

# Annual Report 2012

## Wine Industry

### SA Young Wine Show

The South African Young Wine Show gives winemakers the opportunity to showcase their best wines of the current vintage.

The eight participating wine regions are Robertson, Worcester/Breedekloof, Stellenbosch, Paarl, Oranje-Vaal, Olifants River, Swartland and the Little Karoo. The show dates back to 1833 when the Cape of Good Hope Agricultural Society presented the first wine show in South Africa, making the SA Young Wine Show the oldest wine competition in South Africa. Today we are still a sponsor of this important show in the wine industry.

The mission of the South African Young Wine Show is to judge the quality of wines that are still in their infancy, i.e. within the year of production – and have some way to go before they are finally blended and bottled. In this way, the industry can give recognition to the production capabilities of a wine cellar. Very few of these wines are for sale or in their final form at the time of being judged.

Champions are crowned in the following categories; Chenin Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Sémillon, Other White Cultivar, Dry White Blend, Sweetish Wine, Noble Late Harvest, Pinotage, Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Other Red Cultivar, Dry Red Blend, Port, Dessert Wine and Muscadel.

In addition to the 17 SA Championship trophies, the impressive General Smuts Trophy – introduced in 1952 – for the overall SA Champion Young Wine, and the Pietman Hugo Trophy, for the cellar with the highest score for five best entries, are also at stake.

Entries are adjudicated by specialist panels of seven judges drawn from winemakers or wine experts with a formal qualification and specialist knowledge of specific wine styles. An eighth junior judge per panel has been introduced to train future judges.

With just more than 1 900 young wines entered for this year's competition Riebeek Cellar came up trumps when their wooded Viognier won the General Smuts trophy as SA's new champion young wine and Badsberg won the Pietman Hugo trophy for the third time in a row.

The winners were announced during a luncheon at the Muisbosskerm in Lamberts Bay on 19 August 2011 with the West Coast Wine Route as host.

### Veritas

The Veritas Awards gives recognition to wines of exceptional quality and the distinctive Veritas symbol of excellence serves as an authoritative quality guideline.

After almost two decades the Veritas Awards has earned its reputation as one of South Africa's most authoritative and credible competitions for market ready wines. The Awards with its coveted Veritas emblem, has become

synonymous with top quality wines. The results are trusted implicitly when international as well as local wine buyers use them to assist in their buying decisions.

Gold and double gold awards are of significant value to the wine industry and offer a prestigious image for the wine, winery and winemaker. Veritas is also the only wine competition in South Africa for the industry by the industry and there is no commercial gain.

The judging system for Veritas has been described as one of the most thorough in the industry. Judging panels are representative of the entire wine industry and include winemakers, researchers, academics and merchants and are compiled in collaboration with the relevant cultivar work groups.

All the judges are required to have a wine judging certificate from the University of Stellenbosch, a Cape Wine Masters Diploma or a similar accreditation.

On Saturday, 8 October at the CTICC, KWV was crowned as the king of Veritas 2011. This almost century old wine and brandy company with its headquarters in Paarl, received a remarkable five double gold and nine gold medals – the most double gold and gold medals ever won by one cellar.

Seven individuals received their specially designed scrolls of honour as Veritas Legends. A Veritas Legend is no less than an icon – an individual who has shaped the industry through his/her wine making or viticultural abilities, or writing, research or promotional contribution.

Agri-Expo, as partner of the South African National Wine Show Association (SANSWA) is the main sponsor for the Awards dinner.

## **Cultivar work groups**

Further support to the wine industry includes financial assistance to the various cultivar work groups. This project experienced significant growth over the past year and most of the work groups function successfully. Agri-Expo makes funds available for comparative tastings, work sessions and seminars that contribute to the promotion of the various cultivars. This year, funding was given to the Cap Classique work group, as well as the Chenin Blanc, Shiraz and Sauvignon Blanc groups.

