 15-25 January 2013.

According to Mr. Dumisane Ndhlovu, training officer from the Department, all the 14 farmers that have attended the training course on vegetables production have an agricultural background and attended the training course so that they can apply the knowledge they have obtained in their farms. The vegetables production

course is a National Qualification Framework (NQF) that has 19 credit units (Level two), he said.

The two weeks training course included theory and practical work. For the practical work, the farmers were taken to field trips in the Mzinti area whereby they went to a farm to identify some of the diseases which are found on plants such as early blight, late blight, fusarium wilt, verticillium wilt, powdery mildew, botrytis rot, bacterial wilt, bacterial speck and bacterial spot.

Some of the activities the farmers were involved in included visiting the Naas shopping centre where some economic activities happen at Nkomazi municipality. An interaction or market research session between the





farmers and vendors took place with the sole purpose to find out where the vendors obtain their produce and the frequency of obtaining the produce and how much it was costing.

Ndlhovu said, the visit to local markets was to show farmers that indeed there is demand for fresh produce and one can supply vendors with what they produce in their farms and it does not necessarily need to be a big market that they can supply. He also said you can start small and then grow bigger to supply bigger companies as long as you are reliable and consistent with your fresh produce supply.

One of the farmers who attended the training Mr Mduduzi Nduze said farming is his life and he feels very much fortunate to be part of the trainees. Nduze is looking forward at starting a two hector farm that will produce vegetables, currently he has a broiler farm in Mkhondo local municipality, he said the compost will help a great deal in the planned garden and with the knowledge obtained during the training he will utilize it to his advantage.

**For those who are interested in participating in the FET's agricultural trainings the Department of Agriculture Rural Development can be contacted in their nearest agricultural offices which are available in the Mpumalanga Province or visit the departmental Website:  
<http://dardla.mpg.gov.za>**

## UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES TO HELP UNSHACKLE FAILING PROJECTS

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In an effort to deal with countless attempts to rescue the collapsing land reform farms in the province, the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration (DARDLA) has taken a bold step and called upon all unemployed agriculture graduates to salvage the sinking ship. Hundreds of graduates from around the province heeded the call



### Unemployed agriculture graduates listen to MEC presenting the Development Programme

from the DARDLA former MEC, Mrs Candith Mashego-Dlamini, after inviting unemployed agriculture graduates to participate in the turn-around of the land reform farms.

Mrs. Mashego-Dlamini has since been moved to the Department of Health and Social Development after the recent cabinet reshuffled by Premier DD Mabuza. Before the cabinet reshuffle, Mashego-Dlamini addressed the graduates as DARDLA MEC at Lowveld College of Agriculture on the 17 February 2013. The meeting successfully continued the following day, where the programme managers engaged the graduates on various key departmental programmes.

Addressing the graduates on the first day, Mrs Mashego-Dlamini explained that the initiative was aimed at improving the skills base in the agricultural sector, and to develop partnership as part of the plans to turn around land reform farms. She stated that the agriculture sector employs a large number of unskilled labour workforce in Mpumalanga, yet statistics show that the sector in the province has less than 1.8 percent professionals.

The former MEC further indicated that the Department has identified 292 land reform farms that needed special attention. "Government has been investing heavily on these farms by developing both on-farm and off-farm infrastructure since the inception of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme. But the lack of management skills and resources at the farms has led to their downfall, hence our intervention," said Mashego-Dlamini.

The agriculture graduates would be given an on-the-field opportunity to work with the cooperatives that have been established by farmers, and be accountable to





the farmers that they service. Mashego-Dlamini said the graduates, who are expected to come up with new innovations that would assist to advance food production, would be placed in land reform farms, communal farms and gardens earmarked for the school nutrition programme and experiential training.

“You will be working closely with mentors, coordinators, commercial farmers, successful black farmers, retired agriculture professionals, extension officers and researchers. This will help you gain experience, practical training and work as junior farm managers and ensure good management practices on all the farmers,” said Mashego-Dlamini. She added that the

graduates would be receiving a stipend for a period of 12 months and upon completion of this term, the department would consider absorbing those who would have performed exceptional well in their respective farms.

The programme was received with mixed reactions; Ms Paulina Nurse Mahlangu from Ward 13 in Dr. JS Moroka Municipality is one of the many unemployed agriculture graduates that would benefit from the programme. She holds an Honours Degree in Agriculture but has been unemployed for many years. She warmly embraced the initiative, saying she hopes the opportunity would be her break-through in the agricultural sector.



