

20 May 2023, Modimolle – WRSA hosted their first Buffalo Symposium at Castle de Wildt. The event aimed to discuss everything buffalo in terms of diseases, disease management, and the buffalo system that is being developed to potentially privatize buffalo movement as well as addressing some other challenges faced by buffalo ranchers in South Africa.

The program included:

- a national biosecurity update with presentations by
 - [Prof Anita Michel \(Brucellosis / contagious abortion\)](#), and
 - [Dr Livio Heath \(Foot and Mouth Disease, and the risks of mixing cattle and buffalo\)](#)
- Technical updates
 - [Dr David Pretorius \(buffalo SOP, authorized private vets, and testing and movement of buffalo\)](#)
- Industry updates
 - [WRSA CEO Richard York presented updates](#) regarding important matters affecting the industry, including the TOPs regulations, hunting quotas, KZN compensation policy, the white paper on sustainable use, the lion task team, and the wildlife & welfare forum.

Prof Michel, from the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases at the University of Pretoria, gave a presentation regarding the silent threat to buffalo farming: Brucellosis / contagious abortion.

- What is brucellosis (Slide 5)
- When do you suspect brucellosis? (Slide 6)
- How do buffalo become infected with brucellosis? (Slide 7)
- Brucellosis spreads within a heard. (Slide 8)
- Latent carrier status (Slide 9)
- Brucellosis in humans (Slide 10)

- How to protect your herd from brucellosis? (Slide 11)
- Control of brucellosis in buffalo. (Slide 12)
- Clinical signs: Wildlife (Slide 14)

Dr Livio Heath, from the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute Agricultural Research Council, presented an informational update regarding the risks of mixing cattle and buffalo with regard to Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD).

- Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute Transboundary Animal Diseases Laboratory (Slide 2)
- Epidemiology of FMD (Slide 3)
- Role of buffalo in FMD (Slide 4)
- Role of impala in the epidemiology (Slide 5)
- FMD outbreaks in South Africa 2000 – 2009 (Slide 6)
- FMD Control in South Africa (Slide 7)
- FMD Diagnostic Capacity (Slide 9)
- Contribution of laboratory services for surveillance of TADs (Slide 15)
- FMD situation in South Africa (Slide 16)
- FMD in KwaZulu-Natal: 2011 (Slide 17)
- FMD in Mpumalanga: 2013 – 2014 (Slide 18)
- FMD in South Africa: 2015 – 2021 (Slide 19)
- FMD in South Africa: 2017 (Slide 20)
- FMD in South Africa: 2015 – 2021 (Slide 21)
- FMD in KwaZulu-Natal: 2021 – 2022 (Slide 22)
- FMD in Limpopo and North West (Slide 24)
- Global Distribution of FMD (Slide 25)
- FMD Type O in southern Africa (Slide 26)
- FMD Vaccination in South Africa (Slide 27)
- Longevity of immune responses (Slide 28)
- FMD Vaccination in South Africa (Slide 29)
- Foot and Mouth Disease R&D (Slide 30)

- Changes in epidemiological patterns? (Slide 31)

Dr David Pretorius presented the progress in the establishment of the Buffalo Company, a new entity meant to act as a facilitate

- Have you heard about? SOP (Slide 3)
- Drivers of the SOP (Role players) (Slide 4)
- What do we want to achieve with this SOP (Slide 5)
- Authorized Private Vet (Slide 6)
- Criteria of an Authorized Vet (Slide 7)
- CPD – Training Course (Slide 8)
- Application for Buffalo Farm Registration (BU Number) (Slide 9)
- The Application Process (Slide 10)
- Section 1 – Testing (Slide 17)
- Movement of Buffalo (Slide 24)
- Tick Boxes (Slide 27)
- Contact details (Slide 29)

WRSA CEO Richard York discussed the latest industry updates.

1. TOPS Regulations
2. Hunting Quotas
3. KZN Compensation Policy
4. White paper on sustainable use
5. Lion Task Team
6. Wildlife & Welfare Forum