## **Dairy**

### **Qualité cheese tastings**

In order to further extend the partnership between Agri-Expo and the South African National Wine Show Association (SANSWA) Qualité cheeses are tasted together with the double gold and gold Veritas wines during three exclusive public tastings. Approximately 1200 members of the public took part in these tastings held in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban. These events serve as the ideal platform to promote the Qualité mark as trustworthy indicator of dairy quality in South Africa.

## The South African Dairy Championships

Agri-Expo has been presenting the South African Dairy Championships, the country's biggest dairy championships, since 1834. It gives large and boutique producers the opportunity to benchmark their products against those of their competitors. The 2012 judging process took place on 15 March in the Kraaifontein city hall, where some 790 entries competed for the coveted title of Dairy Product of the Year.

Ninety (90) impressive dairy products were crowned as SA Champions and twenty six (26) outstanding dairy products received Qualité Awards. These awards represent South Africa's only symbol of dairy excellence. Producers acknowledge that the consumer's tastes and preferences are continually refined and they increasingly expect higher quality products. The quality of goat's milk products improve annually and goat's milk yoghurt can now compete with cow's milk yoghurt where quality is concerned.

The Portobello Franschhoek Angelot had to compete against all entries in all categories including cheese, butter, cottage cheese, yoghurt, flavoured milk, dairy dips, and ice cream and dairy desserts to win the favour of the 40 judges and be named 2012 SA Dairy Product of the Year.

## DuPont Qualité Awards Dinner

The Society is fortunate to have Danisco (now part of the DuPont group) on board as naming rights sponsor for the Qualité Award Ceremony for the 5<sup>th</sup> year. The gala awards dinner, undoubtedly South Africa's foremost dairy event, took place on 25 April in the Bloemhof Centre in Stellenbosch with "Fire and Ice" as theme, good food and wine and entertaining surprises.

The event, where the SA Champions, Qualité Awards and the Dairy Product of the Year were announced, was attended by 350 guests from all sectors of the dairy industry. Valuable coverage was generated in both the agricultural and industry media.

## Africa projects

The following projects were managed by Agri-Expo for SPEAR CC during the past year:

- Training of Mozambican veterinary surgeons in hygienic milk production and milk processing;
- Finalising the building and equipping of a milk processing plant in Beira;
- Selecting and training of six cheese makers from Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia in Burgundy, France.

## International cheese competitions

The 2011 World Cheese Awards was held in Birmingham and the South African cheeses earned a number of gold and silver medals. Agri-Expo acted as South African representative for this competition and as such handled the entries as well as the exportation of the sample cheeses to the United Kingdom. A record number of 52 cheeses were entered.

## **Retail training**

Two three-day training sessions were presented to the staff of the biggest supermarket group in South Africa. The training of personnel includes the receiving, storage, display and pro-active selling of dairy products.

## **Advisory and consultancy services**

Large and medium cheeseries have made use of the Agri-Expo consultancy service on a number of occasions. Quality problems with dairy products were rectified and assistance was given with the launch of new products and factory extensions. A number of lectures were also delivered at two chef training schools.

## **Western Cape/Burgundy Cheese making Fellowship**

Cheese making students from the Centre de Formation Professionnelle et de Promotion Agricole in Davayé, Burgundy visited the Western Cape during the year to attend the Cheese Festival and visit various cheeseries. Four Western Cape cheese makers visited Burgundy during September 2011. The Fellowship remains highly successful as can be seen from the number of prizes won by past students at the SA Dairy Championships. The Fellowship is an important link between the Society and the Western Cape Department of Agriculture.

## **SA Cheese Festival**

The SA Cheese Festival won the favour of the country's cheese lovers over the past eleven years with its focus on the versatility of this dairy product. After eleven successful years the SA Cheese Festival has firmly lodged itself in the hearts of thousands of cheese lovers. This year more than 32 000 people visited the four day long festival held at Sandringham from 27-30 April – proof that cheese is increasingly capturing the imaginations of consumers.