Paulina Nurse Mahlangu posing a question to the MEC



HOD Ms NL Sithole responding to questions that graduates asked.



Ms Dudu Ndlovu presenting the Masibuyele Esibayeni Programme to graduates

## PLOUGHING FOR SUBSISTENCE IN RURAL AREAS IS THE ORDER OF THE DAY

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**T**he Bushbuckridge Municipality is known of its poor economic drivers which results in poverty and the lack of job opportunity in the area. However, agriculture and/or farming is highly practiced in the area; local people believe that farming can help fight hunger and poverty.

Dumphries C Irrigation Scheme is one of the examples of how Agriculture can help communities sustain their families. The scheme was started in 1986 by community members with the help of donors. The members or beneficiaries of the scheme used to plant groundnuts, butternuts, pumpkin and madupe and sell to the community. The scheme was later neglected, leading to its infrastructure becoming dilapidated and vandalized, and fencing collapsing.







Members of Dumphiries Scheme C with the Agric Advisor (on Khakhis) Mr Dingumlahla Shabangu at the Scheme before harvesting.

Farmers began to lose hope on the existence of the scheme, saying they will be left with nothing to sustain their families. This was soon to be the thing of the past after the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration, through its Ehlanzeni North District, intervened through the Comprehensive Rural Development Program (CRDP) to help the farmers on the fencing of the of the scheme. Farmers

also receive farming inputs and implements through Masibuyele Emasimini.

Dumphiries C Irrigation Scheme chairperson Mr Timothy Thwala sang praises to the DARDLA, saying the support provided will go a long way in ensuring sustainability of the scheme. He said this will help them feed their families and the community at large. "We had lost hope of the existence of the

scheme, worried how are we going to feed our families. The department assisted us with fencing, farming inputs and farming implements". said the delighted Thwala.

The scheme consists of 44 farmers, 3 of whom are youth who took up farming as their full time job. Currently the farmers have planted maize, groundnuts, and pumpkins, and their wish is to rotate their farming as per the season.

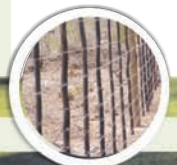
## CRDP BENEFITTING THE PREVIOUSLY DISADVANTAGED

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**C**hange in the lives of previously disadvantaged communities in Mpumalanga is evident thanks to the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP). Residents in a rural village of Glenmore, under the Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality, have started to heed the call for them to take charge of their own development, through their participation in Council of Stakeholders meetings, and forming Cooperatives for key projects like Livestock Production, Masibuyele Emasimini, School Nutrition, Access Road Maintenance and Building Material supplies.

This is, without a doubt, bringing about change and the much needed job opportunities to the local people. Recently, it was decided that the venue for the Provincial CRDP Technical Task Team meetings should be held at the municipalities and areas where CRDP projects are located.





The arrangement will also afford the Task Team an opportunity to visit projects and assess their progress. It will also assist after principals raised concerns about incomplete projects that had been reported as completed. As a result, this had led to Honourable Premier, Mr DD Mabuza deploying MECs and HODs to assess progress on projects. They made shocking discoveries regarding incomplete projects, houses etc.



**CRDP Technical Task Team members at a house in Glenmore built by MRTT students. The mud house at the back used to be home for the impoverished family**

The HOD for the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration, Ms Nelisiwe Sithole earlier said visits

to CRDP projects will help in the monitoring of progress, and to ensure that projects are completed. The Technical Task Team meeting held at Glenmore FET College

on the 1st February 2013 saw committee members visiting a health, agriculture, housing and a window/door frame making project in the area.

The CRDP Technical Task Team, comprised of CRDP Coordinators from different departments, is spearheaded by DARDLA as a Coordinating Department. At the meeting in Glenmore, the committee also discussed progress on the idea to brand CRDP municipalities, which is at an advanced stage. Sites where these billboards will be put up have since been identified, but inputs are still welcome in terms of where exactly can they can be put up.

## HOD ASSESSES PROGRESS AT JUNIOR LANDCARE SCHOOLS

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*Promoting food security and skills development in a sustainable manner in previously disadvantage communities*

Junior LandCare, which learners from various schools have fallen to its charms, forms a vital part of the schooling life and encourages learners to be bearers of its torch within their communities.

