

# Community Engagement Newsletter



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Veterinary Science  
Summer: December 2017



## HORSING AROUND IN ORANGE FARM

Vianca Naidu, Sarah Oodit, Angelique Jacobs, Stephan Spamer and Xanthe Woychieh (BVSc III)

Our community engagement project afforded us the opportunity of working in association with the Highveld Horse Care Unit (HHCU) in the rural community of Orange Farm in Johannesburg.

Orange Farm is a community that has a mixed population of equines such as horses, donkeys and mules. Many of the community members are unable to speak or understand English, as their home language is Sesotho. However, we were helped by means of an interpreter and tried our best to communicate with the members despite the language barrier.

We were given the task of educating the community members further on proper equine management. Many animals in the community were used for pulling carts containing coal, scrap, and other materials. The owners rely greatly on their animals for the transport of materials, which is how they make an income.

We went into the community with a series of topics to discuss with the horse owners in the hope of educating them on proper animal management. These topics include the use of basic materials, uses of equine manure, basic grooming, basic wound care and parasite control.

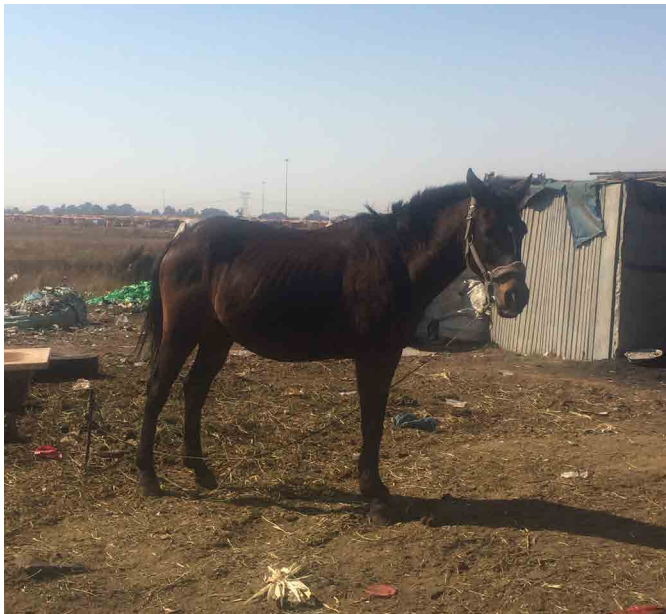
We went into the community with open minds and no presumptions. We wanted to learn from the community members and at the same time share some of our knowledge with them. The informal discussions we had with the horse owners were extremely interactive. Not only did they learn certain tips on how to care for their animals, but they also learnt how to adapt their current methods to ensure the best quality of life for their animals.

We believe that there were many beneficial aspects to our project. Owners learnt how to manage their animals correctly, ensuring

optimal productivity, how they could use their animals and their byproducts to their advantage, as well as how to ensure their animals remained healthy. All the abovementioned points were not only economically beneficial for the community partners, but also enlightened them on the best methods to care for their animals.



*The veterinary science students were given the task of educating the community members on proper equine management.*



*The horses, donkeys and mules were healthy and in good condition.*

This experience was truly positive and inspiring. When we arrived at Orange Farm, poverty surrounded us. Despite this, the horses, donkeys and mules were healthy and in good condition. It was clear that the horse owners respect and care for their animals greatly. This community project allowed us to share our horse health knowledge with caring horse owners and empower them to achieve better health care for their animals.

The unique thing about this project was that we could engage with the horse owners directly, discuss problems and offer practical, safe solutions. The owners were engaging, thoughtful and interested, which made the outreach even more enjoyable.

It was moving to see what a difference we could make. As a group, we felt that this was the biggest highlight of the project. It really was an incredible experience and we are truly grateful for it. This opportunity allowed us to make long lasting memories and opened our eyes to the situations in rural communities that we are not exposed to in our everyday lives.

We are truly grateful for the opportunity to engage directly with community members and not only impart our knowledge on them, but also have the chance to listen to their stories and take away the lessons they had to share with us.