The 2012 grounds layout with the Dairy Square, Carnival Park and Meander in a designated area consisting of 26 875m<sup>2</sup> with 5 516m<sup>2</sup> floor space for stands, generated favourable feedback from both exhibitors and visitors. More than 35 tons of cheese was made available by national and boutique cheese makers. Absa once again brought 10 new small cheese makers to the festival. During demonstrations in the Checkers Theatre, the DStv Food Network Theatre, the BBC Lifestyle workshop, Santam Milk Factory and the Pinotage Theatre, celebrities and well known food and wine experts shared their expertise with cheese lovers. The new cheese carving competition drew interested and creative crowds due to the challenge and the big prizes to be won each day.

Agri-Expo's Cheese Festival partners once again showed their loyalty – not only through monetary contributions but also through media coverage and sponsorships of products and services. Four sponsors, namely Absa, Ladismith Cheese, Parmalat (Simonsberg) and The company of wine people (Welmoed wines) were honoured for their continued support over ten years. Agri-Expo would like to thank every sponsor and supplier that contributed to 11 years of Cheese Festival success.

The SA Cheese Festival remains the largest platform for cheese makers to introduce their products to some 32 000 consumers over a period of four days. The stands were judged in six categories and the following winners were announced during the Media24 exhibitors' breakfast:

National cheese	* Portobello / Rhodes Food Group
Boutique cheese	* Arista Dairies
Wine	* Wildebraam
Related products	* Sweet Temptations
Catering	* Piroshka's Kitchen
Milk Factory	* Simmentaler/Fleckvieh (for the 4 <sup>th</sup> consecutive year)

The marketing and media campaign succeeded with impressive coverage in the printed media, through online advertisements, electronic newsletters, social media Facebook, as well as radio and TV. Publicity to the value of some R26m was generated. The 2012 SA Cheese Festival was truly one of the Society's best festivals ever.

## Cape Dairy Experience

On 2 & 3 November 2011 a brand new comprehensive and true Cape Dairy Experience took place at Sandringham. The need arose for a show that focuses entirely on dairy – an event that not only attracts the direct role-players but simultaneously presents the public with a first-hand experience of the special dynamics of this very important industry.

The success of the occasion mainly rested on the fact that the complete value chain of dairy was displayed in a fresh and exciting manner.

For the dairy producer the event gave them an opportunity to compare their animals with those from herds from across the country, to interact with other industry role-players and to be exposed to the latest technology. For the general public the event was a pleasant farm outing where they could learn to make butter, cheese and chocolate and where the little ones could spend time close to beautiful farm animals. The Youth Show where children experienced the intricacies of a show was very popular and the ice cream eating competitions and milking of mock cows guaranteed hours of fun. Many guided school groups attended and participated on Friday.

Some of the highlights on the agricultural programme included the crowning of the Absa Cape Dairy Queen, the announcement of the Western Cape Master Dairy Producer of the Year and the Western Cape Milk Goat Championships.

A superb Holstein, Ellerslie 4078, owned by J W Penn & Kevin Lang from Grace Valley in KZN was crowned as the Dairy Queen. Some 200 world class Holsteins, Ayrshires and Jerseys from as far as Kwa-Zulu Natal, the Southern Cape, the Free State and the far reaches of the Western Cape put their best foot forward to win this coveted title. Experienced judges, including Scott Ruby (an American dairy farmer and consultant), Paul Meade from Kwa-Zulu Natal and Niel Jansen van Rensburg from Mpumalanga, scrutinised the animals to determine which cow boasts the best build, legs, feet and udder.

Mr Philip Blanckenberg from Klipheuwel close to Malmesbury and Chairperson of the Milk Producer's Organisation (MPO) in the Western Cape was heralded as the Master Dairy Producer of the Year on Friday 2 November.

Two show rings and various inside stands created a lively and busy atmosphere in the Pavilion marquee. The large outside stands and area where feeder wagon and bale handling demonstrations took place drew as much attention. During the exhibitors' breakfast Saturday morning, Foxenburg Estate won the best inside stand award and Richard Keenen SA (Pty) Ltd the award for best outside stand.

The Cape Dairy Experience received generous media coverage to the value of R7.6m.

## Equestrian

### Agri-Expo Equestrian Show

The Agri-Expo Equestrian Show was held in the October school holidays, by popular request from competitors over the past few years. Entries were still very viable and a total of 2 800 entries were received for the different disciplines.

