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THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD VACCINATION PROGRAMME

Zandisiwe Manyathela

Disease prevention is of the utmost importance in any animal production enterprise. Adequate nutrition, strategic de-worming and dipping and a well-designed vaccination programme are all necessary to maintain herd health. Like humans, animals suffer from diseases caused by many factors and one of the best means of preventing the suffering is to create a strong immunity from birth. Vaccination stimulates the body to produce its own defence against infection, and therefore it is important to vaccinate young animals as early as possible after the initial defence from colostrum has subsided and in older animals annually or before the breeding season. A vaccination programme is an important tool to use in herd health programmes for the protection of animal health, however, vaccination should be used in conjunction with good management practices.

It is important to know which diseases to vaccinate against and which vaccine to use, depending on the area and stage of production the animals are in, in order to supply the correct drug according to the animal's needs. Administering the correct vaccines is a very important task that can have a huge impact on the health and well-being of animals and the profitability of the enterprise. Vaccination programmes thus assist farmers in planning ahead to prevent the introduction of new diseases in the herd. It is therefore very important to carefully draw up a vaccination programme with the help of a veterinarian that is best suited to the area, as well as the type of production system.

For comprehensive information to assist in planning and developing a vaccination programme for their animals, Extension Suite

Online users can navigate to any animal commodity of choice by selecting "**Animal Production**" and then any one of the main menu icons on the main menu bar at the top of the page. Now select "**Production Information**" on the sidebar, then select "**Health and Diseases**" followed by the information option sub-item "**Vaccination and inoculation**". A pop-up option page will appear which will give the user the option of declining or accepting. It is important to read the page and confirm by accepting the terms and conditions.

A local veterinarian, who understands the local and current conditions, is an important advisor to consult for advice on any health and vaccination programme the user may plan to implement. Users can consult their nearest veterinarian by obtaining their contact details by selecting the "**Regional Data**" navigation tab, then selecting "**Infrastructure**". The user can then select their preferred search method and fill in any information required, then click on the veterinarians bar at the bottom of the page and then the search option. A list of veterinarians within the selected area, together with their contact details will appear.



Zandy Manyathela

ESO UTILISATION, A PROVINCIAL KPA

Piet van Zyl

In the agricultural environment in South Africa there are three, first level stakeholders playing important roles in terms of Extension Suite Online (ESO) utilisation and its impact on food security in general, and food production for the poor in particular. ESO is without equal as a web-based agricultural decision support system. Its impact on farming and extension over the past 46 months has been impressive.

Stakeholder one is the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) who is mainly responsible for financial and administrative support of the nine provincial departments, who as a group represents the second important stakeholder. The third stakeholder is Manstrat Agricultural Intelligence Solutions (MAIS) who is responsible for the maintenance, up-dating and hosting of the system, as well as training and user support.

As the second stakeholder the provincial group is responsible for ensuring that extension personnel are available for registration and ESO training; that they have the necessary hardware and software; and that officers are motivated and encouraged by their supervisors/managers to use ESO to the advantage of the farmers they serve. The provinces are also the most important stakeholder because they hold the key to the use and application of the system - to motivate, train and capacitate officials to use the system to its fullest, as many are doing already.

The Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Affairs (DARDLA) held its 2014 Extension Summit from 11-13 March during which the challenging issue of "*the lack of technical and other agricultural information for extension officers and their clients, the farmers*" was discussed in depth. The outcome was a summit proposal to include ESO utilisation as a KPA for the Province's extension officers. By tackling the lack of information problem in this way, the Province is leading the way in solving, probably the biggest challenge to agriculture in South Africa today, namely the lack of market and production information.

The immediate result of the resolution was that the province advanced from 7th to 3rd place on the National Comparative Utilisation Table. Well done Mpumalanga!

NATIONAL ESO USER: MARCH 2014

The monthly national ESO user will receive the following prizes: First time National ESO User 2013: 4 Gig USB memory stick, second time National ESO User 2013: Digital Camera, third time National ESO User 2013: Nokia Lumia 520, fourth time National ESO User 2013: Samsung Galaxy Tab.

Congratulations to Ms Vonani Stella Mabunda (Limpopo Department of Agriculture), who is the ESO Top National User for March 2014.



Ms Vonani Stella Mabunda

The Extension Suite Online Top National User for March 2014 is Ms Vonani Stella Mabunda from Limpopo Department of Agriculture. Congratulations Vonani! Vonani's home town is Phalaborwa, of which the town centre is approximately 3 km from the Kruger National Park.

Vonani is currently situated in the Limpopo province and works in the Ba-Phalaborwa, Lulekani municipality under the Namakgale Service Centre. Machaba is her municipal manager, Mushwana her service centre manager and Mr Malefana is her district senior manager.