## RABIES PREVENTION, ONE CHILD AT A TIME!

Haseena Moosa, Jozaan Holliday, Graham Taylor and Masa Bopape (BVSc III)

On 7 June 2017, we nervously entered Ramoshie Primary School in Ratjiepan village. We were very unsure what to expect from the Grade 7 learners in front of us.

However, our worries were unfounded when we discovered a highly enthusiastic group of learners. There were a few minor hiccups in terms of language barriers, but that was expected. What the learners lacked in knowledge on the topic at hand, they made up for in enthusiasm and a willingness to learn.

We are extremely grateful to the Global Alliance for Rabies Control for donating 50 booklets to us. Each learner excitedly received their own rabies booklet after receiving a talk on rabies and dog handling. The learners even participated in a verbal oath towards the cause of rabies prevention with us. All extra booklets were given to the teaching staff of the school. We are very thankful to the teachers of Ramoshie Primary School, who were all very accommodating towards us and our project. Ms Dooka, the class teacher, even participated in our talk along with the learners, occasionally asking questions, and she was sometimes just as enthusiastic as the learners, if not more so.

Participating in this community engagement project was something that we will never forget. Despite our initial nerves, the demeanour of both the learners and

teachers allowed us to feel comfortable very quickly. This project gave us the opportunity to impart certain wisdoms to the people of Ratjiepan village, and allowed us to leave the school feeling extremely gratified. We believe our efforts definitely benefited the learners at Ramoshie Primary School, giving them an interest in animal care that they had not been exposed to before.

They were also previously unaware of what rabies was and how to control or prevent it, as was clear to us after asking them a series of questions on the topic. We hope that they will take home whatever knowledge they learnt to their families and the community at large.

Not many of the learners seemed particularly interested in becoming veterinarians later on, but we were hopeful that our words and, more importantly, the rabies booklets, would give them something to think about, and encourage them to consider it as a career path in the future.

Maybe one day some of them will find themselves at Onderstepoort Campus too, striving further to achieve the changes we are working towards.



*Each learner excitedly received their own rabies booklet after receiving a talk on rabies and dog handling.*



*Participating in this community engagement project was something that we will never forget.*

# EDUCATING CHILDREN TO EDUCATE THE MNISI COMMUNITY

Bevin Meyer; with Jana Basson, Roelof Berg, Aninca Jordaan, Motheo Masiya, Vicky McGee and Mbapeua Mootu

Animal welfare faces challenges in Hluvukani - an area where cattle are, as a rule, well cared for and considered as both a source of wealth and pride and a means of sustenance.

Farmers put in the effort to keep their animals healthy by bringing them to the dip tanks every week and contacting the Hluvukani Animal Health Clinic (HAHC) when they are sick.

However, it appears that shepherds lack the understanding that animals feel pain the same way humans do. Something that I, Bevin Meyer, witnessed repeatedly during my original trip (as part of my practical training for clinics) was the poor manner handlers herd their animals, specifically their cattle, every morning. Cattle were constantly beaten and whipped, often on their faces, in an effort to drive them into the crushes to the dip tanks. Children showed some aggressive behaviour towards the cattle that became quite rough at times.

This treatment of animals inspired an idea to educate people about the principles of handling cattle, as well as the fundamentals of animal welfare through direct engagement with the children who herd cattle on a regular basis. Dr Quixi Sonntag arranged for this idea to become part of the Veterinary Professional Life (VPL) 300 module as a Community Engagement (CEn) Project for the third-year students. The project was based at the HAHC in the Mnisi community, in Mpumalanga.

An exceptional group of third-year students wrote a motivational letter and were allocated to this project in order to make it their own. It was a privilege for me to be assigned as their mentor. In April of this year, the group visited Hluvukani for the first time. This opportunity was used to observe the handling and general stockmanship of cattle by the farmers and their children.

The third-year group then collected information that was used to compile the training programme to teach the children later on their second visit to Hluvukani.

June approached and the third-year group and I returned to Hluvukani. This time we visited two schools in the Mnisi community where we gave a talk and acted out a play for Grade 6 and 7 learners. This was done at both Manyeleti and Uthar primary schools.