This year the show started off with Eventing (dressage, cross country and show jumping). This was the first time that eventing had been run by Agri-Expo on Sandringham. The track was designed by David Evans from the UK, and it was built by Andile Balula and the Agri-Expo team. David was the course builder for the Beijing Olympics Cross Country Course. An international FEI track CIC 1 \* was run this year. This course is one of the few in the Western Cape that has varied terrain. It has one of the biggest water jump complexes, although this is still in its infancy in actual construction. The plan is that by 2014 Agri-Expo would like to run a CCI 3 \* event which should allow us to host the SA Championship.

Although a totally new track always has its problems, the course was extremely well received by the public and by the top grade riders. A clinic was held by Alex Paternell (SA Olympian 2012) on the course two weeks after the event.

### Cape Premier Yearling Sale 2012 – Book 1

Cape Thoroughbred Sales received over 800 entries for the Sales, so they split it into Book 1 (CTICC) and Book 2 (Kenilworth). CTS contracted Agri-Expo to handle all the logistics for the Sale at the CTICC. This year 350 yearlings were accepted and all the halls except Hall 1 were used for stabling. This meant that the grooms' accommodation had to be built in the parking basement. 205 Grooms were accommodated in shell scheme dormitories and a lounge/dining area was also set up in the basement with full DSTV channels available at all times.

The stud farms really took trouble in decorating their lounges at the end of their stable rows, and this was very well received by the buyers while viewing the horses during the build-up. CTS introduced the long awaited very strict credit control criteria and at the same time made sure that there was a finance company available to grant loans. This year all the vendors were guaranteed their payments within 30 days! The sale aggregate was R106, 835,000 and the highest price of R2 800 000 was reached for a Highlands yearling.

Book 1 Sale is aimed at enticing the foreign buyers into SA to purchase locally bred horses, and although this year the export protocols had become extremely difficult because of the outbreak of African Horse Sickness, the foreign buyers still spent R40 000 000 of the total spend.

The whole sale is aimed at a very upmarket clientele and the opening act was the petite Zolani from Freshly Ground, who had the whole sales hall spell bound with her rendition of the South African Anthem. Gary Player made a truly heart warming opening address and set the tone for a wonderful sale.

## **Cape Premier Yearling Sales 2012 – Book 2**

This sale was held at the beginning of March at the Kenilworth race track. There were 405 yearlings catalogued. Agri-Expo was tasked with turning the car park area into a stable yard – quite a feat in 10 days, as the ground was very uneven and major ground work had to be done prior to the stables going up. The auction was run over 2 days, and was really tough. The aggregate was R24 653 000 and the average R83 559.

# Member Shows

## **Agricultural Societies**

Agri-Expo acts as sponsor for agricultural shows that are members of the Society on the grounds that these events promote the image of agriculture. This year 6 national, 22 provincial, 2 interprovincial, 26 regional and 30 club championships were held. Judges agreed that the standard of the animals in the Western Cape is exceptionally high. Apart from these presentations, various youth shows, emerging farmer shows and poultry shows were held.

The annual general meeting of the member shows took place on 14 June 2011 at Riversdale. During this meeting shows discuss show dates, challenges in the show industry and any other issues regarding shows. This year Mr Hein Volgraaff, Manager of Livestock at BKB, acted as guest speaker and emphasised the important role of shows for breeders, sponsors and industry organisations. He praised shows that have adapted to make use of available technology.

Agricultural shows in the Western Cape play a significant role in rural communities by comparing agricultural products with one another and thereby raising the bar of quality.

## **Western Cape Yearling Poultry Show**

The Society annually supports the Western Cape Yearling Poultry Show. This show creates the opportunity for participants to select chickens for the future and for the upcoming Club Show. This year 510 entries were received by 30 exhibitors and included 62 different breeds of chickens and ducks. Despite the abnormal changes in the temperature, the judges were impressed by the quality and appearance of the poultry. This show annually attracts many exhibitors but also many members of the public.

