



KWAZULU-NATAL POULTRY INSTITUTE

POULTRY MANAGEMENT TRAINING CENTRE

Friday 15 November 2019

The KwaZulu-Natal Poultry Institute recently hosted its year-end function and officially opened the new facilities generously sponsored by the World Poultry Foundation (WPF). The institute, which is located in the Bisley Valley Nature Reserve on the outskirts of Pietermaritzburg, has been in existence for 28 years and has a solid reputation for poultry training excellence. In particular the training farm on the institute's premises offers unparalleled opportunities for hands-on practical teaching in poultry flock management.

Members and visitors were invited to walk around the grounds to view the new buildings donated by WPF. During an unexpected but very welcome rain shower, long-standing KZNPI president Mr Seo Mtetwa did the honours by cutting the ribbon to the new biosecurity shower block. This building offers eight modern showers which are a big improvement on the existing biosecurity shower block. Biosecurity is a crucial part of poultry farming and all staff and trainees at KZNPI must undertake biosecurity procedures which include showering and the use of protective clothing. The new showers will increase the time available for practical on-farm learning as groups of delegates can now be kitted out and ready for farm learning in a quarter of the time previously needed. The new gas geysers will ensure that the hot water never runs out – this is especially important in cold winter months!

After the opening ceremonies, Honorary and current KZNPI members, board members, staff and invited guests sat down to an excellent spit roast luncheon during which Dr Ed Wethli, the first Training Principal of the KZNPI gave an interesting talk on the early years of the KZNPI. Founding members, Prof. Rob Gous, Dr Roger Horner and Mr Bryan Edmondson, were present at the event as was Mrs Julie Kent (nee Nixon), the Administration Manager during the institute's infancy.

WPF funding was also used to build a separate feed store, egg cold room and to extend the existing hatchery. This will allow much-needed additional space for hatchery training courses. On hand for the ceremonial ribbon cutting were Andrew Smith, COO of Meadow Feeds, Pietermaritzburg and Michel Bradford, Product Manager of De Heus Animal Feeds. These two companies have generously sponsored the

institute's broiler, breeder and layer feed for a number of years. The KZNPI is extremely grateful for this support – and for the generous assistance that other companies offer.

The WPF have funded poultry production training for 300 South African farmers and extension advisors over a three year period from 2017 to 2019. An independent, post-training survey commissioned by WPF highlighted the value of knowledge in chicken farming :

- 80% of the poultry producer beneficiaries reported that their earnings improved after the training;
- 89% reported that their quality of life had improved as they were growing healthier poultry
- 97% of extension advisors reported increased confidence in their knowledge and skill when advising their poultry farmers.

With the advent of the national South African Poultry Master Plan the poultry sector is poised for growth. The KZNPI is well-placed to play its part in up-skilling the industry.

