



Email: [enquiries@nstf.org.za](mailto:enquiries@nstf.org.za) | Tel: +27 12 841 3987 |  
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# NSTF

*S.E.T. for socio-economic growth*

## Plant health in South Africa – threats to biosecurity, biodiversity and food security

### Threats posed by invasive and migratory insects pests, including locusts, the Fall Armyworm and the *Tuta absoluta* pest on tomato

The [National Science and Technology Forum \(NSTF\)](#) is partnering with [Plaas/Farm TV](#) (YouTube channel) to broadcast a series of monthly talks during the year on the topic '[Plant health in South Africa – threats to biosecurity, biodiversity and food security](#)'.

Fourth in the series of talks is Dr Roger Price talking to Plaas/Farm TV and RSG Landbou (Agriculture) about threats posed by invasive and migratory insects pests, including locusts, the Fall Armyworm and the *Tuta absoluta* pest on tomato. He is the Research Team Manager: Insect Ecology, Plant Health and Protection, Agricultural Research Council (ARC). Dr Price also presented at the NSTF Discussion Forum on Plant Health in June 2021. His presentation is available on video on the [NSTF YouTube channel](#).

***Tune in to this radio and TV interview with Dr Price, to hear more...***

#### **Plaas TV/Farm TV broadcast**

**Date:** Friday, 03 June at 08:00 am (GMT +2)

**Plaas TV YouTube channel:**

<https://www.youtube.com/c/PlaasTVFarmTV>

*Plaas TV is an agricultural media house focusing on sound technical content across all media platforms.*

#### **RSG FM radio talk**

**Date:** Thursday, 09 June at 05:00 – 05:30

**Frequency:** 100 – 104 FM

*Radio Sonder Grense (RSG) is a radio station broadcasting in Afrikaans nationwide. It belongs to the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC).*



**Biography of the speaker:** Dr Roger Price has more than 35 years of service at the ARC Plant Health and Protection Division, specialising in the outbreak dynamics and control of locusts, followed by the management of the Insect Ecology and Weeds Research Divisions. Research areas included the oviposition behaviour and outbreak dynamics of the African migratory locust in a cropland environment, field efficacy trial for registration of insecticides against locust swarms in southern and eastern Africa, development of alternative strategies for locust control, consultancies for international NGOs for the training of locust control officers on safe and effective locust control in a number of SADC countries.

Research highlights included the phasing out of the highly toxic organochlorine and organophosphate insecticides used for brown locust control in the Karoo in the early 1990s and the adoption of safer and more environmentally acceptable insecticides, as well as the field efficacy trials and EIA of the Green Muscle® myco- insecticide for registration against the brown locust and red locust. Dr Price has been the Research Manager for the Insect Ecology Division since 2005 and the Weeds Research Division since 2007. Projects have focussed on the field ecology and biological control of the diamondback moth, Fall Armyworm and *Tuta absoluta*, while technology transfer initiatives have involved the development of training manuals and AgriSETA accredited courses for smallholder farmers on pest management strategies and safe pesticide application.

**Background:** Plant health is intrinsically linked to the survival of our planet and all that live on it. While plant health is a broad topic, it is imperative we understand the latest research and dynamics in the South African context. The NSTF hosted a Discussion Forum on the topic over two days in June 2021 with 11 professionals in plant health, of which three are [NSTF-South32 Award Winners](#).

**Interviews in the series so far:**

1. Prof Mike Wingfield, Professor: Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI), University of Pretoria spoke about [tree and plant health](#).
2. Prof Wijnand Swart, Department of Plant Sciences, University of the Free State (UFS); and President: Southern African Society for Plant Pathology (SASPP) on '[Whither \(or wither\) plant pathology in the next 50 years](#)' (about 3:25 minutes into the broadcast).
3. Prof Michelle Hamer, Director: Natural Science Collections Facility (NSCF), South African National Biodiversity Institute tackled [the role of natural science collections and biobanks in plant health](#).

**Follow the social media conversations on the following NSTF platforms:**

- Facebook: [@NSTFSA](#)
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- Instagram: [@nstf\\_sa](#)
- LinkedIn: [National Science and Technology Forum \(NSTF\)](#)
- YouTube: [National Science and Technology Forum \(NSTF\)](#)
- TikTok: [nstf\\_sa](#)

## About the NSTF

The National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF), established in 1995, is a broadly-representative stakeholder body for all science, engineering and technology (SET) and innovation organisations in South Africa, which seeks to influence policy formulation and delivery.

The NSTF Awards are unique in SA, recognising the outstanding contributions of individuals and groups to SET and innovation.

The science bursaries page provides information on bursaries and bursary providers for science, engineering and related studies.

STEMulator.org attracts learners and students to the exciting world of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). It provides a virtual world full of stimulating content to excite and inform the youth, including STEM career guidance. Established under the auspices of the NSTF proSET membership sector (Professionals *in science, engineering and technology*).

### Disclaimer

The NSTF has taken all practical measures to ensure that the material contained in this newsletter is correct. The NSTF reserves the right to make changes as it deems necessary.

### Privacy

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### For more information

[www.nstf.org.za](http://www.nstf.org.za)

E-mail: [enquiries@nstf.org.za](mailto:enquiries@nstf.org.za)

Tel: [+27 12 841 3987](tel:+27128413987) (Currently not in use due to NSTF staff working from home)

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