

Crop vegetables pesticides registration

By Rony Moremi

The bill of rights states that everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health and wellbeing. It's in line with this right as enshrined in the Constitution that the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) called a meeting with vegetable producers to inform them about the process of registering and safe handling of pesticides.

The meeting was called in response to a need identified during a meeting with minor crop producers, mainly fruit growers in Western Cape organised by DAFF in collaboration with HORTGRO with the aim of starting engagements with the vegetable industry to get organised in the form of proposed CODEX crop groupings.

A meeting with various stakeholders such as retailers, researchers, chemical manufactures and biological/biopesticides manufactures as well growers and other government departments was then organised by the DAFF Agricultural Inputs Control (AIC) Directorate at the ARC VOPI Institute in Roodeplaat. Thilivali Nepfumbada, Management Advisor of the Agricultural Remedies presented on the process of registering agricultural remedies.

He mentioned the lack of interest by companies to invest in research for de-

veloping pesticides for minor crops such as carrot, beetroot and cucumber etc as a challenge to minor crop producers. He said this lack of interest was a result of high research costs associated with the development of new molecules. He also

side." Thilivhali quoted Paracelsus saying "that all is poison, nothing is without poison, only the dose determines what is not poison. He further emphasised the DAFF's responsibility to ensure that pesticides are safe and properly labelled and doesn't negatively affect trade.

Registering pesticides is done to ensure compliance with prescribed requirements and to protect the public's right to a safe environment that is not harmful to their health.

Crop producers were also informed about vegetable food safety and the risks associated with microbial contaminants by Professor Lise Korsten from the University of



informed minor crop producers that importing seeds treated with pesticides that are not registered in South Africa is illegal and companies must apply for import permits prior to the importations of such consignments.

Professor Mary Gulliman from the National Institute for Occupational Health informed producers about the process of risk assessment of pesticides. She said it is very important to set standards before doing risk assessment. "A dose response relationship and the tolerable daily intake (TDI) process has to be completed before setting standards and registering a pesti-

Pretoria's Department of Microbiology and Plant Pathology. She gave insight into research projects being carried out by University of Pretoria, sponsored by the Water Research Commission (WRC) on microbial pest contaminants of food commodities.

"The meeting is a good start in the right direction", said Les Hillowitz, area coordinator of CroLife Africa Middle East. He said he was impressed about the interactions with other producers and insightful presentations made at the meeting. Other meetings with producers will be held during the course of the year.