## Western Cape Poultry Club Show

The annual Western Cape Poultry Club Show took place from 14 to 16 June 2012 at Kleinplasië, Worcester. A total of 1632 entries were received from 51 exhibitors representing 87 different breeds of chickens and water birds. The judges were full of praise for the well prepared chickens, as well as the general condition and quality of the birds. In preparation of the nearing Western Cape Championships, the youth show learners completed their theoretical and practical examinations and the examiners were duly impressed.

## Western Cape Veteran Tractor and Engine Club Show

The annual Club Show was held from 4 to 5 August 2011 at Villiersdorp. This organisation preserves the history of our agricultural activities and therefore Agri-Expo supports the annual show as sponsor. More than 1800 visitors had the opportunity to witness some 150 veteran tractors, 30 stationary engines and a large number of farm implements and vehicles exhibited or in action. The show theme: 'The mechanisation in the fruit industry' drew the crowds with the exhibition of small heirlooms, personal items and house ware from private collections.

Approximately ten new members joined during the show – a clear indication that the enthusiasm and attitude towards conservation that was stimulated by the exhibitions and programme, is invaluable. The Western Cape boasts some 450 members from all over the province. A floating trophy for the best small club in the Western Cape has been made available to the Club to serve as encouragement for the most fervent small club. This year the Villiersdorp Club won the trophy for the second consecutive year.

# Youth

## Youth Shows

Agri-Expo acts as main sponsor for the Western Cape Agricultural Youth Society that presented six regional shows this year with 535 learners participating: Winelands 90, Eden 59, Cederberg 165, Overberg 48, Swartland 87 and Herold 110.

Youth Show learners take part in the following categories:

- Winelands: Beef Cattle, Dairy Cattle, Milk Goats, Boer Goats, Wool Sheep and Mutton Sheep
- Eden: Beef Cattle, Dairy Cattle, Wool Sheep, Mutton Sheep, Poultry and Horses
- Cederberg: Milk Goat, Boer Goat, Angora Goat, Wool Sheep and Mutton Sheep
- Overberg: Beef Cattle, Dairy Cattle, Milk Goats, Wool Sheep and Mutton Sheep
- Swartland: Beef Cattle, Wool Sheep, Mutton Sheep, Milk Goat, Boer Goat and Angora Goat
- Herold: Beef Cattle, Wool Sheep, Mutton Sheep, Milk Goat and Angora Goat

Development courses were presented in Uniondale and Rietbron. These opportunities encourage new learners to join the Youth Show movement and promote the Youth Show concept. A developmental show for beginners was presented in Clanwilliam for learners from Lepelsfontein and Garies.

The Agri-Expo Western Cape Youth Show Championships were held in Clanwilliam and the standard of participants from across the province was excellent. A total of 131 learners participated, making this the largest championship in the history.

The National Championships took place in September in Vryburg in the Free State. As during the past six years, the Western Cape team were crowned as the champions of this competition. The team won 15 gold, 11 silver and 10 bronze medals.

## **Agricultural Schools**

Agri-Expo understands that educational institutions are experiencing extreme financial burdens and decided to support agricultural schools according to their needs. Loans were made available to the province's three agricultural schools, namely Boland Agricultural High School, Augsburg Agricultural Gymnasium and Oakdale Agricultural High School, to improve the quality of education at the schools.

The Society annually supports the schools with bursaries during their prize giving ceremonies. These bursaries are awarded to the best learners in every grade, as well as those learners who perform above their potential.

# General

## **Women in Agriculture**

### **Cape Women's Agricultural Association (CWAA)**

The 82nd annual conference of the CWAA took place from 16-18 August at Villiersdorp. The Society continued its support with a sponsorship which enabled the Association to present a conference of quality. Agri-Expo received good exposure on their website, in various printed marketing material as well as at the conference itself. Mariana Rabie (Marketing Manager) and Johan Ehlers (CEO) attended the event – Mr Ehlers, as the main speaker at the opening ceremony. The new theme for the next year – Build a Bridge – was introduced.