The talk began with an interactive play that had the learners in stitches. The incorrect way to herd cattle was demonstrated by the third-year student through the act of pretending to beat one of the group members with sticks. The group then explained to the learners the humane ways on how to move cattle in a crush. In order to do this they used principles they learned in Veterinary Ethology (VET) 300 in their second year. These principles included the "point of balance" and "flight zones" of cattle. After this, there was a participatory exercise for the learners to show us their understanding of these principles through demonstrating where they would stand in order to get a cow to move in a specific scenario.

The talk ended with an explanation of the five freedoms of animals and a general discussion on what a veterinarian "is" and "does". Some local traditions were also debunked during this session, for example, the idea that you

must cut a dog's ears and let them bleed when a dog is sick. The talk was presented in a mixture of English and Xitsonga to make sure that all the learners understood what was being taught. The learners' enthusiasm and hunger to learn was incredibly motivating and positive. By the end of the discussion, everyone, including the teachers, seemed to have a better understanding of animal welfare.

From what we achieved during this project, our biggest hope is that the learners will share the knowledge they gained with the rest of their community, thereby cultivating and implementing better animal welfare within the community. Secondly, we also hope that this pilot study will become an annual VPL 300 project. We truly believe that this project has started a positive change throughout this community and encourages future veterinary students to continue this transformation. The experience proved



*The students showed the primary school learners the correct way to handle cattle through an interactive play.*

invaluable for all participants. Throughout the visits, the One Health concept was a golden thread in all our activities. With this crucial challenge facing the health profession worldwide our visit to Hluvukani and the Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Center reminded us what this concept really means and now challenges us to incorporate it in our future careers.

During this whole experience, we were so thankful for the opportunity to educate others about our veterinary knowledge and through it all, we were also privileged to be educated about relationships, communication and the real challenges facing future veterinarians in South Africa. We are reminded to be thankful for all the privileges that we so often take for granted. Hita vonana nakambe loko hiya hlangana Hluvukani, misala kahle.

Special thanks must be given to Dr Eugene Machimana, Dr Quixi Sonntag and the University of Pretoria for organising and funding this project. We would also like to give a big thanks to Dr Ilana van Wyk, Dr Jacques van Rooyen and Mr Philemon Mbhukza (Environmental Manager and our interpreter) for facilitating the project in Hluvukani.



*We were so thankful for the opportunity to share our veterinary knowledge to make a difference.*



**DONATIONS:** All donations received will be used for community engagement purposes, specifically in less fortunate communities. Please contact one of the following people if you would like to donate money, dog food, collars, leashes, blankets or your time:

Dr Eugene Machimana	012 529 8100	Community Engagement Chairperson	eugene.machimana@up.ac.za
Sr Sarah Johnson	012 529 8387	Small Animal Section Head & Referrals Co-ordinator	sarah.johnson@up.ac.za

# MASSIVE LIVESTOCK VACCINATIONS AT RUST DE WINTER

Dr Eugene Machimana (Community Engagement Coordinator), Ms Carina Di Sibio (BVSc VI) and Mr Ali Makgato (Chief Animal Health Technician)

The community engagement project (CEn) which was aimed at vaccinating livestock at the Rust de Winter farms was a very enjoyable and satisfying experience.

We left Onderstepoort Campus at 06:00 in the morning for the 1½ hour-long drive to Rust de Winter.

We all came together to discuss which groups were allocated to which farms. Thereafter, students joined their allocated

State Veterinarians, Animal Health Technicians and Compulsory Community Service (CCS) State Veterinarians leaders to the allocated farms. The aim was to vaccinate as many cattle, sheep and goats as a preventative measure against diseases such as anthrax, black quarter,

lumpy skin and pulpy kidney. On 15 September 2017 about 5 500 cattle were vaccinated with Supavax and Lumpyvax. The animals that were vaccinated belonged to emerging farmers and varied in size from a few to as many as 180 for each farmer.

Moreover, 980 goats and 290 sheep were vaccinated with Pulpyvax. The cattle were vaccinated against lumpy skin and all the important clostridial diseases. The sheep and goats were vaccinated against pulpy kidney and the rest of the clostridial diseases that are important. These diseases are very common and have a negative economic impact on the farm if an outbreak occurs.

