This issue

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INTERNS APPOINTED 2012

Manstrat, in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) Internship Programme has over the past six years served as a hosting institution for interns selected to the Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP). This year was no exception, with the company accommodating a total of eight interns in the following fields of expertise: Geographic Information System (GIS), Economics, Plant Pathology and Production, Statistics, Forestry and Fisheries.

Manstrat interns are allocated as far as possible to the various functional departments within the Company relevant to their studies, expertise and experience under the mentorship of different specialists and subject related experts for the remainder of their 12 month internship.

Amongst their allocated tasks and under the guidance of their respective mentors, interns will also be part of teams busy with:

- Information research needed towards the development of Extension Suite Online (ESO) for various Provincial Departments of Agriculture;
- Collecting, interpreting and structuring researched information for data presentation in the ESO System; and
- The maintenance and update of ESO.

Mbongiseni Ntuli

USEFULL TIPS FOR EXTENSIONISTS

Matsunke Malefane and Michèle Cloete

The **5 principles** in guiding and facilitating the empowerment of beneficiaries:

- ✓ Beneficiaries' **NEEDS (real and perceived)**;
- ✓ **PRIORITISING** those **NEEDS**;
- ✓ **EXPECTATIONS including** future hopes and dreams;
- ✓ The **FEAR** of **CHANGE** and **FAILURE** - i.e. new agricultural techniques and methods, failure or success, new extension workers, etc.
- ✓ **CONSTRAINTS** preventing groups or individuals from executing tasks/actions due to either one or more factors such as: culture, religion, norms, etc.
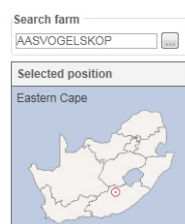
AN IMPROVED ESO REGIONAL DATA MODULE

A number of exciting upgrades have been affected to the Regional Data module in Extension Suite Online (ESO). First of all the Regional Data Navigation Tab has been split into two Main Menu Information Modules - Environment and Infrastructure in order to ensure a more logical approach to the information and easier access to information.

The search methods for infrastructure are similar to the previous version, including the 4 selectors for searching for relevant information. A search can be performed within a district or local municipality; within a specified radius around a farm; or a GPS point (selection of degrees, minutes and seconds – DMS or decimal degrees – DD).

The change comes in with a small map indicating the position of the selected farm or GPS point which has been incorporated into the sidebar (also in the Environmental section) this map will assist users in determining the accuracy of their selection.
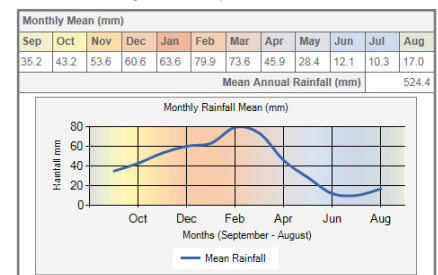
The Environmental section now also includes a few exciting improvements. Not only have the climate, soil and vegetation sections been upgraded but the explanations have also been expanded. Each table now has a short descriptive paragraph to explain the provided data. This explanation can be accessed by clicking on the button situated at the top right-hand corner of each table.

Rainfall											Explanation: ▼
Monthly Mean (mm)											
Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
35.2	43.2	53.6	60.6	63.6	79.9	73.6	45.9	28.4	12.1	10.3	17.0
								Mean Annual Rainfall (mm)			524.4

Furthermore all related maps were redesigned and include the latest relevant environmental information nationally available. These maps can be accessed from the link at the bottom of each table under the related documents heading.

Vegetation Type	Aliwal North Dry Grassland
Protection	Hardly protected
Conservation Status	Least threatened
Related documents: Explanatory document The map of vegetation areas	

Data within each information item in Environment has been updated and improved. Graphs were added in the **Rainfall** and **Temperature** sections that will enable users to get a better idea of the variation in temperature and rainfall throughout the year.

Monthly Mean (mm)											
Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
35.2	43.2	53.6	60.6	63.6	79.9	73.6	45.9	28.4	12.1	10.3	17.0
								Mean Annual Rainfall (mm)			524.4

The **Soil Suitability** table reports on the specific Land Type as well as the Land Capability (rain-fed agricultural potential) at the specific farm or site. A full description of the specific land capability class is also given. In the related documents section the Land Type inventory is included – this gives an indication of the terrain morphology (crests; midslope; footslope; and valley bottom) and the soils (%) that can be expected on the different terrain positions. Other information contained in the inventory includes the slope, clay content and texture classes of soils found in the area.

In the **Vegetation** section information has been extracted from the latest vegetation map of South Africa (VegMAp 2006). Information regarding the biome, bioregion and vegetation type as well as the protection and conservation status can be found. A full description of the vegetation type is included in the related documents section.

Information regarding the animal production potential of a selected farm or site can be found under the **Grazing Potential** section and is extracted from a new grazing capacity potential map that has been produced from long-term satellite data. It also indicates whether the farm is mainly cultivated or if the tree canopy cover is higher than 50%.

In general each ESO user now has access to the latest environmental information available at a national level. The information is easily accessible and straightforward to use.

