

Community Engagement Newsletter

Faculty of Veterinary Science
Autumn 2012



The 5th Annual Donkey Workshop at Onderstepoort, University of Pretoria, from 2 to 3 March 2012, funded by the Donkey Sanctuary, UK

Dr Nicole du Toit
(Tulbagh, Western Cape)

Speakers: Dr Andrew Trawford, the Donkey Sanctuary, United Kingdom. Dr Nicole du Toit, Tulbagh, Western Cape, South Africa.

The donkey workshop was organised with the collaboration of The Donkey Sanctuary, UK, the Onderstepoort Equine Clinic and the Veterinary Public Health Department, University of Pretoria. The aim of the donkey workshop is to raise awareness and improve local knowledge of donkey-specific problems relating to working donkeys in South Africa. There were 28 delegates that attended the workshop, the majority of which were animal health technicians. Animal caretakers, inspectors, vets and vet students were also present.

The morning lectures presented by Dr Trawford consisted of a history of the Donkey Sanctuary, UK, and the work it has done in developing countries and on donkey research. Dr Nicole du Toit explained the clinically relevant anatomical differences between donkeys and horses, and presented a detailed lecture on the common diseases seen in donkeys. She also discussed the role of donkeys in endemic and exotic equine diseases as listed by the International Office for Epizootics (OIE). Dr Patrick Page from Onderstepoort gave a very informative talk on the latest research and findings on African Horse Sickness, with an emphasis on the donkey's aspect of the disease. In the afternoon, the delegates had the opportunity to attend the hands-on practical, using the two resident OP donkeys, kindly arranged by Dr Elize van Vollenhoven. The donkeys were used in a demonstration of how to perform a complete examination of the donkey, as well as for pointing out common problems seen in working equids. Guidance on how best to advise owners on good husbandry practices was also discussed.



On Saturday morning all the delegates were taken by bus to see two donkey owners residing in Stinkwater near Hammanskraal, as arranged by Mr Meshack Matlou of the Tshwane SPCA. The delegates were divided into two groups, and after questioning the owners about their donkey husbandry practices, each group examined one owner's donkeys. The owners were really keen to learn how to care for their donkeys, particularly basic first-aid care. The members of the group hope that they were able to convey to the owners that homemade remedies such as engine oil and battery acid, often used to treat wounds and kill parasites, were detrimental to their donkeys, and ideas for cheap effective alternatives were offered. All the donkeys were in good condition, with a few minor harness and bit lesions, apart from one donkey that had severe wounds on the chest and front legs, which were highly suspicious of epizootic lymphangitis. This owner was also keen to have two of his male donkeys castrated.

It is hoped that a student community engagement project from Onderstepoort will be able to come out to castrate these donkeys and to make a definite diagnosis on the sick donkey and provide appropriate treatment, since the owner was particularly attached to this donkey. Two other donkeys that had wounds on their polls caused by ticks were cleaned and tick grease was applied. The owner was also advised how to treat such wounds.

It is furthermore hoped that in future more workshops can be arranged and, ultimately, that these animal health workers will be able to go out into rural areas and put their new knowledge into practice in communities they are involved in.



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Rust de Winter Excursion

Dr Fortune Sithole
(Senior Lecturer)

On February 16, 2012, BVSc 3 students headed out early in the morning for a day out at Rust de Winter. This long awaited day was preceded by lots of preparations, led by Dr Nenene Qekwana who is a lecturer in the Paraclinical Sciences Department (Veterinary Public Health Section) and also a very fervent supporter of community engagement. BVSc 3 students spend most of their time here at Onderstepoort (OP) and this was going to be one of rare opportunities to get out and work with the community as part of a module.

