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NSTF

S.E.T. for socio-economic growth

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

Artificial intelligence and the future of crop health monitoring

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](#)'.

Fifth up in the series is Prof Dave Berger talking to Plaas/Farm TV and RSG Landbou (Agriculture) about artificial intelligence and the future of crop health monitoring. He is Professor: Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI), University of Pretoria. Prof Berger won the 2016 NSTF-South32 [Special Annual Theme Award: Agriculture and Food Security](#), and also presented at the above-mentioned NSTF Discussion Forum in June 2021. His presentation is available on video on the [NSTF YouTube channel](#).

Tune in to this radio and TV interview with Prof Berger, to hear more...

Plaas TV/Farm TV broadcast

Date: Wednesday, 20 July 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: Monday, 25 July 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: As a plant biotechnologist, Prof Berger conducts collaborative research on crop diseases of economic importance in Africa and globally. His main research aim is to develop sustainable management strategies for long-term food security. He holds a rating of “internationally acclaimed researcher” from the National Research Foundation of South Africa, and in 2013 was a USDA Norman E. Borlaug International Agricultural Science and Technology Fellow at the University of Arkansas, USA. Read the [Mail & Guardian article](#) about his award winning work when he won the 2016 NSTF-South32 Award.

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: 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 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](#).
4. Dr Roger Price, Research Team Manager: Insect Ecology Division, Plant Health and Protection, Agricultural Research Council (ARC) addressed [threats posed by invasive and migratory insects pests, including locusts, the Fall Armyworm and the *Tuta absoluta* pest on tomato](#).

Follow the social media conversations on the following NSTF platforms:

- Facebook: [@NSTFSA](#)
- Twitter: [@NSTF_SA](#)
- 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

Registration details submitted to the NSTF will be treated confidentially and will only be used by NSTF to communicate with its members and subscribers.

For more information

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