



CELEBRATE THE **BEST**

compiled by **Nichelle Steyn**

The Agricultural Research Council (ARC)'s annual National Dairy Performers' Awards were presented at Agri-Expo Livestock last year, on behalf of the National Milk Recording and Improvement Scheme of the ARC Animal Production Institute (ARC-API).

All the dairy herds participating in performance recording via Intergis qualified for the Master Dairyman competition.

The top herds in every region were identified based on objective production standards and functional efficiency. Official milk recording for at least three years is essential for a herd to

qualify for any award. At least two herds per region were identified as finalists and one small-scale farmer was added to each of the regional finalists as well.

Visits were paid to the finalists in each of the five milk recording regions by a judging panel of four members, each focusing on a different

list of criteria. Dr Jakkie du Toit based his evaluation on breeding goals and selection for traits measured in the scheme, Dr Carel Muller focused on feeding strategies, production and reproduction, Dr Barry van Houten focused on health traits and milking procedures, and Danie Giliomee focused on the visual appraisal of the functional traits of the herds.

The awards ceremony was opened by Prof. Norman Maiwashe, general manager of the ARC Animal Production Institute. He stressed the importance of a healthy and growing dairy industry and elaborated on the impact of performance recording when it came to ensuring food security in South Africa.

With Dr Carel Muller as the master of ceremonies, Dr Jakkie du Toit of the ARC gave an overview of the criteria set for the specific awards, and the proceedings concluded with a dinner. Dr Jakkie du Toit thanked all present, particularly all the sponsors and facilitators of the event. [mpo](#)

1. Gerrit Hattingh (Nova Feeds) with Prof. Louw Hoffman (Stellenbosch University) and JK Basson, the ARC National Master Dairyman of the Year for 2016, Prof. Norman Maiwashe, general manager of the ARC-API, and Charl Sandenbergh (FNB).
2. Gerrit Hattingh (Nova Feeds) with Prof. Louw Hoffman (Stellenbosch University) and Tshildze Matshidzula (Barnet Business Trust), the ARC National Small-scale Dairyman of the Year 2016, Prof. Norman Maiwashe, general manager of the ARC-API, and Charl Sandenbergh (FNB).
3. Prof. Norman Maiwashe, general manager of the ARC-API, with Gordon Robertson, receiving the ARC National Herd with the Best Somatic Cell Count award, and Cliff Harrington (Meadow Feeds).

CONGRATULATIONS!

- ARC National Herd with the Best Somatic Cell Count: Robertson Broers (180 000 cells/ml).
- ARC National Best Performing Milking Team: Rhodes Food Group.
- ARC National Herd with the Best Intercalving Period: H.J. Rall (378 days).
- ARC National Small-scale Dairyman of the Year 2016: Barnet Business Trust.
- ARC National Master Dairyman of the Year 2016: JK Basson Family Trust.

“ Prof. Norman Maiwashe stressed the importance of a healthy and growing dairy industry.”

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