



CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE 2015

VENUE: ATKV Drakensville DATE: 1, 2 & 3 September 2015

NB: The fee for the Conference includes lunch, dinner, and teas... but DOES NOT include breakfast, meat for the braai and accommodation!

ROB CASKIE – Guest speaker at Conference dinner – “GOING SOUTH”



Rob Caskie, educated in the Natal Midlands and graduated with a BSc. Hons degree in Agriculture. He joined the guiding profession as a photographic safari guide and wildlife film-maker in Botswana’s Okavango Delta. His expertise earned him a place as official photographer on Kingsley Holgate’s *Afrika Odyssey* expedition in 1993 along the waterways of Africa from Cape to Cairo.

After working with the late David Rattray from 2001 on the Anglo Zulu battlefields, he began his own business in 2011 as a Professional Speaker and Specialist Tour Guide. Rob took a four-year round-the-world expedition through the UK, Europe, Israel, Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand, of which the last sixteen months were spent travelling and working in the United States, Mexico, Canada and Alaska.

Since 2004, he has presented extensively in the UK and South Africa. He was invited to speak at the Royal Geographic Society in London to full houses in September 2010 and in September 2012, when he was invited to showcase his talk 'Going South with Scott & Shackleton' fulfilling his lifelong passion with Antarctica. He then spoke at the Royal Geographical Society in both Hong Kong and Singapore.

With stick and trademark shorts, Rob prides himself in unique storytelling and does not rely on electronic or visual aids – *‘when the lights trip, Rob does not!’*



RICHARD TEAGUE, Professor, Ecosystem Science and Management, Texas A&M University, Senior Scientist of the Borlaug Institute, and Associate Resident Director, Texas A&M AgriLife Research

BS (Agriculture - Grassland Science); University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1972
PhD (Botany/Ecology), University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1987

Since 1972 as a research scientist, he worked on various aspects of rangeland management, as well as methods of killing unwanted woody species in Zimbabwe. In South Africa he concentrated on determining how *Acacia karroo* responded to defoliation by goats to develop means of managing to reduce it or use it as a sustainable resource for goat production.

Moved to Texas, concentrated on determining how to manage grazing and fire to decrease the cost of controlling unwanted woody species. After 10 years of this he concentrated on determining what was the best that grazing management could do to restore ecosystem function and improve ranch livelihoods on the rangelands of north Texas.

Has travelled widely, meeting leading grazing managers to find out what they were achieving, how they were succeeding or what problems they were encountering. Over 90% of conservation awards on grazing lands go to folk who practice adaptive multi-paddock grazing, indicating the superiority of such management.



PASTOR AUGUST BASSON moved to Lesotho in 1993 to pastor the Lesotho Evangelical Church in Tebellong.

His interest in agriculture was born out of the question that haunted him: How can he preach to people who are hungry?

Healthy soil that grows healthy plants has become a way of life for him. Today agriculture is the platform from which he is doing his ministry.

Their vision is ‘Transformation through Sustainable Agriculture’ and they are training and equipping pastors, farmers, young people and key members of the community.

His passion is to see life change through agriculture.



VICTOR ROBERTS, Soil Fertility and Analytical Services, Cedara, KZN Dept Agric. and Rural Development - Specialist Soil Scientist

Victor grew up on a farm in the Eastern Cape. He studied Soil Science at The University of Natal. In 1995, he began working at the ARC conducting soil surveys in KZN and the Eastern Cape before moving to the KZN Dept Agric. in 1998. He has worked on N fertilization of maize, the P and K fertilization of chrysanthemums, and numerous projects for small scale farmers.

Currently he is looking at N fertilization and the role of cover crops, the P fertilization of sweet-potatoes, and P sources for resource poor farmers. He is an accomplished speaker and was one of the key-note speakers at the 6th Biennial National Landcare Conference in 2014 where he spoke on the “Evolution of Conservation Agriculture – challenges and opportunities in South Africa”.





ANTHONY MUIRHEAD, Gourtan Farm Winterton

“The Professor”, as he is affectionately known in The No-Till Club, and in partnership with his son Terry, farms maize, soyabean and wheat in rotation on their 400 ha farm comprising 250 ha irrigation and 30 dryland and 120 veld. Anthony, Old Western College scholar, was one of the first farmers to adopt No-Till Conservation Agriculture in South Africa, and as he states, he has a master degree from The University of Hard Knocks cum laude.