Mrs Rabie also acted as convening judge for the CWAA's Farming Partner of 2011 competition. The aim of the competition was to honour women as partners in agriculture. The winner was Me Lucia Dorfling from the farm Commessie near Steytlerville.

### **WAA Circle Tygerberg**

The Circle's 45th Conference took place on 8 March at Joostenbergvlakte and the Marketing Manager attended the opening ceremony.

## **Landbouweekblad Agricultural Woman Entrepreneur of the Year**

Agri-Expo's Marketing Manager served on the judging panel of the Landbouweekblad and Sanlam Agricultural Woman Entrepreneur of the Year competition. Mrs Rabie joined Adv. Kobus Engelbrecht (from Sanlam) and Anton Roelofse (from Business Partners). Visits were made to the various finalists and the winner was announced during a gala dinner at Durbanville Hills on 28 October 2011. Ronel Swart from Africa Silk Farm near Graskop in Mpumalanga won the honours.

## **Other**

### **Agricultural Writers SA**

Agri-Expo hosted the annual photo competition of the SA Agricultural Writers and handled the entries and logistics of the judging day. Some 300 photos were entered and judged on 28 October in the Agri-Expo board room. The panel consisted of six judges and chose Johan Norval's "Young farmer and son" as the Photo of the Year.

### **Conservation**

This year the Society financially supported two WWF projects. The conservation of the Riverine Rabbit seems to be successful and various new breeding areas have been identified. Part of the funding is also used for the Karoo Eco Schools programme. Learners are exposed to the concept of conservation from a young age and schools that successfully present the program receive Green Flag status. This programme is rapidly expanding across South Africa and has been internationally acknowledged.

### **Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth**

As member of the RASC the Society received two official visits from the RASC. Mr Michael Lambert, Media Secretary of the RASC, met with the CEO and visited Sandringham. Information about the Society's activities was shared with other agricultural societies in various Commonwealth countries.

Mr Breyton Milford, Project Coordinator, was again invited by the RASC to be part of the Commonwealth's Next Generation delegation which visited Singapore and India. The Western Cape Department of Agriculture acted as main sponsor for Mr Milford's visit and the Society wishes to thank Ms Joyene Isaacs (Head of Department) for their continued support of the Society.

## **RASC Next Generation mission to Singapore and India**

Every second year the Next Generation Forum of the Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth (RASC) has an Assistance and Understanding Mission to countries that the RASC feels there is a need for. The group, consisting of 21 members from 12 Commonwealth countries that are all involved in agriculture, visited Singapore and India from 12 to 26 November.

In **Singapore** the conventional thoughts of agriculture were challenged in learning about the legacy of farming in Singapore, the real issues faced by farmers today, the government's view on land use and the need for sustainable urban farming. This metropolitan city has a lot to offer but when faced with the challenge of losing its rural roots it gave a clear message to the group of how important involving the community and promoting innovative growth in urban sustainability really is.

In **India**, the group visited the RASC member societies - Deva Organisation Rural Development Society (DORDS) and Welfare Organisation for Rural Lean Development (WORLD). The group spent a day amongst ordinary Indian families learning about agricultural practices, the community and experienced Indian customs first hand. Knowledge was further shared with village farmers creating a greater understanding of the similarities and differences in agricultural challenges across the Commonwealth. The highlight of the mission was no doubt the Inaugural Warangal Agricultural Show set-up and show day. The community was given an insight into the benefits in encouraging excellence through competition as well as networking and educational benefits.

Agri-Expo endorses the importance to understand the challenges that agriculture faces across the Commonwealth and is proud of the way in which the Society's Project Co-ordinator used his skills in participating in this very unique mission to assist these Commonwealth countries with agricultural development.

## **In-house**

### **Exhibition and Events Association of Southern Africa (EXSA)**

Agri-Expo once again walked away with one of the special accolades at the annual awards ceremony of the Exhibition and Events Association of Southern Africa (EXSA), held in November in Johannesburg with the Cape Premier Yearling Sale that was held at CTICC as the Most Memorable Event for 2011.

