



MSD Animal Health Poultry Academy

Friday the 12th of June 2015 saw the launch of the MSD Poultry Academy at Nice-by-Nature in Muldersdrift. The Academy was attended by 16 candidates and took the format of a morning lecture session and an afternoon practical session. The morning lecture session covered anatomy, physiology and the poultry post-mortem, this was presented by Dr Claire Botha of MSD Animal Health. Dr Greg Cilliers then presented the poultry immune system, serology and serological case studies which the group found very interesting and applicable to daily poultry production. After lunch the candidates had the opportunity to get some hands-on experience when Dr Scott Elliot taught the candidates how to take the samples required in routine monitoring and disease outbreaks of poultry. This was followed by candidates being taught how to, and having the opportunity to actually perform poultry post-mortems under the guidance of Drs Scott, Greg, and Claire. The practical session was very well received and the candidates had the chance to share information with colleagues and to learn new skills. So far the feedback on the first session has been great and we are looking forward to hosting the next session of the Academy.



Figure 1. Some of the candidates that attended the first MSD Animal Health Poultry Academy.

The goal of the Academy is to share knowledge with farm managers in the layer, broiler and breeder industries and to gain insight into the needs of local farmers. The Academy has been split into sessions to be held on a regular basis over the course of about 18 months. Each session covers a range of topics that have been split into modules. The proposed sessions will cover everything from anatomy, physiology, serology; biosecurity, vaccination, water quality; ventilation and housing; poultry economics; key performance indicators and diseases of poultry. Ideally each session will consist of a theoretical component and a practical component where possible. This will enable candidates to get some hands-on experience. Unfortunately the number of spaces available in the Academy are limited but as it evolves we hope to increase the number of intakes.



Figure 2. Dr Scott Elliott explains how to take the necessary samples for testing purposes in poultry.