



Communication Services

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livestock auctioned at the Nkandla Agricultural centre at the weekend by King Cetshwayo Farmers' Association.

Farmers' association winter auction bonanza

GIVEN MAJOLA

THE King Cetshwayo Farmers Association cattle auction proved a success yesterday, when more than 200 head were sold.

The auction was jointly organised by the Nkandla Municipality, National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) and KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) at Nkandla Agricultural centre.

Nkandla Municipality spokesperson Mgcobeni Khanyile said the auction was a great success as 205 cattle were brought in for auctioning and only three were unsold. The highest bid was for more than R13 000 while the lowest was just above R6 000.

Khanyile said that while the auction was growing in strength, the smaller subsistence farmers needed to learn how to prepare the cattle for auction by feeding them to have a better weight.

"It looks like the conditions of this time of the year are ill-impacting the weight of the cattle leading to cattle owners getting lesser revenue."

Nkandla Livestock Association chairperson Bhekizihlakaniphi Mbatha said the auctions were started to help cattle farmers generate revenue and grow the local economy.

"This was to ensure their cattle do not get old or die. Another challenge we face is stock theft."

This year's auction was the third following two sellouts, with the highest bid at R15 500.

"The people are very happy with this programme in the face of the challenges facing cattle rearers. After they have sold these cattle, they are able to do other things that they would like to do like buying a younger herd."

Mbatha said many cattle died in winter as the conditions were dry with not much fodder. Stock theft was also a new pressure.

Some cattle also died in summer after being struck by lightning.

NAMC started the National Red Meat Development Programme in 2014 which works with emerging and communal farmers to increase the income earned by farmers from raising cattle, through greater and more beneficial participation in formal red meat markets.

This programme focuses primarily on connecting farmers to the formal markets and systemises the informal markets.

It has three key areas which are enabling farmers to understand the structure, operation and requirements of formal red meat markets, developing marketing channels that will increase their participation and providing training, and practical assistance to align the age, health and breeding of animals more closely to market demand.