

Primary Animal Health Care (PAHC) rotation with final-year veterinary students

MODULES: VCP 520, VCP 602 and VCP 603 – Veterinary Core Practice

Course description

Our community engagements take place during the PAHC rotations that we conduct once or twice a month with rural communities around the University precinct. Final-year veterinary students have the opportunity to receive training in farming on various animal health topics such as early disease identification, disease prevention and production planning.

Community challenges

A lack of adequate knowledge, which is necessary for productive and profitable farming, is one of the key challenges that communal farmers face. The course therefore aims to empower farmers with knowledge of fundamental management practices on how to take care of their animals. We train about 30 farmers during each rotation week. The training sessions take place over four days and involve in-class theory and practical sessions. The practical sessions are done at the farmers' households using their own livestock and available infrastructure. Training booklets are also provided to farmers as learning aids to support the learning process.

Opportunity description

The opportunity provides the farmer with knowledge and skills related to good management practices that should be undertaken on an on-going, daily basis to maintain

health and production of livestock, in consultation with local veterinary professionals. The livestock owner also gains an understanding of the products that are available for treating the most common treatable or preventable diseases, how to administer medicines correctly, and the importance of record keeping.

Impact

We have received very positive feedback from the communities about our training and farmers are enthusiastic and willing to put into action what they have learned. They see our engagement as very worthwhile as it helps them to gain knowledge on how to look after their animals better and how to improve the productivity of their animals. Students also learn about the concept of PAHC and how it can be leveraged to support community development and enhance security. Healthy animals are productive animals and therefore can contribute to improving the livelihoods of rural communities, the alleviation of poverty and can ensure food security.

Community partners

Hluvukani Animal Health Clinic (HAHC) in the Mnisi Community, Mamelodi Animal Health Clinic (MAHC), and various towns across South Africa where animals are vaccinated against controlled diseases.

