

MEC encourages youth to get into agriculture



A thrilled Zinhle Sithole accepts the JR Brewitt Floating Trophy and Royal Show medallion, for showing the best group of four steers, from Themba Mthembu, MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development. With them is judge Malcolm Moodie, chairperson of the SA Fat Stock Association. **PHOTO: ESTELLE SINKINS**

ESTELLE SINKINS

THE future of South African farming looks bright, says Themba Mthembu, MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development in KwaZulu-Natal.

He was on hand to watch the judging of the RAS Challenge for halter-trained animals at the Royal Show at the weekend.

Addressing students from Cedara College of Agriculture, Mtubatuba Mini Farm, Owen Sithole College of Agriculture, the University of KwaZulu-Natal and Hoër Landbouskool Vryheid, he said it was important to encourage more young people to get into the agricultural industry.

"What I have seen in front of me today fits well with the focus that the department has on agricultural production," he said.

"Seeing the youth today entrusted with these animals makes me very excited."

Judges Malcolm Moodie, chairperson of the South African Fat Stock Association, and Douglas Fletcher of SA Fat Stock Association, had a tough task choosing the best animals on show in a huge group class.

Ultimately, however, they gave first prize to first time exhibitors, Mtubatuba Mini Farm, who had travelled to the show from Zululand to show their group of Bonsmaras, sponsored by Ferrero Bonsmaras from Harrismith.

Zinhle Sithole accepted the JR Brewitt Floating Trophy and Royal Show

medallion from the MEC on behalf of the team, which included Ngecebo Zungu, Mandisa Msweli and Gugu Thobede.

Second place went to Hoër Landbouskool Vryheid who also showed Bonsmaras.

Mtubatuba Mini Farm also did exceptionally well in the contest for halter-trained steers, winning the under 350 kg, 350 kg to 399 kg and 400 kg to 449 kg categories.

The big winner in the unhalter-trained steers was Ferrero Bonsmaras.

THE FULL RESULTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

HALTER-TRAINED STEERS

Under 350 kg: 1, Mtubatuba Mini Farm; 2, Owen Sithole College of Agriculture; 3, Cedara College of Agriculture.

Between 350 kg and 399 kg: 1, Mtubatuba Mini Farm; 2, Owen Sithole College of Agriculture; 3, Owen Sithole College of Agriculture.

Between 400 kg and 450 kg: 1, Mtubatuba Mini Farm; 2, Hoër Landbouskool Vryheid; 3, Mtubatuba Mini Farm.

450 kg and over: 1, Hoër Landbouskool Vryheid; 2, Hoër Landbouskool Vryheid; 3, University of KZN.

UNHALTER-TRAINED STEERS

Under 350 kg: 1, Weston Agricultural College; 2, Weston Agricultural College; 3, Weston Agricultural College.

Between 350 kg and 399 kg: 1, Ferrero Bonsmaras; 2, Silvasands Farm; 3, Mtubatuba Mini Farm.

Between 400 kg and 449 kg: 1, Ferrero Bonsmaras; 2, Ferrero Bonsmaras; 3, Ferrero Bonsmaras.
450kg and over: 1, Ferrero Bonsmaras; 2, Ferrero Bonsmaras; 3, Ferrero Bonsmaras.