Dirk Pretorius

Extension Suite Online's (ESO) Infrastructure module allows a user to do a comprehensive search for agricultural infrastructure by means of four different methods. The first dropdown box, **"Search by"** in the Infrastructure sidebar allows a user to select one of the following search methods.

Method 1: Municipality name search: A choice is given to search infrastructure by means of a district municipality and in turn a specific local municipality. The option to search by all local municipalities is also available. A specific local municipality can also be chosen by clicking on the main map in the content window. After a district or local municipality is selected, specify the desired infrastructure and click on search;

Method 2: Farm name: To open the popup page where a farm name can be entered, click inside the input box or on the button next to the input box. Start by entering the farm name in the input box and then allow ESO to populate a list of suggested farm names. Click on the desired farm name and click on the search button to search the

farm and to display a table of farms with a similar name. Each farm name displayed contains an SG Code and its municipality name, to focus the search and to ensure accuracy. Click on "select" in the table next to the desired farm name, this action will close the popup window and return to the search page. A search radius can now be selected. Choose the desired infrastructure and click on the search button;

Method 3: GPS coordinates (DMS): By entering the GPS coordinates in degrees, minutes and seconds into the designated input boxes, one can select a search radius from between 1 km to 1500 km, then specify the desired infrastructure and click search; and

Method 4: GPS coordinates (DD): Two input boxes are provided, enter the GPS coordinates in decimal degrees (without any +/- signs) select a search radius, specify infrastructure to search for and click search.

Methods 2, 3 and 4 provides a positioning map which will, after selecting the farm name or GPS coordinates, assist users in determining the accuracy of their selection.

NATIONAL **EXTENSION SUITE ONLINE** TOP USER: JANUARY **2012**

The top monthly ESO user is determined by monitoring user utilisation in the nine provinces.
Values are attached to Visits, Pages Visited and Duration of Visits to establish the National ESO USER of the Month.

Congratulations to, **George du Preez** (Northern Cape Department Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development), who is the ESO National User for January 2012, George has been the National User twice in 2011 and is the first **winner of the ESO National User** award for 2012.

During February, we had the opportunity to ask George du Preez a few questions regarding his usage of ESO:

Q: What is the impact of ESO on the farmers that you serve?

As an Extensionist I have many farmers that I need to advice and oversee, in the past I had to spend hours on research, sifting through different resources to get the information that I needed, which had taken up a great deal of my time, but Extension Suite Online has allowed me to more effectively do my research, which in turn allows me to reach more farmers in a shorter period of time.

Q: What do you enjoy most about your work as an Extension officer?

I enjoy the field work, being directly involved with the farmer. At many times I would assist the farmer when going to a cooperative to get the necessary materials.

George du Preez

Q: Where do you access ESO, at the office or on site?

I mostly do my research in office and will print the documents that I need to use as tools and take them with to the farmer. Many of my farmers have folders where they keep these ESO print-out documents for later referencing.

Q: What is the biggest challenge that you face in your everyday work as an Extension Officer?

I think that my biggest challenge is the fact that there is not enough time in one day. There are many farmers to see and things to do and one day is too short to fit everything in.

Q: In which district of your province are you working?

I work in the Phokwane Local Municipality.
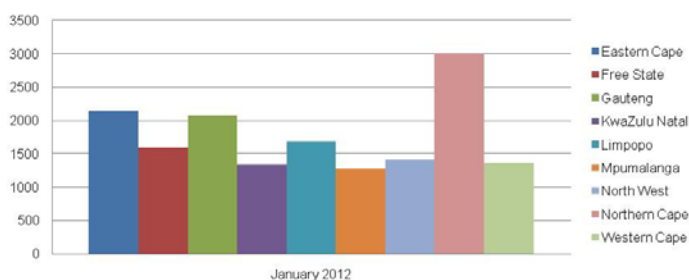
JANUARY 2012 UTILIZATION OVERVIEW

Despite the start of the year traditionally being slow in ESO utilisation, this year seems to be the exception as January 2012 started relatively well in terms of usage of the system. Utilisation generally was higher than during the corresponding period in 2011. Users accessed 3 529 ESO pages during the month and spent 151 hours doing so. The Northern Cape, despite having only around 100 extension officers did well in pages visited and time spent.

In order to give our farmers the crucial assistance in agricultural production and decision making information that we have undertaken to do, we need to up the utilisation of ESO. Encourage colleagues to register, activate and provide that crucial service.

Let us then continue the growth in ESO utilisation experienced over the past 19 months, and do our utmost to reach our objective of launching ESO utilisation in every province into the individual 5,000 point ratings zone.

Piet van Zyl

PROVINCIAL TOP USER RATING

January 2012

Legend:
- Eastern Cape
- Free State
- Gauteng
- KwaZulu Natal
- Limpopo
- Mpumalanga
- North West
- Northern Cape
- Western Cape

NAME OF TOP USER IN EACH PROVINCE JANUARY 2012	
PROVINCE	**NAME**
Eastern Cape	Sindile Magoda
Free State	Griffith Hadebe
Gauteng	Lesego Phakedi
KwaZulu Natal	Sibongiseni Gcumisa
Limpopo	Simon Aphane
Mpumalanga	Malele Tebogo
North West	Thebe N.M.
Northern Cape	**George du Preez**
Western Cape	Slabbert I.F.