

# Curriculum Vitae – Dr JC Hendriks

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Dr Kobus Hendriks was born in Heilbron in the Free State on 24 August 1948, where he also matriculated in 1966. He obtained his BVSc degree in 1971 at Onderstepoort and practised as a veterinarian in Kroonstad from 1972 to 1985. He returned to Heilbron in 1985 and, after his father passed away in 1986, he took over the farming activities on a full-time basis, applying his knowledge as veterinarian and his expertise in embryos practically and effectively. In 1991 he purchased controlling stakes in the Spitsvuur Holstein dairy herd. Over the years, farming activities have been restructured and taken over by Inovula Pty (Ltd). In May 2015, his son, Jaco Hendriks, took over the management of Inovula's other farming activities, and Dr Hendriks became deputy managing director. He is still managing the dairy division.

## **Pioneering work with embryos**

After having studied privately in mainly Denmark, Dr Hendriks performed the first successful non-surgical embryo collections and transfers in South Africa (SA) on **28 December 1976**. In **1980** he froze the first bovine embryos on farms in SA and performed the first embryo splitting in SA. **In 1992** he froze embryos for the first time in SA for direct transfers, which opened new doors for the practical application of embryo transfers on farms. He has since been widely recognised as the pioneer of embryo transfers in SA.

## **Implication of his expertise for Spitsvuur Holsteins**

Dr Hendriks' veterinary training and experience in herd health and reproduction management as well as his exposure to various local and international dairy management practices and business management models have placed him in an ideal position to develop his Spitsvuur Holstein herd into one of the finest dairy herds in South Africa. His knowledge of nutrition and genetics has enabled him to manage this dairy stud in an optimal manner.

By means of embryo transfer technology, over 6 000 embryos have been transferred, which added over 3 500 embryo calves to the herd. The genetic basis of the herd has been dramatically improved by means of some of the best genetics in the world through imported embryos and semen, and through the collection of embryos from superior donor cows.

This strict selection from an extensive gene pool has created a local gene pool that has been adapted to the harsh South African environment. Semen from over 90 top genomically tested bulls had been frozen and has subsequently been used in the herd. This selection can now compete with the best in the world. Animals in the herd have been analysed genomically since 2009 on a large scale, and by combining this data with Logix performance data it was possible to select the best animals. This method, in combination with an extensive embryo transfer programme, has contributed to Spitsvuur Holsteins being hailed as the best genetic herd in SA since the late nineties (see the timeline below for more details) – this way, Inovula stays true to its motto: *With Embryo Transfers we stay on Top of Modern Genetics*

In addition, Dr Hendriks has developed the Spitsvuur Economic Selection Index (SESI). The Index is composed of genomically estimated breeding values that are strengthened by real performance data. This index focuses on traits that each have a particular percentage of economic impact, and which together contribute to the SESI index value for indicating the profitability of a particular animal.

## Timeline with summary of awards and achievements

Dr Hendriks has been awarded several awards since 1989:

