

## Onderstepoort working to address vaccine backlog

Widespread complaints are still surfacing claiming that high-demand livestock vaccines from Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP) are unavailable. This is despite OBP reiterating that the production of these vaccines was in full swing.

OBP, a parastatal responsible for producing vaccines particularly necessary for protection against SA strains of livestock diseases, has in recent years come under fire for failing to meet demand. The company has committed itself to turning the situation around from this year.

However, parts of South Africa were still reportedly without important vaccines. KwaZulu-Natal vet, Dr Ariena Shepherd, said in an email to *Farmer's Weekly* that "OBP vaccines are still not happening".

"We phoned on Monday, 25 May 2015. The following vaccines were all out of stock: African horse sickness (AHS), three-day stiff-sickness, blue-udder, blue tongue, [and] inactivated Rift Valley fever," she wrote.

An informal survey conducted by the National Wool Growers' Association (NWGA) found that while a co-operative in Caledon in the Western Cape had, for example, a diverse array of OBP vaccines available, and bluetongue vaccine was available in Hanover in the Northern Cape, widespread shortages of OBP vaccines were being experienced in other parts of the country. In the Standerton district of Mpumalanga, the NWGA found no stock of Pasteurella vaccine. In the Eastern Cape, only the Jamestown area had stock

of bluetongue vaccine, while the Dordrecht, Burgersdorp and Molteno areas had none. Bluetongue vaccine appeared readily available in the Free State, but there was no Clone 13 vaccine for Rift Valley fever available in the Harrismith area. Vaccine agents in KZN said they had not been receiving their full orders for OBP vaccines.

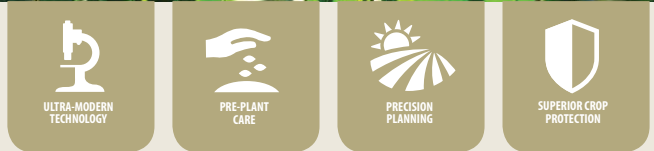
OBP was in full production of key livestock vaccines, but this did not mean they would immediately be available, OBP business development officer, Dr Jacob Modumo, told *Farmer's Weekly*.

"We need a lead time of six to twelve weeks to produce, package and distribute just one batch of certain vaccines. Production of key products such as Rift Valley fever, AHS, bluetongue, and lumpy skin disease is well underway," he said.

He was confident that by the peak livestock vaccination season, starting in August, sufficient stocks of all necessary vaccines would be available countrywide.

Douglas Welsh of the AHS Trust said that based on the trust's current figures, OBP should be able to meet South Africa's vaccine requirements for AHS. However, the accuracy of these figures would become evident once the AHS vaccination season began at the end of July.

NWGA general manager, Leon de Beer, said that at the most recent animal health meeting, OBP had encouraged farmers to start ordering and purchasing vaccines now for the next season in order to avoid circumstances of non-availability of vaccines. – *Lloyd Phillips*



## Farmers who expect the best, choose the best.

Look no further than PANNAR's irrigation hybrids for exceptional results. We also offer a range of practical farming solutions and cost-effective management tools. Take our YIELDBOOST™ fungicide and insecticide spray programmes, for instance. They offer a comprehensive cost-effective risk management package for the best profit potential of your business.



[www.pannar.com](http://www.pannar.com)  
[infoserve@pannar.co.za](mailto:infoserve@pannar.co.za)