This was vividly evident in the recent schools visits by Ms Nelisiwe Sithole, the Head of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration (Dardla).

The schools visits took place at Ehlanzeni South on 8th January 2013, to assess the Junior Land Care Programme. The schools, which included Jerusalem High School in Jerusalem, Sindzawonye Primary School at Pienaar and Thekwane Primary School in Thekwane South, are beneficiaries of DARDLA's LandCare Programme. Ms Sithole







**HOD Ms NL Sithole explaining the aim of her visit to educators at Singobile Primary School in Louville**



**learners learn valuable lessons, in planting and maintaining school vegetable gardens**



**encourages schools and learners to prevent soil erosion**

and her entourage braved the scorching heat from the sun and went on a walk-about in each of the schools, zooming in on the DARDLA supported projects which are part of the Junior LandCare Programme.

The Junior LandCare Programme is currently active in 18 schools in Mpumalanga, in which learners get involved in erecting farming infrastructure and utilise resources at their disposal in ensuring community food security and skills development in a sustainable manner within previously disadvantaged communities. The programme, which is a National Government initiative, encourages schools and learners to prevent soil erosion by ensuring good grass cover and well designed foot paths, and remove alien plants and weeds to make way for planting vegetables and fruits.

It also encourages awareness campaigns in sustainable agriculture, thus encouraging youth to identify small projects aiming to promote components of LandCare (which is Soil Care, WaterCare and VeldCare). The trust of the Junior LandCare programme is making youth aware of the economic benefits of sustaining natural resources and utilizing it properly.

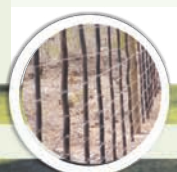
However, DARDLA HOD Ms. NL Sithole believes that the Junior LandCare Programme can be spread to communities where the schools are located, instead of it being confined to learners only. "The programme should also involve local communities because these learners come from the same households next to their schools. Therefore these communities need to be mobilised towards supporting this programme." said Sithole. She also called for the establishment of Project Teams at the schools that will help identify all the needs for their respective Junior LandCare schools. "We need those Project Team members to be innovative, to think out of the box and make this

programme sustainable. The Project Teams must include officials from the department, especially from LandCare and Extension Officer; let us also ensure that we have an SGB representative in the team."

Principals from the schools applauded the department for its assistance with the Junior LandCare Project. They however raised few concerns, which included water shortage and the lack of support from local communities, amongst others. Principal at Sindzawonye Primary School, Mr AM Mabuza said the same community surrounding their school is not supportive. "They steal our produce which is actually meant for feeding the kids while they are attending class", said Mabuza.

The HOD commended the management teams at the schools for their commitment and innovation in ensuring the greening of their schools. The Thekwane Primary School is a good example in this regard, with a well looked-after green garden, and paved walk-ways. Principal Ms Mkhathjwa said they have also adopted a wetland next to her school, helping learners with practical lessons on their Environmental studies.

In all the schools she visited, including schools in Matsulu, Kaapmuiden and Umjindi Trust on 10th January 2013, Ms Sithole gave advices on rain water harvesting, installation of boreholes, paving footpaths and planting grass to avoid soil erosion, and most importantly mobilising the surrounding communities to protect and support the Junior LandCare schools. She said the programme will help instil a culture of being responsible among the learners, and encourage them to take agriculture as a career. The HOD is yet to visit other schools in Ehlanzeni North, Gert Sibande and Nkangala Districts.







# AGRICULTURE - ECONOMIC GROWTH PATH

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The Agricultural industry is one of the major drivers of economic growth in the province. As part of addressing the challenge of poverty, inequality, unemployment and sustainable livelihood, the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration has prioritized crop production through Masibuyele Emasimini (ME) Programme.



**Mr. Praisego Moyo, in his maize field showing off his product**

farmer and his/ her needs to offer good advice, I am talking about a person who empowers farmers in every possible way”, Mr Moyo said.

The main objectives of the ME programme are to provide mechanization support to the poor community households whose land is lying fallow to participate in agriculture through tilling their fields / backyards. The targeted beneficiaries are those who have been excluded

The ME programme was introduced as an intervention to mobilize people back to agriculture as a means of sustaining livelihoods. The goal of the ME programme is to increase community food production so as to attain household food security, especially for the poor and vulnerable households.