**A Community
Engagement
meeting will
be held on
15 May 2012
at 13:30**

To give a brief background, Rust de Winter is a farming community located in Gauteng. Most farmers are emerging cattle farmers and still need advice and help on good farming practices as well as primary animal health care. State Veterinarians and Animals Health Technicians from the Gauteng Department of Agriculture are leading a co-ordinated and integrated effort with other state and local government bodies to develop this community. They realised that a co-ordinated effort is more practical and sustainable than one that is limited to animal health. They also pulled in expertise from the Faculty's Veterinary Public Health (VPH) Section. Dr Qekwana has been actively involved in this initiative for a couple of years. Part of the PHE601 module given to BVSc 3 students and co-ordinated by VPH teaches community engagement, so a few years ago it was decided that once a year, as part of the course, students would go to Rust de Winter and spend the day vaccinating animals as well as doing some primary health care. This outing/excursion is organised by the Gauteng State Veterinary Services as well as the Faculty of Veterinary Science and is also meant to generate publicity on animal health and welfare. The logistics around this day are very intricate as students have to be divided into groups which are then allocated a number of farmers. So organising this begins weeks before the actual excursion. Vaccines have to be obtained and the cold chain has to be maintained throughout.



This year's excursion was a resounding success. Aside for a few glitches (which are inevitable given the logistics), the day went on very well and it is our desire to continue doing this excursion as in one day we achieve 2 university objectives: teaching as well as community engagement. The excursion was covered by SABC as well as AgriTV.

The excursion is an opportunity for students to experience another farming system with its own unique set of challenges. The desire to achieve optimal animal health, husbandry and welfare may be there but ultimately socio-economic factors dictate the reality. Veterinarians (like other professions) need to play a key role in recognising these realities and challenges and tailor our strategies around them. The day ended on a lighter note as everyone entertained their appetites to wots and cool drinks.



DONATIONS

Please contact one of the following people if you would like to donate money, dog food, collars, leashes, blankets or your time:

Sr Sarah Johnson (012) 529 8387 / 079 183 1878 sarah.johnson@up.ac.za

Mr Jacques van Rooyen (012) 529 8339 / 083 289 1312 jacques.vanrooyen@up.ac.za

Mr Eugene Machimana (012) 529 8100 /083 687 0181 eugene.machimana@up.ac.za

History and origin of the Makapanstad CVC

**Sr Debbie Pleaner,
(CVC co-ordinator Gauteng)**

Around November 2011 the University of Pretoria approached the South African Veterinary Association Community Veterinary Clinics (SAVA CVC) for assistance. For many years they have had a mobile clinic doing an outreach into the area of Makapanstad and surrounds. The primary goal of this unit was to service the production animal population in this area. As time progressed, however, they were seeing more and more domestic cats and dogs. This reached a point where they were struggling to accommodate the demand and were not able to assist the production animals, as was the original intention, due to time constraints. The SAVA CVC was therefore approached to start a CVC to attend to the domestic pets in this area, so that the mobile unit would be free to attend to the production animals.

In late November, representatives of the CVC head office went with the mobile clinic to assess the situation, and after that it was agreed that a CVC would be started. Dr Dawie Blignaut agreed to be the responsible veterinarian for this clinic. The vets on the mobile clinic assist this CVC where necessary.

The first clinic was held on 11 January 2012. The CVC is now held on a Wednesday every second week. It begins at 09:00 under a tree opposite the Ratjiepan Clinic. At 11:00 the clinic is packed up and moves on to the Makapanstad Tribal Offices to attend to the pets there from 12:00 to 14:00. The services offered by the CVC are primary health care. The CVC vaccinates, deworms and dips pets for a nominal fee. The fee is to keep the clinic sustainable.

Should sick or injured pets be presented at the CVC the attending vet will treat them according to his/her discretion



and with the owner's consent. There is no other veterinary facility that we are aware of in reasonable proximity to this community, so the mobile unit and the CVC constitute the only veterinary aid provided to this community at this point.

As the CVC is still very new to this community we do not see large numbers at any one clinic yet, but we are sure this CVC will grow over time. In January about 50 pets were attended to by the CVC, and about 70 in February. The CVC also assists with sterilisations. Thus far, three sterilisations have been performed.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

1. Production Animal Outreach Clinic: Makapanstad & Ratjiepan Project: Wednesdays
2. Mamelodi Animal Health Care (MAHC): Mondays to Fridays
3. Loate CVC: Bi-monthly on Wednesdays



DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO PUBLISH?

The Community Engagement Committee invites you to submit short articles to be published in the next Newsletter (Winter 2012). The Community Engagement article should not be more than one page long. Contact person Mr Eugene Machimana Tel: (012) 529 8100 (w) Cell: 083 687 0181 Email: eugene.machimana@up.ac.za

Visit the UP Community Engagement website regularly for updates about projects and funding opportunities.