

CUT training farm opens

The Free State's Central University of Technology (CUT) officially opened its farm on 11 April 2018 to the first-year students who attended their practical sessions on a farm for the first time. This facility is more than just a farm; it is a training centre intended to provide academic support and research to the university; unlock the full potential of students; and equip them with skills in agriculture through practical learning and demonstrations.



The official opening was sponsored by Greenforce to the value of R40,000 and Telwiedre Voer, a long-term partner, sponsored the training ground for students.

During the practical session, the students folded their sleeves and got their hands dirty, as they learnt about different types of additional pastures used for dairy cattle feed and sheep during dry seasons. They also experimented on how to operate a tractor, safety measures when handling farm equipment, handling livestock and vaccination, administering chemicals, identification of grasses, soil sampling and tomato production. Different cultivations will be done on the farm which will form part of real-world for the agricultural students. They were afforded an opportunity to touch and feel all that they have learnt in class.

"I am extremely happy to come to our farm and see all these interesting things. I enjoy Agricultural Science so much that I follow documentaries about women in agriculture and I want to encourage my peers to see it with that eye as they still believe it is a man's world. This day will remain memorable for as long as I'm in this field. It has made me fall in love with my career all over again," said Mathapelo Mautswa, first-year student from Botshabelo.

Said Karabo Seepamore: "This experience was exciting and a bit scary. What we did in class became clear during the practical session. I have learnt a lot; especially in the tomato production. I come from an agricultural background in Thaba Nchu and believe that through agriculture I will be able to contribute positively to the development of my community. I have always wanted to be a soil specialist and teach my community about the value of soil. Soil is just as important as plants and animals."

In August 2017, the Department of Agriculture acquired a brand new wet clutch 4X4 John Deere 5075E Cab tractor as one of the essential components of a well-run training establishment in Bainsvlei. The farm is located 29KM from Bloemfontein with 32 ha of cultivable lands and 1.5ha of natural pastures. It is surrounded by active commercial farms, which will be beneficial to the department. The farm will acquire additional livestock such as lamb, broiler chicks, as well as an array of organically grown produce such as watermelons, cabbage, pumpkins, dryland maize and sunflowers, and other melons.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>