



# Extension officers well-informed about parasites

by Isabel Basson

**In November last year, Jas Wasserman from the Intervet MPO Institute for Dairy Technology visited extension officers of Kroonstad and surrounding areas. With him was the energetic Dr Faffa Malan from Intervet, who taught the officers more about parasites and how to control them in a two-day course.**

This course empowered the officers to assist their farmers when their local animal health technicians are not available. “I’m having a problem. Our animal health technician has been gone for a long time and I couldn’t help the farmers who came to me with questions. Now I am well-prepared, I can fight with this weapon (manual). Now we can do anything,” says Mamohapie Rantoo.

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The extension officers are now able to identify the symptoms of diseases caused by parasites. They can also identify the different parasites and help their farmers with advice about how to get rid of them. Parasites do not only affect your cattle and grains. If not managed properly, you can also get sick.

Dr Malan is a very energetic lecturer. No one wants to fall asleep in one of his classes, for they might miss something! He travels with his bottles of worms, ticks and other

parasites, and informs farmers, farm workers and extension officers about the dangers of parasites.

At the end of the course, some of the students got the chance to present a short lecture on some of the parasites. This prepares them for when they have to inform their farmers about the parasites. It also shows who has not paid enough attention in the class.

To end the course with a bang, Dr Malan taught the students a funny little song to sing to the parasites on their cattle. "When you look them in the eye and sing this, the parasites will run away," he joked. Everyone had a good laugh trying to do the moves that goes with the song.

After their lectures, every extension officer got the chance to tell the others what they found most memorable about the course. It was clear that, although they were flooded with information, the extension officers were all very positive about what they have learned. It is clear that a special bond was formed between them and Dr Malan.

"When the ticks see me, they are going to run away. They will see that this person is coming with something," said Sopyu Khoza. "My farmers are going to be beneficiaries of Intervet," she added.

It is clear that anyone can benefit from these courses. This group of extension officers are now ready for battle. With their manuals and everything that they have learned by their side, they will be able to fight parasites in their communities.

For more information about these courses, contact Jas Wasserman on 012 843 5743 or 082 490 2465. **UM**



Students get the opportunity to present the class. Motsoane Motsoane tells a member of the group more about ticks



Dr Faffa Malan is a very energetic lecturer. Here he teaches the officers a little song to sing to their cattle. Julius Sebei plays the cattle



The group of extension officers. They are all well-informed about parasites, and can now help their farmers