



# JUDGING OF THE NATIONAL BEEF CATTLE FARMER OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

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**The aim of the National Cattle Farmer of the Year Competition is to recognise South Africa's most effective stock farmers, also taking their natural resources into account.**

**Reproduction efficiency plays an important part in judging the competition as it greatly affects profitability. Fertility is one of the most important indicators of an adapted animal.**

**By studying, among others, the weaning percentage (number of animals weaned per animals mated), various aspects in the reproduction management programme are assessed.**



## AIM OF THE COMPETITION

- ✓ To gather on the ground production data of beef cattle farmers
- ✓ To set a new benchmark for weaning percentage
- ✓ To point out management practises of successful farmers
- ✓ To share this information with fellow farmers through the media and farmers' days
- ✓ To give recognition to SA's leading stock farmers

## **CO-WORKERS**

**Voermol initiated the competition eight years ago and is the main sponsor.**

**Apart from Voermol being the main sponsor, the competition has also been realised by input from and the collaboration of BKB, First National Bank, Landbouweekblad, Red Meat Producers Organisation (RPO), University of the Free State and the Livestock Health and Production Group of the SA Veterinary Association.**



## **HOW DOES THE COMPETITION WORKS?**

- **Open for participation by any beef cattle farmer in SA.**
- **Information gathered through questionnaires.**
- **The participant must personally complete the form and sign the declaration at the end of the questionnaire.**
- **The competition is based on the participant's latest calving season or calving seasons.**
- **Information submitted by participants is confidential.**
- **Questionnaires are verified and evaluated by Department Animal, Wildlife and Grassland Sciences of Free State University.**

- **Management counts 50 % and results 50 %.**
- **Potential winners are identified and visited on the farm.**
- **Aspects considered are resource utilization, fodder flow planning and management, pasture management, breeding goals and selection criteria, record keeping, condition of animals, marketing, value adding, herd production, labor management, infrastructure (handling facilities, etc.) and participation in organized agriculture.**
- **Three finalists selected.**

# BEEF CATTLE FARMER OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

- 172 Entries over the past eight years
- In total 75 419 females
- Average herd size of 439
- Average weaning percentage 86.6

*(Average calving % of SA beef cattle herd is below 60%, Erasmus, 2003)*



**Mr. Mark Newborn and his son Brett, of the Matatiele district, farm extensively with more than 1700 Simbra and Simmental breeding cows.**

**They use an ecological approach in their veld management programme. The weaning percentage in this big herd was 90% in the last production year with an average weaning weight of 265 kg.**

**They use the good milk characteristics of the Simmental and hardiness and growth attributes of the Brahman to create a highly productive and efficient commercial Simbra.**

**Because of a high demand for Simbra bulls in the area, they also registered a Simbra stud. Using BLUP breeding values in both studs, outstanding breeding stock is produced and inter-calving periods compare well with the breed averages.**





**On farm visit: 19 October 2010**









# Prize giving function at Gala dinner, Bloemfontein

