

SASAS COMMUNIQUE

"Experientia docet"



"Life on a farm is a school of patience; you can't hurry the crops or make an ox in two days."

Henri Alain

CHAIRMAN NOTES



2024 was an adventurous and challenging year that provided many of us with opportunities to grow and make changes.

We welcomed our new SASAS council at the AGM held at the 2024 congress and are excited about the renewed efforts from all going forward!

We look forward to a productive 2025 for SASAS and wish all our members a successful 2025!

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Renewal of membership 2025

The SASAS financial year ended on 31 December. Therefore we kindly request all animal scientists to renew your membership. A grace period of 3 months is allowed, after which your membership lapses. Please also revise your contact details on the SASAS website. The good news is that the fees for 2025 remain unchanged.

SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNAL OF ANIMAL SCIENCE (SAJAS)

As of 1 December, we welcome a new editor for our journal, Dr Megan North, and we trust that our members will support her as she endeavors to maintain the journals upward trend, taking it to new heights.

As the editor cannot do it alone, we call on the continued support of our sub-editors and reviewers, a critical element in publishing a successful journal.

We also thank our previous editor, Dr Marion Young for her efforts over the past few years and wish her all the best for the future.



The SASAS council held a workshop looking at the new vision for SASAS over the next 5 years. This will be presented at the AGM at our next congress.

We will be canvassing the opinions of our members early in 2025 through an online survey, as it is your society and your opinions count.



SACNASP-SAVC ENGAGEMENT MEETING

SACNASP facilitated a meeting to discuss some long standing issues between some of the SACNASP VA's and the Veterinary Council, held at the SAVC offices on 26 November. Apart from SASAS, the meeting was attended by the Zoological Society, the South African Bat Assessment Association and the South African Wildlife Management Association. Essentially this meeting addressed procedures that are considered veterinary (vs non-veterinary procedures) and therefore restricted to registered veterinarians. Essentially, only a registered veterinarian may; diagnose a disease, treat a disease, prescribe scheduled drugs and undertake surgical any other invasive procedures in animals according to the veterinary act. Apart from these restrictions, there are very few restrictions impacting on Animal Science/Production. The one regulation which may impact some researchers is the taking of blood samples, however, the SAVC will relook at taking blood samples from peripheral veins using the needle and stick method. However, those involved on biomedical research with lab animals and the unique sampling practices in the Zoological field face some difficulties associated with animal welfare issues. The Veterinary vs Non-veterinary Procedures document has been placed in the SASAS website members section. If members would like to raise any other issues, please forward the details to the SASAS secretary.

It was a constructive meeting and the issue of vets consulting in breeding and nutrition was raised by SASAS and vets involved in environmental consulting by SAWMA. Essentially these fields of practice do not fall within the scope of the SAVC and they cannot be held responsible for the actions of individuals within the profession. Their response was, did the consultants meet the Day 1 competencies for that field of practice, as there are many veterinarians with animal science, or other degrees, completed prior to studying veterinary science. If not, you have a case and can consider taking action, by lodging a complaint with the SAVC and SACNASP or taking legal action.

This issue highlights the need for a comprehensive set of Day 1 competences. SASAS has a list of Day 1 competencies drawn up by Prof Noman Casey, however, these may need to be revised and updated. Universities need to take note of these and ensure their student are competent in the Day 1 competencies upon graduation as these could have repercussions with the registration and practicing as an Animal Scientist going forward. There is an urgent need to align the basic elements of the Animal Science qualifications offered in South Africa to meet these competencies, with SASAS taking the lead through Dr Simon Lashmar and the science and education sub-committee of the SASAS Council.

Membership criteria for registration with SACNASP as an Animal Scientist

An issue that SASAS has taken up with SACNASP is the relevance of some of the qualifications considered to be appropriate for registration as an Animal Scientist. It would appear that anything containing "Animal" in it's designation is considered Animal Science and reflects a misunderstanding of what the Profession of Animal Science encompasses, possibly from a literal translation of "Dierekunde" to Animal Science rather than Zoology.

Despite the sterling efforts of our PAC Chair, Prof Linky Makgahlela, we hit a brick wall in the current dispensation.

We are now awaiting the new draft bill governing the Natural Science Professions, which apparently should resolve our concerns, as these not adequately covered in the present bill.

Challenges posed to Livestock Production

Council received a letter expressing concerns regarding the persistent attacks on our industry by activists. Basically there are two groupings, those who out of principle, or religious issues, find taking a life and consuming animal products against their values. They are entitled to their views, however we do not condone violent activism. Our profession needs to ensure we abide by the best animal welfare standards to avoid bad publicity, particularly on social media, which fuels their case. Another field in which we take flack is climate change where many of the issues are based on incorrect assumptions, dated and inappropriate science, which has since been repudiated in more recent research. After some discussion, it was concluded that direct confrontation would not be appropriate.