Mr. Praisego Tembani Moyo of Weltevreden Farm at Emalahleni municipality is one of the people who have full evidence about Masibuyele Emasimini programme and other services offered by DARDLA. He is a member of Lima Ngilime Cooperative for commercial farmers. Being motivated by his father, who is a livestock farmer and having a passion for agriculture from childhood, Mr Moyo started farming in 2007 whereby the Department assisted him with maize seeds for a start. In 2008 he started planting soya beans, since then he never looked back. The DARDLA is assisting him with tractors, implements and fertilizers. He says passion without purpose is dangerous, passion should be profitable.

Currently Mr Moyo planted 218 ha of maize which he supplies to Afgri. For this year, he says he is looking at approximately 5.5 of tons per ha which he will supply. Mr. Moyo says he appreciates the service he receives from the local extension advisor of the Department. “It feels good to work with somebody who understands a

in the past government interventions. The programme also provide production inputs so as to ensure food massification, ensure food security at household level, increase access to food, increase farm income through crop sales, create jobs through tractor operators and implementation of production operations on farms supported under the programme

There's a saying that for one to be in power, he should have empowered somebody. Mr Moyo has four permanent employees and hires 40 people during the harvesting period. His advice to other emerging farmers is that “people should always try to seek information, and when that opportunity avails itself, they should grab it with both hands. They must be open minded and take advices from their extension officers”

It is the duty of an extension officer to:

- Use democratic methods in educating farmers.
- Help in adoption of innovations.
- Increase farm yields and improve the standard of living of farmers
- Make good communities better and progressive. This manifests that working together; we can drive back unemployment and reduce economic inequality and poverty.



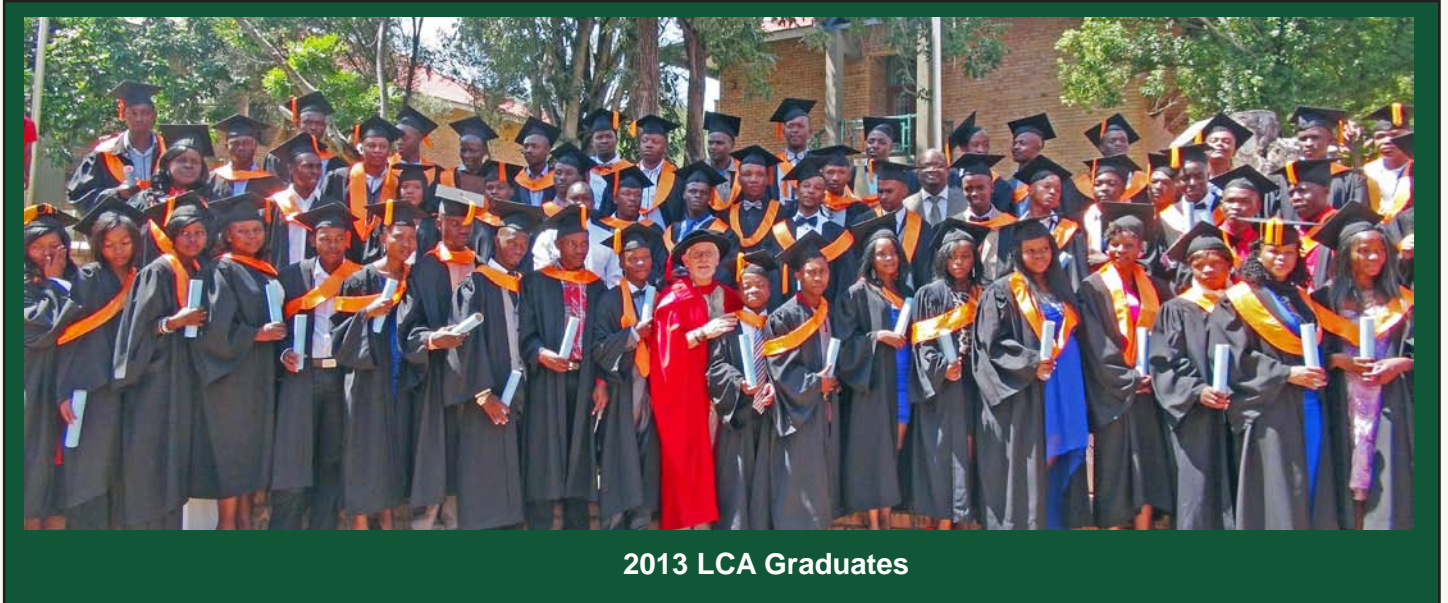




# LCA PRODUCES YET MORE ACADEMICS

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2013 LCA Graduates

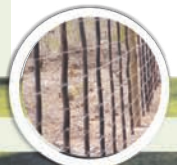
The Lowveld College of Agriculture held its 21st graduation ceremony on Friday the 22nd of March 2013 in its headquarters main hall situated in Nelspruit. Lecturers, proud family members and stakeholders, gathered at the College to witness and celebrate the success of the 78 graduates after they successfully completed their Diplomas. The graduation day served as a motivation to other aspirant agriculturalists that hard work does pay off.