The vaccines also included anthrax for which livestock are to be vaccinated against by law. Our group was fortunate to have crushes available on the farms that were in good working condition and which caused us to work efficiently to finish our allocated farms quickly. We then helped some of the other groups with their vaccinations.

All the groups finished around 14:00 and headed back to the assembly point where we had the opportunity replenish our "fuel" reserves with food that was provided for us. We arrived back at Onderstepoort Campus at 16:00. Although it was spring, it felt like a hot summer's day. We worked hard and were covered in dust, but we left with a satisfied feeling in our hearts.

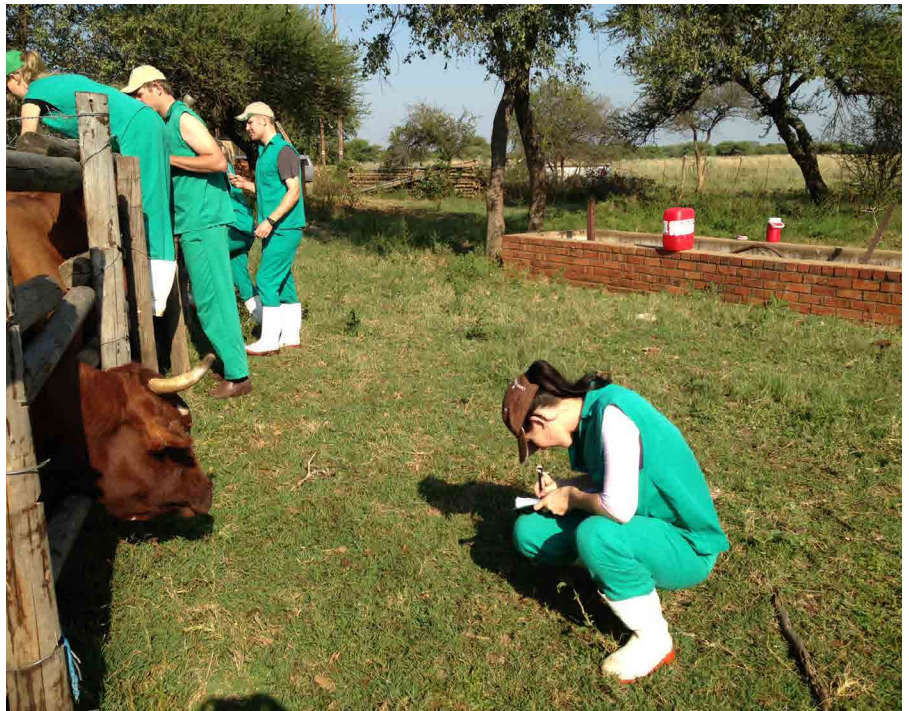
The Rust de Winter campaign is an annual programme that has been running successfully as partnership between the Faculty of Veterinary Science, Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (GDARD) and local livestock farmers.

Previously the contribution of this community project to economic development and food security has been widely acknowledged by receiving awards from the World Animal Health Organisation officially known as the OIE and the Premier's Service Excellence Award. Finally, we would like to acknowledge some of the community partners who played a role in the successful implementation of 2017 Rust de Winter campaign:

