



Congress 2024 - directional

- What is the future of agriculture in South Africa?
- Is organized agriculture still relevant in its current form?

The above are just some of the issues that will be addressed during this year's Congress, which will take place on August 7 & 8 in Bloemfontein.

The Congress is the highest authority of Free State Agriculture and every member is invited to give your input and be part of the solution!

The call to Congress has already been sent to all farmers' associations. Registrations and/or inquiries can be sent to cynthia@vslandbou.co.za

regards

Francis Wilken

CONGRESS
2024

QUO VADIS?
WHERE ARE WE HEADING?

7 & 8 AUGUST 2024
BLOEMFONTEIN

ENQUERIES :
Cynthia@vslandbou.co.za
Elana@vslandbou.co.za
051 444 4609

ONGEAG



RURAL SAFETY

Private investigators on livestock theft continue to expand

A further thirteen (13) additional private investigators on livestock theft in the Free State were trained and empowered by FSA's Peet Swanepoel and Isabel Kruger. This brings the total number of private investigators to 20. The investigators are based in the following towns, namely Parys, Frankfort, Senekal, Kroonstad, Ladybrand, Fouriesburg, Bloemfontein (Bainsvlei and De Brug), Bultfontein, Edenburg, Jacobsdal, Reddersburg and Steynsrus. Free State Agriculture has also received numerous requests for further training in other areas.

Jakkals le Roux, Chairman of the Free State Agriculture Rural Safety Committee states that the following elements must be taken into account when a community wants to set up such a service:

- Private livestock theft investigators must be Psira registered,
- Each farming community must determine their own cost structure and model in order to pay the private investigators' operational costs (travel costs and daily fees) or establish their own funding.

FSA will be responsible for the training, empowerment and support in relation to certain important tools as well as the integration of the information related to livestock theft.

FSA will hold consultation meetings in June and July 2024 in areas where new private investigators have been trained, engage in discussions with farming communities to inform them of what such investigations entail and that cooperation with the local police and livestock theft units is of crucial importance. They will also be made part of such meetings in order to establish better cooperation.

Inquiries regarding the private investigators can be directed to jane@vslanbou.co.za or peetswanepoel86@gmail.com

New Regional Manager, TLU

The new regional manager of Transvaal Landbou Union (TLU) in the Free State is Professor Andries Raath. Prof Raath takes over from his son, Jannie, from May 2024.

FSA met with Prof Raath and discussions regarding cooperation were touched upon in order to better address the interests and safety of farming communities in the Free State. VL wishes Professor Raath all the best and believes that his legal knowledge, experience and experience can be used for the benefit of farming communities in the Free State.



Prof Andries Raath



NATURAL RESOURCES

Climate change & carbon credits

During 13 to 17 May, the World Bank presented a land conference with the theme "Ensuring land ownership and access for climate actions". The overview can be viewed [here](#).

The significant theme was the protection of the rights of current land owners, which also includes a fair market price. In a recent media report it was indicated that land prices in the United Kingdom have doubled due to the demand for land for carbon credits. The problem with this is that smaller farmers cannot afford more land for expansion. This is a very important issue that Free State Agriculture (FSA) as well as Agri SA is watching at a national level and must guide the small and family farms, as well as the South African sector as a whole.

See Agri SA's mandated position on climate change [here](#)

FSA made input to the Climate Change Bill during the public hearings in the Free State that took place in March. The Bill is a broad framework for the fair and equitable transition to a low-carbon and climate-resistant economy.

Agri Relief Foundation donates again

Free State Agriculture thanks the [Agri Relief Foundation](#) who recently donated 35 blowers to our organisation. The blowers will be allocated to agricultural associations that need them most for firefighting. The first five have already been handed over to farmers' associations in the Southern Free State during an event in Trompsburg on 28 May.

FSA recently attended the successful "Central South Africa Wildfire Expo" from 3 to 4 May. The Expo combined presentations from academics and wildfire management experts from outside the province with practical demonstrations of equipment and techniques. The practical demonstration of how to use blowers correctly as well as how to manage a team of fire fighters more effectively was really informative.

Dr Jack Armour from FSA who attended the event points out that the state is phasing out certain aspects of the Kishugu / Working on Fire JV. FSA requests that members who are aware of Kishugu / WoF vehicles that have been transferred to the state (municipal structures) but are being misused or neglected, report to [Jack Armour](#) in the office.



COMMERCIAL

Treasury facility for infrastructure projects

In his State of the Nation Address (SONA), President Ramaphosa announced the establishment of a treasury facility to expedite the completion of major infrastructure projects that are already in development or well advanced in planning. This initiative aims to accelerate critical projects, especially those that have an impact on road rehabilitation.

However, the guidelines for this funding were introduced just before the deadline for submitting detailed project proposals. Free State Agriculture did identify key projects that are critical to the growth of the agricultural sector and requested the Treasury's help to identify and support future projects, and hold government institutions accountable for their implementation.

Furthermore, there is a call to align these projects with the Agricultural Master Plan (AAMP), especially in the Free State. This comes after the Premier announced in May that Springfontein AgriPark would be designated as the hemp and cannabis center of the province, despite concerns about the lack of scientific basis and alignment with the Spatial Development Plan.

FSA's letter to the treasury can be viewed [here](#).



FS-AIMS

By clicking on the FS-AIMS sticker image, you will be directed to a free registration website where any livestock farmer can securely fill out their profile with essential information that is subject to FSA's Personal Information Protection Act compliance protocol.

Roads - 825km transferred to Sanral

Through applied pressure, FSA succeeded in transferring 825km from the Free State government to SANRAL in 2023/24. It is also gratifying that SANRAL has received another written request from the Free State Premier for an additional 900km. SANRAL must first confirm the national importance of the routes before they will be able to take over the maintenance. Among the requests were dirt roads to be converted into tar roads.

Cell Phone Signal & Satellite opportunities

FSA requested during Agri SA's Economic Committee meeting on 07 May that the availability of satellite communication as well as its affordability be investigated in order to offer reliable cell phone signal to rural citizens. Furthermore, it was also requested that an investigation be instituted into ICASA's delay in allowing StarLink in South Africa.



RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Maluti PALS initiative produces good results

Free State Agriculture (FSA) was invited to attend the Annual Meeting of the Maluti PALS (Partners in Agri Land Solutions) initiative in Bethlehem on 22 May 2024.

We are proud of our members who participate in this collaborative initiative. New entrants to agriculture were guided in a clear legal and business management system to develop together and expand economically sustainably. New partnerships in Smithfield, Wepener and Ficksburg have been added to the nine Eastern Free State projects.

For more information visit <https://www.sapals.co.za/maluti-farming-pals/>

LABOUR

Submission of Wage Returns

Employers are again reminded that in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, the returns of earnings in respect of employees must be submitted by 30 June 2024. This involves the wages that were paid by a farm from 1 March 2023 to 28 February 2024 as well as a forecast of the wages from 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025 and includes working directors, temporary, permanent and seasonal workers.

Stephan Pietersen from Work Accident Support kindly provided information regarding the submission of the wage returns as well as a wage return form. The information is available on the closed section of our [website](#) (Login > Documents > Labour)

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