**Africa report 2021**

Dear Fellow Jersey breeders and enthusiasts,

Please allow me to present my swansong report. I do not really want to repeat the known facts but most projects, shows and activities was dampened by the covid19 pandemic. However, jerseymilk supplies the food industry and will therefore never be classified as a “non necessity”. Behind the scenes, many role players carried on actively with planning for when things return to normal again.

Our largest jersey population on the continent is in South Africa. Although battling to maintain registered numbers due to many producers taking the commercial route, quality of these animals remain of top-drawer because of the class farmers who still believe the importance of quality breeding stock. Therefore AI companies are thriving. Exports nearly halted over the past year with only a few inquiries, but expected to pickup. Jersey SA’s national show has been postponed to April 2022 for the second time understandably. This event is always the highlight of the calender. Virtual meetings proved to be successful, though the need for physical interaction is critical.

The constitution of Jersey SA is being adapted to be able to process and assist fellow African countries to have their cattle registered and added to the database. Any interested parties or societies, please get in touch with Jersey SA at [tessa@jerseysa.co.za](mailto:tessa@jerseysa.co.za). Alongside this we are investigating the offering of services in collaboration with our service provider, SA Studbook, whos expertise are of top class.

Initial ideas:

* Record native cross breed data
* Develop additional related management services like animal health and environmental analysis.

We are however, fully aware that the main objective is uplifting and sustaining communities.

The pivotal highlight of 2021 would be of course the AJF virtual conference being held on 2 and 3 November. “The Jersey Footprint in Africa”, hosted by the RJA&HS, in Jersey, and Project Mercy, in Ethiopia.

Although initially planned as a physical meeting in Ethiopia it will still be an event not to be missed with some excellent speakers.

Recognition must be given to the following people whose work and dedication towards the AJF is inspiring. Dr Bete Demeke, from Project Mercy. David Hambrook, Sam Thomson and Louise Agnez. The birth of the AJF website was a milestone and a job well done!

To conclude, I wish to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to have been part of this fine bureau for the past 7 years. The passion for the breed amongst the members and office bearers are contagious. My biggest wish is just that the youth to be kept included, to one day, take over the reigns, but also learn and observe the fine example set by the current and past leadership.

Yours in Jersey,

Arno Theron