



Back: Frans Ditebete, Andreas Maponya, Mabula Dikokowo (Limpopo Department of Agriculture), Frans Seolwana (Agricultural Research Council) and Justice Mathebula.
Front: Vincent Sehloho, Mesheck Marumo, Salome Manamela, Charles Molekoa (ARC), Phillip Pheto and George Shonng. Sitting are Sabel Chambal (left) and Hezekiel Matlamela

Training for the future

by Fidelis Zvomuya

Ten small-scale livestock farmers from Limpopo province attended a one-day training course in animal managerial skills, health, disease control and treatment organised by the Milk Producers Organisation (MPO). The course was held in Pretoria recently.

One of the course instructors, Hezekiel Matlamela, said that through the course they aim to develop small-scale livestock producers who are into beef, dairy and small-stock farming. Matlamela said it is also meant to ensure that emerging farmers manage their livestock, farms and finances in a more professional manner. This could result in them breaking into the niche market.

“We have lined up a number of these courses and we aim at training more than 500 farmers in North West, Limpopo and Mpumalanga by the end of this year. Our training programmes are not directed only at dairy farmers, but also at beef and small stock farmers and are open to any farmer,” he said.

One participant, Frans Dibete, a farmer from Moletjie in Limpopo, welcomed the course and described it as a positive step towards the commercialisation of the emerging sector. Dibete said that despite it having been a one-day course, it had planted in him some in-depth knowledge on farm planning and animal management skills.

He said that, as a livestock farmer, the biggest challenge he faces is the lack of knowledge on how to produce good quality products that can compete on the market.

“These courses are professionally conducted by people with industrial experience and will be of great assistance to the emerging sector by bridging the gap between us farmers and the niche market,” he said. *UM*