Essentially, we need to educate our members and the livestock production community in general on these issues, based on good science to enable Animal Scientists and livestock producers to challenge the perceptions and pseudoscience used against our profession when we are confronted.

»» SASAS MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

At the recent council meeting workshopping the way forward for SASAS, it was proposed that we include a new category of members, namely, associate membership for non-Animal Scientists involved in livestock production. We also need to consider our young animal scientists in training, to bridge the gap between student member and those registered as Professional Scientists. These are the SACNASP registered candidate scientists, who form the vast majority (65%) of Animal Scientists registered under Animal Science with SACNASP, as can be seen in the data presented below.

A summary of the latest demographics of Animal Scientists registered with SACNASP is:

Distribution of Animal Scientists per Province

Province	Gender		Total	%
	Male	Female		
Eastern Cape	230	202	432	23.9
Foreign	8	3	11	0.6
Free State	39	29	68	3.8
Gauteng	205	223	427	23.7
KwaZulu-Natal	107	117	224	12.4
Limpopo	105	147	253	13.9
Mpumalanga	46	44	90	5.0
Northwest	62	69	131	7.2
Northern Cape	12	6	17	1.0
Western Cape	69	66	135	7.5
No Data*	10	9	19	1.1
Total	893	915	1808	100



Animal Scientist Registration per Category

	Male			Female		
	Pr.Nat.Sci.	Cert.Nat.Sci.	Cand.Nat.Sci.	Pr.Nat.Sci.	Cert.Nat.Sci.	Cand.Nat.Sci.
Black	108	46	429	58	25	561
White	208	23	56	140	8	84
Asian	4	3	13	8	1	15
Coloured	-	-	3	6	3	4
Others	-	-	-	-	-	1
Undisclosed	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	320	72	501	212	37	666

SACNASP/SASAS MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

As we head into the final stretch of the 2024 mentorship program, we are once again thrilled with the progress that all the individuals have made. From taking on new jobs, to personal growth and development as well as international travel opportunities that arose, we are extremely proud of each and every one of them! Here are some highlights from the previous few months:

- The second workshop was held in October at Future Africa where we focused on personal brand & marketing as well as making science accessible.
- Mr Ashell Maenetja was awarded best subsistence producer in Limpopo in September 2024
- Ms. Ntokozi Msiza hosted the OWSD webinar series for Women’s month and was also selected to participate in the TechWomen professional science exchange program in the USA for five weeks from September to October 2024.
- Mr Afikile Mbombi was selected to participate at the World Science and Technology development forum in Beijing China (accompanied by SACNASP delegates and his mentor, Mrs. Jackie Tucker) in October 2024



FROM RESEARCH TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP:

CAREER PATHWAYS FOR POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARS

Presented by OWSD SA NC

JOIN US FOR INSIGHTFUL DISCUSSION

Our Speakers

DR NTOKOZI MSIZA
Chief Executive
Also Chair of Science Africa

DR REABOTSE MOSE
Associate Professor
Department of Microbiology

Facilitator
Ms. Ntokozi Msiza

Panelists:
MS MTSHI MASHO (Department of Plant and Soil) and **MS PHATISO MATHEBISO** (Pharmaceutical Marketing)

Join us in exploring the potential of research commercialisation and entrepreneurship as viable career paths for scholars.

PART 2 - 29th AUGUST 2024

➤➤➤ SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS



Our Facebook page is live with the convener of our marketing portfolio, Jackie Tucker, as the administrator. Please follow it on this link and join the conversation:

[SASAS Main Council Facebook](#)

**SASAS IS GROWING AND THERE ARE EXCITING TIMES AHEAD.
WE WOULD LIKE TO ENCOURAGE ALL PASSIONATE ANIMAL
SCIENTISTS TO BECOME MEMBERS OF SASAS IN ORDER FOR US TO
CONTINUE WITH OUR DREAMS AND GOALS OF CREATING A
SOCIETY THAT ASSISTS AND DEVELOPS PROFESSIONAL ANIMAL
SCIENTISTS FOR THE FUTURE OF FOOD PRODUCTION IN AFRICA.
FOLLOW THE LINK IN THE QR CODE ALONGSIDE TO BECOME A
MEMBER TODAY!
YOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL CREATE THE CHANGE YOU ALL WANT!**



UPCOMING EVENTS



SASAS CONGRESS 2025 SAVE THE DATE

The 55th SASAS Congress is being hosted by our members in Limpopo, at The Ranch Hotel/Resort from the 8-10th July 2025.

For more details visit the congress website sasascongress.co.za.

Further communication on the congress will be forwarded to members as further information is made available.

This will be the first time it's being hosted in Limpopo and we wish the team the best of luck!

WITH THANKS,

TREVOR DUGMORE
SASAS PRESIDENT

&

JACKIE TUCKER
PR & MARKETING