



Prof. Izak Groenewald

Centre for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development

Overview

The Centre for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development was established in 1994, in order to offer postgraduate training at master's degree level with a multi-disciplinary approach by means of distance education, and to undertake research with a view to the development and maintenance of sustainable agricultural production systems.

The international status of this programme was confirmed in 2007 when great interest was shown from all of the countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and students from Ireland, England, the Netherlands, Denmark, Kenya, Texas and Ethiopia. The international student component is approximately 50%.

Students come from all sectors of the agricultural milieu, including, amongst others, commercial and small farmers, as well as employees of the Department of Agriculture, the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), agricultural co-operatives and industrial institutions such as mining firms involved in the re-establishment of agricultural activities on their over-utilised land.

Students leave this programme well equipped to address the challenges of modern agriculture as depicted by ever-changing environmental constraints and challenges. Technological, managerial and thinking skills are developed.

In 2007, 54 students were selected from more than 100 enquiries for the programme. Our experience has shown that quality of tuition declines when larger numbers of students are enrolled per year.

During 2007, Ph.D. degrees were awarded to Drs Hendrik Smit and David Nthakheni. Dr Smit's research focused on: *Development of a systems model facilitating action research with resource-poor farmers for sustainable management of natural resources*, whilst Dr Nthakheni researched: *A livestock production systems study amongst resource-poor livestock owners in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province*. Prof. Edward Nesamuvuni, Extraordinary Professor of this centre and General Manager of Research, Provincial Department of Agriculture, Limpopo Province played a pivotal role in these studies.

The congress of the European Association for Animal Production (EAAP) was held in 2007 at Dublin, Ireland. During the congress, Prof. Izak Groenewald, Director of the centre, delivered

a poster presentation on recent advances in lick supplementation for livestock in rural areas. At the same congress, a master's graduate and current Ph.D. candidate of this centre, Mr Douglas Nkosi, presented a poster presentation.

A visit was paid to the Royal Agricultural College for Science and Technology in the United Kingdom (UK). This institution offers similar learning programmes to the one at the UFS, and existing course contents and new ideas were exchanged.



The centre presented a summer school during the first two weeks of October on the Main Campus in Bloemfontein. The purpose of the summer school was to provide subject guidance to the centre's distance-learning students and to summarise the year's assignments. The highlight of the summer school was a lecture by Prof. Edward Nesamuvuni, Extraordinary Professor at the centre and General Manager of Research, Provincial Department of Agriculture, Limpopo Province, on the role of agricultural research in the progress of rural communities. From the left are, front: Prof. Nesamuvuni and Prof. Izak Groenewald, Director of the centre; back: Mr Khathu Tshikolomo, Senior Manager: Crop Production, Limpopo, Ms Jane Tshovhote, Manager of the Giyani Municipality, Limpopo, and Mr Maanda Dagada, Manager of Land and Agrarian Reform, Limpopo. All three are registered as Ph.D. students at the centre.

Collaborations

Collaboration with the following institutions has been established and maintained in various ways:

- University of Namibia,
- University of Virginia, United States of America (USA)
- University of Cornell, USA
- Royal Agricultural College, UK
- Dronten Professional Agricultural University – Netherlands
- University of Wageningen – Netherlands



A group of 52 emerging farmers from Gobabis in the Omaheke region of Namibia visited the centre. The group, which comprised several ladies and young people, consisted mostly of small and large scale cattle farmers. They were addressed by several lecturers from the centre. Visits were also paid to a large goat farm in Upington and Beefmaster's feeding paddock in Christiana, amongst others. The farmers wanted to acquaint themselves with animal production practices and possible food value chains and establish future business partners for their businesses. From the left, are: Prof. Izak Groenewald, Director of the centre, Sir Lesley Kaundara, member of the group, Ms Inge Kangootui, member of the group, Prof. Kobus Laubscher, Associate Professor at the centre as well as the Department of Agricultural Economics, and Mr Joel Tjaondjo, member of the group.

Staff

Professor: Prof. Izak Groenewald

Professors Extraordinary: Profs Frans Swanepoel, Edward Nesamuvuni, Alice Pell

Senior Researchers: Drs Aldo Stroebe, Florence Nherera

Associate Lecturer: Prof. Kobus Laubscher

Programme Co-ordinator: Ms Mia Kirsten

Officers: Mss Reneé Heyns, Suzette Seymore

Messenger: Ms Evodia Khalata

Contact details

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Research outputs

Reports

Swanepoel, F.J.C., Lombard, C. & Stroebe, A. 2007. *United in our diversity: Working together towards the total emancipation of rural women from poverty and hunger. Executive summary and analysis.* Position paper to Cabinet for the 4th World Conference on Rural Women.

Conference contributions

Groenewald, I.B. & Katjiteo, Z.K. 2007. *Efficacy of homemade lick supplements for cattle in rural areas of Namibia.* Poster presented at the 58th Annual Meeting of the European Association for Animal Production (EAAP), Dublin, Ireland. 26-29 September.

Langa, T., Nkosi, D., Meeske, R., Palic, D. & Groenewald, I.B. 2007. *The effect of ensiling Bonsilage Mai on the fermentation quality of whole maize crop: A laboratory study.* Paper presented at the XII International Feed Technology Congress, Novi Sad, Yugoslavia. 13-15 November.

Nkosi, D., Groenewald, I.B., Palic, D., Meeske, R., Leeuw, K., Ratsaka, M. & Langa, T. 2007. *The effect of dietary inclusion of potato hash silage on the growth performance*

of sheep. Paper presented at the XII International Feed Technology Congress, Novi Sad, Yugoslavia. 13-15 November.

Nkosi, D., Ratsaka, M., Leeuw, K., Palic, D. & Groenewald, I.B. 2007. *Laboratory evaluation of vegetable wastes as alternative feed sources for livestock farmers in South Africa.* Poster presented at the 58th Annual Meeting of the European Association for Animal Production (EAAP), Dublin, Ireland. 26-29 September.

Stroebe, A. 2007. *Research and innovation management: Key to prosperity.* Convenor of the 6th Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association (SARIMA) Conference, Potchefstroom, South Africa. 9-11 May.

Stroebe, A., Swanepoel, F.J.C. & Van Niekerk, J.A. 2007. *Agricultural research for development: Facilitating leadership roles in South African Higher Education.* Paper presented at the 5th Conference of the Global Consortium of Higher Education and Research for Agriculture (GCHERA), San José, Costa Rica. 5-8 March.

Swanepoel, F.J.C. & Stroebe, A. 2007. *Positioning agricultural research institutions to be fully effective.* Paper presented at the 4th FARA Annual General Meeting, Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa. 10-16 June.