

Emerging farmer wins award

by Isabel Basson

The Agricultural Writers' Association recently announced their Farmer of the Year, Agriculturalist of the Year and the Upcoming Farmer of the Year.

Anna Bock won the Upcoming Farmer of the Year 2005 award, a new edition to the competition. Anna is a 69-year-old widow from the Raman farming family in the Northern Cape. Anna and her son, Anthony, farm on the farm, Caboob (5 000 ha) just outside Pofadder. They, and her two other sons, are part of a closed corporation who bought Caboob with their land reform subsidies and a Landbank loan. Their livestock comprises of 700 Dorpers and 40 cows. They also recently bought their first two stud rams.



Anna Bock is the Agricultural Writers' Association Upcoming Farmer of the Year. With her is Charl van Rooyen, chairman of the Agricultural Writers' Association and Schalk Burger, market development manager, Agri SA

The Bocks are among the emerging farmers who farm successfully on a LRAD farm in Namakwaland. The reason for Anna's success is her love for her animals. "Being a livestock farmer is like running a business – what you put in, is what you get out. You must love animals. You must sacrifice yourself for your animals and you must endure," says Anna.

Anna started her farming career in Pella on the Orange River, just outside Pofadder. When she married Willem Bock in 1962, they started farming on their own with the 50 animals her father gave them as dowry. Willem had to work at a nearby mine to help put food on the table, while Anna did the farming and raised her five children.

Their farm in Goodhouse, Pella was on communal ground, but they often let their cattle graze on the property of commercial farmers in exchange for their labour. Later they decided to try and buy their own farm. In spite of drought and other problems, their farm is still growing. They sell most of their cattle through the Skaapland Butchery in Upington.

Upon receiving her award, Anna was clearly emotional. "It is a hard job being a cattle farmer. It is a hard job being a woman and raising children. But my faith saw me through." She also thanked the organisers of the event for her award, and the government for making it possible for her to get a farm. **UM**