Key speakers at the ceremony included DARDLA MEC, Mrs V. Siwela and Dr Steve Worth from the University of Kwazulu-Natal's Environmental Sciences Faculty, who had worked with the College for a number of years. DARDLA's Chief Director for Research and Structural Training Services, Mr Stemmer Ndala was the programme director at the graduation.

During her keynote address at the graduation ceremony, MEC Siwela said "This event comes at a time when there is a huge need for relevant people to take the agriculture sector to another level. Our efforts as a department are focused on encouraging and instilling agriculture to young minds at school level. The MEC also spoke about plans to turn Land Reform farms

around, saying the department decided to source the services of unemployed agriculture graduates from the province, who would be deployed to the identified ailing farm that needs intervention. "These young people are expected prove how good they understand farming and farm management. They will need to come up with strategies and innovation to bring about change and improvement on these farms", said MEC Siwela.

In his motivational speech, University of Kwazulu-Natal's Dr Steve Worth encouraged the graduates to aim higher now that they have their Diplomas. "You should just keep going until you reach PhD level. Now that you have the relevant skill, you should consider becoming independent farmers, to help in the department's effort to ensure food security". He also encouraged them to consider venturing into farming because they already have the relevant skill that can see them becoming independent farmers. Dr. Worth had worked closely with the College Management to ensure the advancement and upgrade of the campus in all spheres.







# YOUNGSTER TAKES UP AGRICULTURE AS A CAREER

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A cow and 2 calves placed in a mobile crush for demonstrations; branding and vaccination

**N**komazi - Dedication and passion have motivated a grade 11 learner, to be certain in her decision to consider agriculture as a career after matriculation, she participated in the farmers' day event.

Agriculture student from Mahhushe Agricultural High school, Ms Nokulindwa Thwala was one of the honoured students who had 1st hand experience of information sharing with farmers, the Department and the private sector.

On 22 February 2013, the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration, jointly with Obaro Malelane, successfully hosted a Farmers' Day event in Mzinti Training Centre at Nkomazi Local Municipality aimed to educate and share information on various topics with farmers, students and other stakeholders. Information was also shared on how to make livestock production a business.

Mr. Braam De Beers, Branch Manager at Obaro Malelane stated that the event was also aimed at giving livestock farmers an opportunity to see what equipments to use when branding and vaccinating their livestock, including how best to look after them.

During the event farmers from various villages and learners from Mahhushe and Indlangamabala Agricultural High Schools were given an opportunity to listen to presentations and view demonstrations on animal identification, branding, dehorning, vaccination, breeding, feedlot project and managing their livestock.

Impressed with the activities of the day, Nokulindwa further said that her love for livestock and food production was growing daily, adding that it is a myth that the youth had lost interest in agriculture. "There is still more of us who are interested in agriculture, I love agriculture with all my heart. At home I have a small garden where I plant vegetables. Agriculture is my passion. I am glad that our school was part of this adventure to see and learn how things are done," said Nokulindwa. She believed that in order for the province's economy to grow, government needs to invest more resources into agriculture.

In her quest to further her vision in the industry, she was currently studying Agricultural Science, Agricultural Management Practical, Physical Science and Mathematics as part of her subjects.

A livestock farmer Mr. John Masilela from Jeppes Reef village owns about 29 cattle since he started farming in 2005. He said the event was very informative and has learned how to take good care of his livestock, giving it proper feed and vaccinations. He indicated that some of the challenges that they were experiencing was that of people forcefully taking their grazing camps and building houses.

The DARDLA Director for Ehlanzeni South District Services Mr. OB Magagula advised all the farmers to form cooperatives in order to access the department's programmes, financial support, markets and farm infrastructure. He also encouraged them to support the Nkomazi Red Meat Abattoir, soon to be fully operational.







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