Always ready to impart his knowledge and passion for the no-till system, Anthony has spoken at many farmers’ days. In 2012 he addressed the International Soyabean Conference in Durban. In 2013 he was invited to the prestigious Landbou Weekblad farmers’ conference in Bloemfontein. He was invited to Zambia on a tour to explain and encourage farmers in that country to adopt No-Till Conservation Agriculture.

Anthony and Terry have given their valuable time to promote no-till, which they feel is vital to the sustainability of farming, not only on their farm but around the world. Gourtan Farm has hosted many trials conducted in the interest of improving the technology as well and the principles associated with No-Till CA. The last being a “Soil Bourne Disease” trial in conjunction with Cedara, ARC and the Maize Trust that lasted five seasons. For the past nine years Guy Thibaud of Cedara has run a fertility trial in maize looking at conventional and no-till establishment.



DR RIANTO VAN ANTWERPEN, a soil physicist by trade and in his career he has worked on projects which covered soil tillage, root growth, soil health, irrigation scheduling, the use of residue from various sources and soil management.

Rianto is a Senior Soil Scientist and Programme Manager at SASRI, and holds an honorary appointment at the Department of Soil, Crops and Climate Sciences at University of the Free State.

He also serves on councils of the Soil Science Society of South Africa (President), the International Society of Sugarcane Technologists (Agricultural Commission, Agronomy section) and the South African Sugarcane Industries’ Agronomists Association (Convener).

RENE STUBBS bought Denleigh in 1986 and converted it to a dairy farm immediately. In 2006 he bought the neighbouring farm and set up a dairy there as well.

In 1991 he started converting cropping land and pastures to no-till.

Currently milking 1000 cows on 200 ha irrigated ryegrass pastures together with 110 ha dry land maize for silage and 200 ha kikuyu pastures.

His son Nick has joined him and they have set up a further two farms milking 1100 cows.



EGON ZUNCKEL’S farm is situated north west of Bergville and south of Warden.

Comprises: 1800 ha summer crops
2200 ha grazing

He has been using no-till for 19 years with great success.

Main summer crops:
Maize and soya in a 50/50 rotation and 60/40 in Freestate.

Winter crops: Wheat in 1/3 rotation.

Non-irrigated cover crops: About 600 ha of oats and radish.

Supplementary irrigation: 450 ha **Dry land:** 1350 ha

Store cows and weaner oxen have been introduced in order to utilise the large volumes of maize residue and cover crops generated.

COBUS VAN COLLER

Studied at Central University of Technology Free State and received B-Tech Electronic Inc in 1995.

He worked at a medical company on electronic equipment – Laser and X-ray technology.

Cobus started farming in 1999 in Viljoenskroon on 130 ha dry-land, which was leased without any financial support. He began precision farming in 2003 and implemented full CA (Conservation Agriculture) in 2006; he continues with crop rotation of maize, sunflower and soyabeans.

Commercial cattle and sheep utilise the grazing in summer and controlled grazing of dry-land residues in winter. Farming today consists of 2000 ha dry-land and 1500 ha grazing.



BILL BERRY, MSc Agric (Agronomy) has been consulting in the agribusiness and rural development field for the past 14 years. He also has 19 years of experience in crop production research and extension, managing Agricultural Research Council and Government research sections, and has built up a solid knowledge of conservation agriculture farming methods and mechanization.

Between 2001 and 2005 he was involved in planning, implementation and management of a large commercial crop production enterprise in Sudan, growing cotton, sorghum, sunflower, maize, wheat and sesame, using no-till methods on up to 8 000 hectares. His research work initially concentrated on crop physiology, general agronomy, soil physics, soil water and energy balances in tillage systems, and crop modelling.

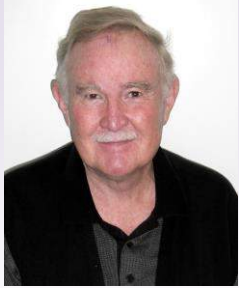


RUHAN THEUNISSEN, studied at North-West University, Potchefstroom and obtained a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in Mechanical Engineering.

He worked in the energy management sector for three years and specialised in the measurement and verification of energy related data.

Always had a passion for farming and decided to change career to farming in May 2013. He is part of the Riemland study group and no-till trails in the Reitz district.





