

Agricol Farmers Day at Mooi River

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Agricol (Pty) Ltd in Kwa-Zulu Natal hosted a Pasture Information Day, in conjunction with AFGRI Producer Services at Weston Agricultural College in Mooi river the 11th of October 2006.

About 25 farmers from the surrounding area attended the day, along with 38 Grade 11s from Weston College. Earlier in the year Agricol and AFGRI approached Weston Agricultural College and offered to donate some ryegrass seed and fertilizer to sow into kikuyu for winter grazing. Weston welcomed this and offered their venue for a farmers day to be held later in the year.

Agricol sponsored eight varieties, covering 0.25 of a hectare each and AFGRI in Mooi River sponsored the fertilizer to be used. Graham Caldecot lent his Connor Shea seed drill and planted the seed into the existing kikuyu.

The trial area was put into rotation and used and treated the same as all the other pastures on the farm.

Later, due to staff changes Weston suffered the loss of their farm manager, Mr. Manie Louw, to greener pastures, and pasture management on Weston suffered accordingly.

But all was not lost, as Mr.

Bruce Blaker, a well known dairy farmer from Colenso, stepped in to help Weston out until Mr. Louw could be permanently replaced.

When spring came there was just too much grass and too few cows to graze it all, and thus some of the paddocks outgrew the rotation. Lots of early spring rains did not make things any easier.

However, on the 11th of October the Pasture Information Day went on. Jan Coetzer from Agricol said a few things on the product range and also talked about some new exciting crops and varieties from Agricol. Mr. Hugh Smith from Kynoch also gave a good insight into how to manage your soils for better fertility. After the talks there was an opportunity for the guests to visit the trial site, after which a lunch was given by the capable catering people from Weston College.

All in all, there were a few hiccups through the year with regards to staff changes and the problems that go with it, but Agricol plans to have another day such as this with Weston Agricultural College and other such institutions, in an attempt to give something back to the farming communities and thus also maintain a healthy triple bottom line.

