



## POTHOLES GALORE

### AUCTION

## Historic Bo-Velder herd sold off

PART ONE OF A TWO-AUCTION - plan to dissolve the entire Bo-Velder herd took place at the historic Bo-Velder sale at Johannesburg Water's Northern Farm on April 14.

The sale, saw 46 bulls, 514 cows and 186 heifers (746 head in all) bought for prices which had the eyes of chancers out on stalks.

**'We could have made much more I think.'**

The bulls raked in R634 000 at an average of R13 783, with the highest lot going for R25 500. A buyer for Kansas Meats waited nervously for the appearance of lot 9, which he said had "balls the size of a cabbage".

The bull catalogue included an impressive set of details for each animal, including date of birth, sire, dam, birth mass, wean index, dam efficiency index, 12 month mass, final index and scrotum circumference.

Mohammed and Abdul Saleem of Highveld Cattle came to buy heifers, but were alarmed to find the lots going under the hammer of Barry Purdhan at an average of R6 868, with the highest going for R7 800.

"We were at an auction last week where the average was under R2 000 per heifer," said Abdul Saleem.

There was a comic interlude when lot 115 was herded in by Northern Farm's irrigation workers (the permanent cattle staff had chosen auction time as the day to strike). The lot included eartag NF92LO60, mother to 16 young over her 18 years, a calf for every fertile year of her life.

"I want to take her home and frame her," said one female buyer.

Robert Mtshali arrived with R10 000 in the hopes of buying two cows for his father, but his hopes were soon dashed when the cows started going under the hammer at an average of R6 615,

MOST SOUTH AFRICAN ROAD USERS can bear witness to the deteriorating state of the country's roads, particularly secondary or provincial roads. Minister of Transport S'bu Ndebele recently admitted road maintenance backlogs caused at least 40% of SA's 184 816km provincial roads to reach crisis point when it comes to maintenance. It has been estimated that the cost of fixing these roads are between R75 billion and R100 billion.

One such road, which earned a very bad reputation after claiming tyres of several victims (including Minister of Agriculture in the Western Cape, Gerrit van Rensburg) in the form of burst tyres, is the De Hoop/Ouplaas-road, situated between Bredasdorp and Malgas in the Overberg district.

The Overberg Agricultural Association appointed a committee to regularly engage with local and provincial authorities on the state of the road and to encourage its upgrade as soon as possible.

According to the committee, they have made some progress and local authorities said that upgrading this road was part of the Roads Department's 20-year development plan for the area.

Pictured is Rhowheln Rhoode, a clerk of the Provincial Roads Network and one of the De Hoop/Ouplaas-road's most recent victims. – *Denene Erasmus*

COURTESY OF THE OVERBERG DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION

with the highest lot going for R8 500. "We could have made much more, I think," said farm manager and animal scientist Roger Wood, who was instrumental in developing the renowned Bo-Velder breeding project in the 70s, and who, together with his wife Lynette, has managed the herd full-time since 1984. "Unfortunately there are only so many hours of daylight, and so we had to auction the heifers and cows off in lots of 10 or 12."

The remainder of the herd – which Johannesburg Water decided to sell after new purification technologies meant that the herd was no longer needed to graze pastures irrigated by treated effluent from the old Northern Sewage Works is set to be auctioned off in June. – *Sean Christie*