DR JOHANN BRITS

DSc (Univ. of Pretoria) 1976: Entomology
 BA (Univ. of Pretoria) 1979: Letter en Wysbegeerte: Main subjects: Psychology and Archaeology
 BA (Hons) (Univ. of Pretoria) 1981: Main subject: Archaeology
 Short course in Nematology (Univ. of Potchefstroom) 1983
 Registered as Biological Scientist 23 February 1983
 Marketing Management Course (Univ. of Pretoria) 1996
 International Marketing Seminar Workshop in Basle, Switzerland 1997
 Advanced Marketing Management: (Univ. of Pretoria) 1999
 Senior Management Programme (Univ. of Pretoria) 2000

Lecturer:	University of Pretoria	January 1975 – 1983	
Group Leader:	Insecticides	Ciba-Geigy	1985 – 1995
Product Manager:	Insecticides	Novartis	1995 - 2001
Crop Manager:	Sub-Tropical Fruits and Vegetables	Syngenta South Africa	2001 – 2009
Group Leader:	Insecticides	Villa Crop Protection	2011 -



DR PHILIP THEUNISSEN, BCom – North West University

Started in 1983 as an economist with the SA Agricultural Union (now Agri-SA). In 1987 he was appointed agricultural economist at Free State Co-operative. Was financial manager at a farming company in Paarl before starting his own accounting practice in 1991 in Bethlehem.

Part-time tutor: computer software for farm management for Technicon SA. He lectured Business Management part-time in a technical college, and was involved in developing correspondence courses for farmers regarding financial recordkeeping, tax and marketing.

Philip does full financial record keeping for farmers, covers succession planning, farm management, machinery management, enterprise budgeting, cash flow analysis and agriculture economical comparisons as part of his regular consultations. In 2005, he enrolled as part of the first group of students for the post graduate Master's degree in forensic accounting at the North West University.

As a freelance journalist, his articles have appeared in columns in almost every agricultural publication in South Africa, and in 1993 he was SA Journalist of the Year. Was awarded best article for the year in SA Grain in 2001 for his article "When must a farmer quit?"



DR HENDRIK SMITH

- PhD in Sustainable Agriculture, University of Free State (2006)
- Developed a process to empower small holder farmers with Conservation Agriculture (CA) principles and practices.
- Worked at the Agricultural Research Council-Institute for Soil, Climate and Water (ARC-ISCW) in South Africa for twenty years.
- Has experience in the area of soil science and land use planning, land degradation, community-based natural resource management, action research, Agricultural Innovation Systems and Sustainable Agriculture (including Conservation Agriculture).
- He has been leading the implementation of a number of Landcare projects for almost 15 years, aiming to promote CA among small scale farmers (inter-alia in Limpopo, EC, Mpumalanga, Gauteng and KZN).
- At Grain SA since January 2013 as national CA Facilitator, promoting CA to all grain farmers in South Africa.
- Hendrik is married to Christine and has two children, Hendrik (14 years) and Maria (13 years).



GUY THIBAUD Completed his BSc (Agric.) degree in soil science and chemistry at the University of Natal in 1982, and joined the Department of Agriculture at Cedara. In 1992 he was awarded an MSc (Agric.) *cum laude* for his research on Langebaan rock phosphate.

Since 2001, his research has focused on soil acidity and nitrogen management in no-till cropping systems.

Since 2006 he has also been involved with cooperative research studies to evaluate the role and importance of soil borne diseases in maize production under no-till at Winterton. Guy has received several awards in his field of work, including the South African Society of Crop Production Daan Retief Floating Trophy, the South African Society of Crop Production Wenwig Trophy, and the Fertilizer Society of South Africa Silver Medal.

DR CHARLIE REINHARDT studied from 1975 to 1978 at the Orange Free State University and obtained the BSc degree followed by the BSc Honour's degree in Botany.

After a brief career at Ciba-Geigy he started his career at the University of Pretoria in 1980, and obtained the following degrees: BSc Agric, BSc Agric Honours, MSc Agric en PhD Agric in Agronomy, specialising in Weed Science. Charlie has produced more than 60 peer-reviewed scientific articles, 80 papers at conference, and 50 articles in popular agriculture-focus magazines.

2001-2008: Professor and Head of the Department Plant Production and Soil Science.

Since 2009: Appointed part-time in the same department as Extraordinary Professor of Weed Science.

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To date, has supervised the studies of 28 Master's and 7 PhD graduates in Weed Science. In 2012 he was appointed in his current fulltime position as Dean of the Villa Academy.