Her responsibility is to assist/advise farmers on farming practices and to coordinate food security project programmes on development of infrastructure. She is currently assisting/advising 3 Co-operatives, 6 Food security projects (68 farmers), 2 Home gardens, 7 School gardens and 150 individual farmers. Vonani started using ESO right after the Department introduced the programme to assist all extension officers together with farmers on finding solutions.

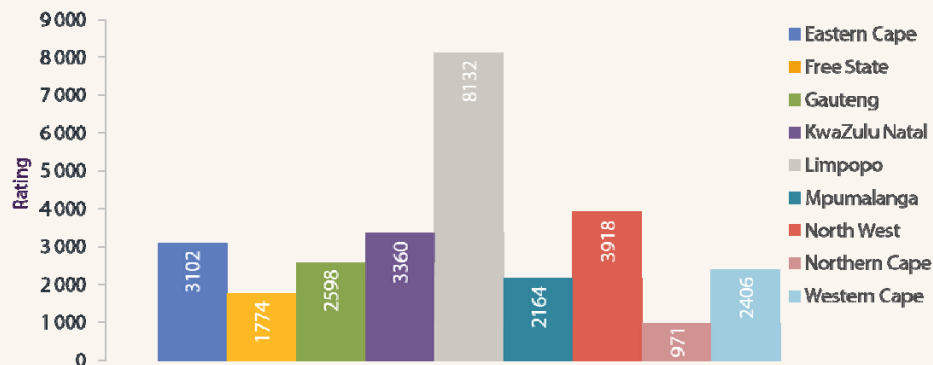
She makes use of ESO during the day at the office or on the farm. She sometimes access ESO using her Samsung Note II and is also able to respond to the challenging questions of her farmers immediately. She makes use of ESO to do feasibility studies for farmers as well. Vonani describes ESO as the best problem solver for different crops and says that she can now access information everywhere she goes as long as she is connected. She says that ESO is "SMARTER" and it is the "doctor" that she consults regarding her daily activities.

To conclude, Vonani says that her relationship with her clients/farmers has improved, because ESO serves as an important source of information. It also helps her to gain more knowledge and to improve extension service delivery.

ESO UTILISATION: MARCH 2014

ESO utilisation is determined through monitoring user utilisation in the nine provinces and by attaching values to Visits, Pages Visited and Duration of Visits; a rating is calculated to establish the National ESO USER of the Month.

PROVINCIAL TOP USER GRAPH



PROVINCIAL TOP USERS

PROVINCE	NAME
Eastern Cape	Bakhangele Minyelela
Free State	Moses Moshe Mbongo
Gauteng	Vhuthu Gavhi
KwaZulu Natal	Sifiso Johannes
Limpopo	Vonani Stella Mabunda
Mpumalanga	Lucas Shabangu
North West	Tlou Harrison
Northern Cape	Johan le Roux
Western Cape	Gcina Shiba

PEST TALK: FEATURED PEST

Further information on featured pest can be found on ESO.

Brown Locust

Scientific Name: *Locustana pardalina*

Popular Name: Brown Locust

Locusts belong to the grasshopper family and have the unusual ability to live in either a solitary or a gregarious state. The brown locust, which is by far the most common locust species in South Africa, overwinters in the soil in the egg phase. The eggs will hatch 10 to 14 days after as little as 10 mm of rainfall. During periods of drought the eggs may lie dormant in the soil for 3 to 4 years. It must be noted that in the solitary phase the insects have little or no impact on their arid and semi-arid habitat.



Brown Locust

Send your pest or disease related questions to newsletter@esuite.co.za with your name, province and the question and we will answer you via ESO's Question and Answer module or in the newsletter.

ESO TECH TIP "FINDING" EXTENSION SUITE ONLINE

Thapedi Setshedi

At the Help Desk we often find that current registered users, for many reasons, had forgotten the basics of accessing ESO, like their passwords or where to find ESO. As part of our service to our clients, herewith some reminders on what's required to get started on South Africa's premier agricultural decision support system:

- One needs to be registered as a user, have a password and the necessary hardware (computer) and a 3G connectivity device;
- A web browser like Internet Explorer, Firefox etc.;

To get going one must type the ESO web address - www.esuite.co.za into the browser's URL bar and press "enter" or "go". Alternatively, type the keywords "Extension Suite Online" or "esuite" into the search box of a preferred search engine such as Google. Click on the first search result, which will be Extension Suite Online. In some cases the second search result, will be the Manstrat AIS website where there is also a link to the ESO login page.

Any user requiring assistance may of course contact the ESO Help Desk by calling **0860 376 376/072 382 8279** or sending an email to support@esuite.co.za for assistance (including the retrieval of forgotten passwords) in "finding" Extension Suite Online again.

Do you have any technology related questions? Send them to newsletter@esuite.co.za, with your name, province and the question and we will answer them in a following newsletter edition.



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