

# Free veterinary support for smallholder livestock farmers

Veterinary technicians of the Western Cape Department of Agriculture (WCDoA) Veterinary Service presented workshops to smallholder livestock farmers in Klapmuts, Paarl, on 27 October.



Images via [AgriOrbit](#)

According to Western Cape minister of agriculture, Dr Ivan Meyer, the WCDoA Veterinary Service supports smallholder livestock farmers through free training and primary animal health care services.

"This free service is crucial for the survival of smallholder livestock farmers in communities with no or limited access to private veterinary clinics and services," Dr Meyer said.

## Access to professional veterinary facilities

Free services include primary animal care, vaccination of production animals against diseases, and tests for conditions such as brucellosis, swine and avian influenza.

Animal health technician, Maresa Fourie, highlights that indigent farmers now have regular access to professional veterinary facilities. "I cannot overemphasise the value of training for smallholder livestock farmers. Healthier animals fetch



better prices at the market. So, the economic impact of what we do can be huge," she said.



Goat farmer, Gideon Mgwaza listening attentively during the workshop.

One such farmer who has benefited from the training is goat farmer Gideon Mgwaza. He said he had learnt much during the training session. However, he feels that he needs more training in order to become a prominent farmer who can employ more people. "I am not doing this for nothing. I want to provide for my family," he continued.

## Ensuring food security

According to Dr Meyer, smallholder farmers play a vital role in ensuring food security and job creation.

"The WCDoA's contribution to the health of livestock owned by smallholder farmers promotes prosperity and contributes to food security. It also enables smallholder livestock farmers to create a dignified life for themselves and their loved ones," Dr Meyer concluded.

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