The Society is represented on the EXSA National Board by its Event Manager, Mrs. Ann Dalton who is also the Vice Chairman of the EXSA Western Cape Chapter.

## **Sandringham**

The extensive improvements that took place at Sandringham during the past year, undoubtedly contributed to the successful presentation of the Agri-Expo horse show, the first Cape Dairy Experience and the 2012 SA Cheese Festival. As the public came to know Sandringham, word spread that this is one of the Boland region's most ideal venues and Agri-Expo has already negotiated with various organisations about the use of Sandringham as venue.

Checkers brought a complete circus to the farm during a two-day training programme for its 1 500 staff members. After long negotiations an agreement was signed to present an outdoor expo on the premises. The Cape Outdoor

Expo, which previously took place in the CTICC and at Bien Donné, will be held at Sandringham from 26 – 28 October 2012.

A process to rezone the arenas, parking and area adjacent to the dams to “Permanent open space zoning” is currently underway and will further enhance the possibilities of the venue.

Much time and effort was also invested in meeting with the local authorities in order to discuss the logistics of presenting large events and to put action plans into place. We are happy to report that these meetings have been fruitful and that good relationships have been built with various departments. Sandringham is now accepted as a venue and they have pledged their support and assistance.

## **Staff and Council**

The Society has always considered the dairy industry to be of great importance and during the past 10 years Mr Kobus Mulder has done much to promote this sector in his role as Manager: Dairy. In December 2011 an era came to an end with Mr Mulder’s retirement. As author of various new initiatives and winner of several national and international awards, he became known as South Africa’s very own Mr Cheese. The dairy industry and Agri-Expo salute a man who committed his life to small producers, emerging cheese makers, the goat’s milk industry, Africa training initiatives, cheese judging and various other aspects of this important industry.

We wish Mr Mulder, his wife Danelle, and children and grandchildren a long and happy future together and thank him for the role he played as President and staff member of the Society.

In preparation of a new project of the Society, the Cape Dairy Experience, the Board sent Mrs Ann Dalton, Events Manager, to attend the World Dairy and Livestock expo in Birmingham. Valuable information and new ideas were applied when presenting the first successful all dairy event. Feedback from various individuals and Breed Associations indicated that this expo can be compared to the best in the world.

The Head of the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, Ms Joyene Isaacs invited the Mr Johan Ehlers, CEO, to accompany Gerrit van Rensburg, Minister of Agriculture in the Western Cape, and 15 members of the wine industry on a visit to the Yantai International Wine Exhibition in China during September. Valuable contacts were established and the CEO has already addressed a Chinese delegation on the issue of exhibitions in South Africa – and specifically wine shows – on invitation of Wesgro.

As has been the custom for a number of decades, the Board and members of the management team got together in February to revise the strategic objectives of the Society. With new challenges in the agricultural and the exhibition sector in mind, and in order to best make use and manage the assets of the Society, a new vision was developed: “Agri-Expo is a professional promotion and marketing organization for the agricultural sector in the Western Cape, focusing on exhibitions and other Public Relations initiatives, in the interest of its members, agricultural role players, the government, the media and the public.”

## Finances

Concern about the lame world economy has dominated the markets over the past few years. Investors are uncertain about the sustainability of economic recovery in America and about the European debt crisis. This, in turn, places pressure on stock markets worldwide. Fund managers believe that investors will have to become accustomed to lower returns.

The aftermath of the credit crisis of 2008/09 caused worldwide interest rates to drop to all time lows in decades. Low negative real interest rates might be with us for a long time and cash will not for the next few years deliver the returns necessary to beat inflation. Therefore it is vital to diversify investments across various asset classes in such a way that together they form a balanced portfolio that will offer acceptable returns and capital growth potential.

We are happy to report that Agri-Expo's investment portfolio easily outperformed inflation. Although the foreign investments did not grow at satisfactory levels, the foreign exchange rate of the weaker rand positively impacted on the investments. The Society believes that a balanced investment plan will limit its risk and therefore, we stay well diversified between asset classes and hedge funds. The focus remains on real long term growth and the investment achievements are continually monitored.