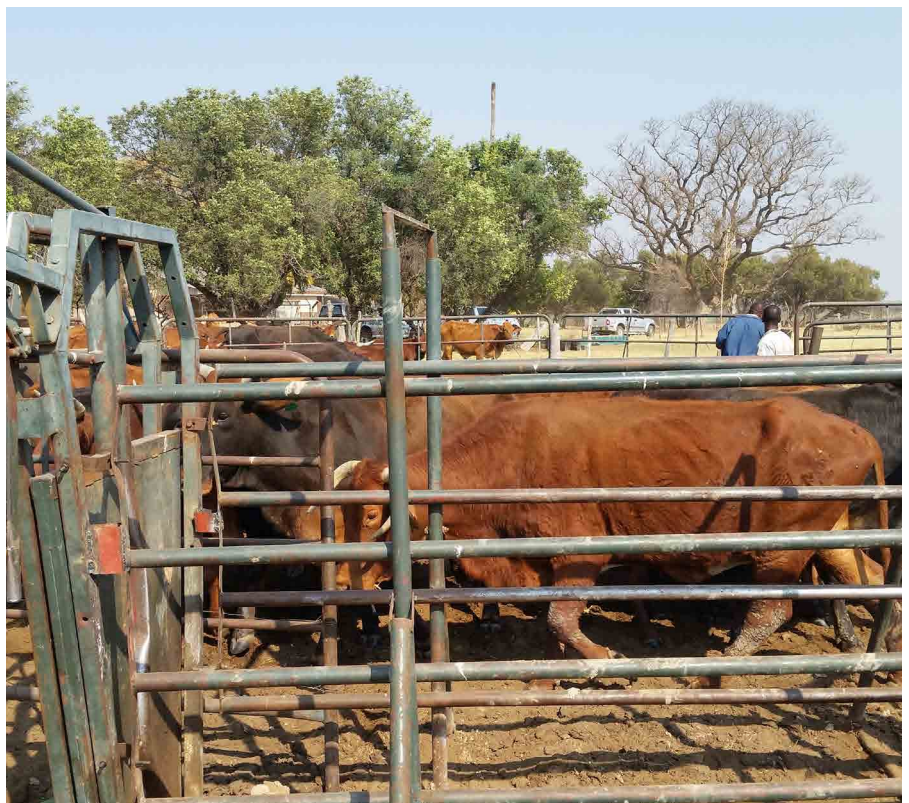
Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Pretoria: Dr Rebone Moerane (HOD: Production Animal Studies), Dr Chris Marufu (Lecturer), Dr Luke Arnot (Lecturer), Dr Eugene Machimana (Community Engagement Coordinator) and BVSc students (n = 37)

GDARD:  
Johannesburg Head Office: Dr Magadla, Dr Alan Kalane, Ms Peggy Mohale and Ms Kefilwe Dire

Pretoria: Dr Faculty Baloyi, Mr Ali Makgato, Mr David Matemotja, Mr Tsholofelo Mojanaga, Mr Gerhard Potgieter, Mr John



*Some of the students during the livestock vaccination campaign at Rust de Winter*



*About 5 500 cattle were vaccinated with Supavax and Lumpyvax.*

Manganye, Ms Tshagofatso Leso (Intern) and Mr Theo Serebolo

Gillian Declercq, Dr Thapelo Makae and CCS Veterinarians (n = 11)

Themba Clinic: Dr Nadia Jordan, Dr Hendrick Engelbrecht, Dr Christo Labuscagne and Dr Viljoen

Randfontein: Mr Biyas Lucky and Mr Sandy Mwale

Germiston: Mr Malebo Molosiwa, Mrs Gadi Mashinini, Mr Tsholanang Mojanaga, Dr

Rust de Winter: Farmers (n = 70) participated and benefited from the campaign (eight farms were visited during the campaign).

# FACULTY SHOWCASES ITS CEn PROGRAMME TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE USRN

Mr Chris van Blerk (Head: Communications and Media)

The University Social Responsibility Network (USR Network/USRN) was inaugurated on 9 October 2015 in Hong Kong.

It places emphasis on collaboration, coalition and networking among members and with other networks and alliances. The University of Pretoria is one of the 14 university members worldwide and the only University in Africa.

On 11 April 2017 the Steering Committee of the USRN visited the Faculty of Veterinary Science as part of an in-depth fact-finding mission to the University of Pretoria, which kicked off on Sunday, 9 April 2017, when the group arrived in Pretoria. Their visit provided the Faculty with the opportunity to showcase its excellent Community Engagement (CEn) programme, the core of which is part of the Faculty's curricula.

About 20 representatives attended a session during which the Dean of the Faculty, Prof Darrell Abernethy, gave a welcoming presentation followed by a joint presentation by Dr Eugene Machimana and Dr Quixi Sonntag, who are both members of the Faculty's CEn Committee. The committee is responsible for coordinating and managing all CEn activities in the Faculty.

In his welcoming presentation, Prof Abernethy explained the way the Faculty operates within the CEn framework, a programme that forms part of the Faculty's BVSc and Diploma in Veterinary Nursing curricula. Aimed at collaboration and cooperation, Prof Abernethy emphasised the One Health concept to which the Faculty strongly subscribes and which is central to its CEn activities and projects. "The core of the faculty's projects is based on the concept that we are living in a dynamic environment. Wildlife, farming and the ecosystem are interrelated, which is something that we take cognisance of and enable us as veterinarians and researchers to better and optimally do our work", he said. Research, collaboration and cooperation do not only apply locally, but extend across South Africa's borders into Africa and the rest of the world.

