

Media release

13 December 2018

UP and AFMA sign MoA to establish Africa's first training and research feed mill

A Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) between the University of Pretoria (UP) and the Animal Feed Manufacturers Association (AFMA) to the value of R50 million for the establishment of a feed mill research facility was officially signed on 11 December 2018.

The MoA was signed by Prof Cheryl de la Rey, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of UP and Mr De Wet Boshoff, Executive Director of AFMA. The ceremony was attended by UP dignitaries and AFMA board members.

According to Prof de la Rey, "this UP/AFMA Feed mill research facility will take the relationship to a new level with a partner on the scale and impact of AFMA – it is a great partner to have in South Africa, Africa and internationally – especially when combined with a research intensive university such as UP."

Prof De La Rey emphasised that "the university has a long and successful history in agriculture, seeing that we celebrated the centenary of agriculture at UP in 2017. Now we must focus on the next 100 years, taking a good look at our assets such as the Hatfield Experimental Farm and the Miertjie le Roux farm with its unique opportunities and potential."

"This new research facility and laboratory will serve as conduit for a number of related research and education activities in both animal and plant agriculture, which are desperately needed by the agricultural industry, the National Department of Agriculture and a number of other scientific disciplines such as biosciences, environmental and climate research. These trans-disciplinary research initiatives will contribute to new discoveries in climate smart agriculture, food safety and food security."

"The signing of the MoA is aligned with AFMA's training and skills development strategic focus area, one of the six strategic focus areas," Boshoff says. "Feed safety and animal nutrition are critically important to the feed industry and should be supported by proper education, training and research."

The training and research feed mill facility is an initiative of the AFMA Board of Directors, driven by Dr Hinner Köster, CEO at Kaonne Investments and Adjunct Faculty Professor at Kansas State University in Manhattan and took close to six years of planning and cooperation.



“What makes this facility extra special, is the fact that it will be the very first of its kind in Africa for feed milling,” Boshoff says.

In addition to providing students access to specialised on-site training and practical experience, the facility will also include a laboratory, a lecture hall, as well as research and product development facilities for AFMA members and local and international animal feed nutritionists and feed manufacturers.

The feed miller curriculum developed by AFMA was finalised and registered during the second half of 2018 with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) as a national qualification. The qualification includes theoretical and practical components that could be presented in different formats, such as short courses, practical training and distance learning. In the training and skills development process, AFMA has partnered with and is assisted by the AGRISETA, which allows AFMA to develop the framework and platforms through which the feed millers curriculum will be rolled-out and implemented.

According to the MoA between UP and AFMA, AFMA will be responsible for the funding of the design and construction of the training and research feed mill facility. AFMA will via its members and industry role players contribute to the laboratory and other equipment necessary for the establishment and ongoing operations. UP will contribute the site and infrastructure, as well as the final operating of the mill with the assistance of AFMA specialists.

AFMA is the official industry representative body of the South African feed industry in the livestock feed sector and larger agricultural environment. AFMA represents a major part of the South African feed industry which is ranked no 22 in the world. Its members are collectively responsible for an annual feed production of 11.4 million tons, which represents the greatest proportion of animal feed production on the African continent. Animal feeds play a leading role in the global food industry to ensure safe, abundant and affordable food for humans and food producing animals. According to the 2017 Alltech Global Feed Survey, South Africa has by far the biggest potential for growth in terms of animal feed production and manufacturing, necessitating high level feed science and associated animal science research.

Captions:

From left: Prof Stephanie Burton (Vice-Principal: Research and Postgraduate Education), Mr De Wet Boshoff (CEO: AFMA), Prof Cheryl de la Rey (Vice-Chancellor and Principal) and Dr Hinner Köster (AFMA Board of Directors and Chairperson: TuksAlumni Association).

Mr De Wet Boshoff (CEO: AFMA) and Prof Cheryl de la Rey (Vice-Chancellor and Principal)

ISSUED BY AFMA

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