



William Mosiane receives his certificate from Litchenburg NDA district manager, Cynthia Monyane

# MPO trains Northwest farmers

by Fidelis Zvomuya

**Cynthia Gonyane, the Department of Agriculture's district manager in Litchenburg, says that lack of capital, inputs, knowledge, technical skills and financial support has made it difficult for emerging farmers to enter the dairy farming industry.**

In an interview with *UbsiMail* during an emerging livestock farmers' training course presented by the Milk Producers Organisation (MPO) in Litchenburg recently, Gonyane said that the MPO has gone the

extra mile in mentoring farmers, but most of them fail to make it due to lack resources to kick-start their projects.

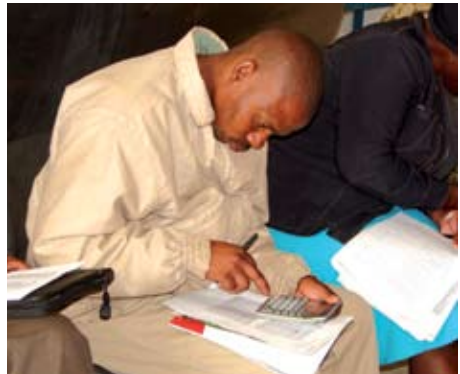
“The MPO has deployed a mentor in this province who has supported our initiatives to mentor the emerging farmers. It is now the duty of other players to join hands and support the farmers through financial injections, so that the training can realise positive results,” she said.

The Lichtenburg district has only three emerging dairy farmers with the rest of the farmers using their cows for subsistence purposes, producing only two litres of milk for family consumption. The one-week training course was meant to assist developing farmers on how to manage their finances and farming businesses in a sustainable way.

MPO instructor, Phillip Pheto, said that in terms of business management, farmers were being trained on how to keep their production cost low, at the same time showing higher productivity of good quality products that can make it in the niche markets.

“Farmers were taught about production factors such as money, materials, machinery, and manpower. They also present practical lessons on good financial record-keeping as a way of measuring their farm profitability and productivity,” Pheto said. He said the Department of Agriculture will regularly visit the farmers, checking on their practical progress.

One of the course participants, Bubby Abel Kutogne, said that his project has failed due to lack of funds. Kutogne whose milking parlour construction was funded by the Department of Agriculture, said he wanted to kick-start production with at least 50 cows. “As you can see, not even a single cow has passed through this parlour and I am still looking for funds, one year after the completion of this infrastructure. Most financial institutions require security and I don't have it,” he said. **UM**



Petrus Mogale busy doing calculations during the practical farm financial management course



Kobus Theron (MPO mentor), Cynthia Gonyane, and Jas Wasserman of the Intervet MPO Institute for Dairy Technology



The Department of Agriculture's extension officer for Lichtenburg, Buti Daniel Tsaoke, with MPO training instructor, Phillip Pheto