Dr Sonntag and Dr Machimana gave a comprehensive overview of the Faculty's



*About 20 representatives attended a session during which the Dean of the Faculty, Prof Darrell Abernethy, gave a welcoming presentation followed by a joint presentation by Dr Eugene Machimana and Dr Quixi Sonntag.*

CEn projects and pointed out that CEn is embedded in teaching, learning and research in the Faculty as well as the involvement of all departments in the Faculty in these activities. It is the responsibility of the CEn committee to oversee the more than 60 projects, to be aware of those activities and to see that they are properly integrated in the curriculum programme. They highlighted the Faculty's clinical and research-based CEn projects, which mainly consist of the Mnisi Community Programme where final-year students annually spend time doing clinical rotations; the Hluvukani Animal Health Clinic; the Mamelodi Animal Health Clinic, and Makapanstad, which is a rural area served by the Faculty's mobile clinics and managed by its Onderstepoort Veterinary Academic Hospital (OVAH).

Integration into the curriculum programme of the Faculty is underlined by, among others, modules such as Veterinary Professional Life (VPL 300) during which students are taught so-called "soft skills" in order to be a successful veterinarian. Skills include communications skills, conflict management and project management, which are applied

by about 30 groups to plan their own projects and identify problems in communities in conjunction with CEn partners such as farmers, welfare organisations, schools and the community itself. Another aim of a module such as this is to enable students to be leaders in respect of their communities after graduation. In essence, the skills taught are aimed at the ability to work and communicate with communities that are often resource-poor and are not always aware of the work that is done by veterinarians.

Through Veterinary Core Practice (VCP) 601 and Veterinary Elective Practice (VEP) 601 BVSc final-year students are working with people who have never been exposed to veterinary services and enable the students to work in different circumstances when community outreach is done. It also gives them exposure to animals, animal production and establishes a CEn and development approach to these communities.

Other examples mentioned, including research-based CEn projects, were the Rust de Winter project that is run by the Department of Paraclinical Sciences in collaboration with the veterinary services of the Gauteng Department of Agriculture and

Rural Development (GDARD) and supported by VETSCO, a student initiative. Within the One Health framework, the project provides training for students without related experience with regard to bovines and small stock. The One Health concept is also manifested in the poverty stricken Zama-Zama informal settlement where the faculty's students have partnered with students from the University's Health Sciences Faculty, and Engineering and Education. In turn, the community identifies its own needs and guides the CEn committee. In this regard, students and lecturers must sometimes improvise because of difficult working circumstances.

The USRN visit was concluded with a video about the Faculty's CEn projects after which Prof Abernethy and Dr Rebone Moerane, Head of the Department of Production Animals and Chairperson of the CEn committee took the two groups on a tour of the Faculty. Judging by questions received from the delegation, they found the information provided extremely interesting and insightful and perhaps a notion to take some of these ideas back to their own universities.



*From left: Dr Eugene Machimana (CEn Coordinator), Prof Darrell Abernethy (Dean of the Faculty), Ms Gernia van Niekerk (UP), Prof Angelina Yuen (Vice President of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the University Social Responsibility Network), and Dr Rebone Moerane, HOD: Production Animal Studies.*

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Event	Venue	Date
Production Animal Outreach Clinic	Makapanstad & Ratjiepan Project	Tuesdays and Wednesdays
Mamelodi Animal Health Care (MAHC)	Mamelodi Campus	Mondays to Fridays
Mnisi Community Project	Hlulukani	Mondays to Fridays



### DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO PUBLISH?

The Community Engagement Committee invites you to submit short articles to be published in the next Newsletter (Autumn 2018). The Community Engagement article should not be more than 1 page long. Contact person Dr Eugene G. Machimana Tel: (012) 529 8100 (w) Email: eugene.machimana@up.ac.za

Visit the UP Community Engagement Management System (CEMS) for updates about community project opportunities.