1989	<i>Conservation Farmer of the Year.</i>
1991	Dr Hendriks sold his Red Angus herd and bought controlling stakes in the Spitsvuur Holstein herd.
1991 tot 2003	<i>Master Dairyman of the Free State</i> each year for 12 consecutive years.
	Through large-scale embryo transfers, the Spitsvuur Holstein herd has grown into the finest herd in the country, genetically speaking.
1992	<i>Free State Farmer of the Year</i> , awarded by the Agricultural Writers' Association of South Africa.
1998, 1999, 2000 and 2007	The SA Holstein Society awarded the Spitsvuur Holstein herd the <i>Highest Breeding Value Index in South Africa Award</i> , calculated according to best linear unbiased prediction (BLUP) analyses.
1998	Senior winner in the <i>National Cooperative Dairies (NCD) Farmer of the Forthcoming Millennium</i> competition.
1998	The Heilbron District Agricultural Union, the local farming community of which Dr Hendriks has been a member since 1990, honoured him with a merit award for <i>Many years of outstanding contributions to the agricultural community of Heilbron.</i>
2001	<i>Farmer of the Central Region</i> , awarded by the Agricultural Writers' Association
2001	<i>National Farmer of the Year</i> , awarded by the Agricultural Writers' Association.
2003	<i>Southern African Dairy Stud Breeder of the Year.</i> The Spitsvuur Holstein herd has earned the award for the highest or second highest milk production in SA for several years.
2009	<i>Master Dairyman of the Free State.</i> Later that year, Spitsvuur Holsteins became the first herd in the country to have the DNA of 352 cows and 150 bulls extracted to get genomic analyses and forecasts of the animals. According to experts, genomics was a greater breakthrough than when artificial insemination was first performed. Own genomically tested bulls are used in the Spitsvuur Holstein herd at a large scale, with excellent results. Young bulls and heifers are being tested genomically continuously.
2010	Highest milk production in SA (according to ARC numbers): Over 305 days, 13 864 kg milk was produced with 506 kg butterfat (3,65%) and 441 kg protein (3,18%) with an inter-calving period of 462 days. With this achievement Spitsvuur Holsteins received seven accolades: five first places, one second and one third place.
2012	<i>National Master Dairyman of the Year.</i>
2014	Obtained a record selling price of R200 000 for a genomically tested Holstein bull from the Monica family, Spitsvuur Spits-Superstar A1826.
2014	Dr Hendriks received a special award from the Milk Producers' Organisation (MPO) for his contribution to <i>Excellence in the Dairy Industry, to celebrate guidance and selfless sacrifice to the benefit of the dairy industry.</i>

2015	<i>Master Dairyman of the Free State.</i>
2015	Featured as a mega farmer in the first series of the popular KykNet television programme, <i>Megaboere</i> .
2016	In the June edition of <i>Dairy Mail</i> it was announced that Inovula's Spitsvuur Holstein herd, was ranked eleventh the world, with its average milk production per 305-day lactations, percentage butterfat and percentage protein.
2016	At its Elite Dairyman Awards, SA Studbook singled out Inovula's Spitsvuur Holstein herd as the <i>Holstein Herd (i) with the Best Functional Herd Life, (ii) the Highest Genetic Level</i> . The Herd was also awarded an <i>Elite Golden Award</i> , which allowed Dr Hendriks to qualify as a finalist for the <i>National Elite Dairyman 2016 Award</i> .
2016	Inovula won the Kwagga Farmer's Floating Trophy for the <i>Highest Production of Fat-corrected Milk per day of Calving Interval in South Africa</i> .
2017	Inovula's Spitsvuur Holstein herd was named <i>Elite Best Genetic Dairy Herd in the Free State as well as South Africa</i> and was also named <i>Free State Elite Dairy Herd</i> .
2018	<i>Elite Best Genetic Dairy Herd in South Africa.</i>
2019	SA Studbook identified Dr Hendriks as <i>Elite Dairyman of the Free State</i> at its Elite Dairyman Awards and named Inovula's Spitsvuur Holsteins the <i>Holstein Herd (i) with the Best Functional Herd Life, (ii) at the Highest Genetic Level</i> .
2020	The Logix production summary of Spitsvuur Holsteins exceeded all expectations with its results for February: Herd average: 563 cows; lactations: 305 days; milk: 14 074kg; butterfat: 503 kg; protein: 432 kg; butterfat + protein: 935 kg; butterfat: 3.58%; and protein: 3,07%.
2020	Inovula was nominated Dairy Breed Finalist for the SA Studbook <i>Stud Herd of the Year</i> .

## Professional involvement

- Dr Hendriks has served on the board of National Cooperative Dairies (NCD), later Clover Industries Limited (CIL), from 1990 to April 2014.
- At NCD he has been a member of the Chairpersons' Committee, the Management Advisory Committee, the Milk Price Committee and the Audit Committee.
- At Clover, a listed company on the JSE, he served in the Nominations Committee and the Group Social and Ethics committees.
- He has also been elected as a trustee of the Clover Milk Producers' Trust.
- From 1990 to 2004, he served as management board member as well as member of the Exco of the Milk Producers' Organisation (MPO) of the Free State.
- He has compiled the Clover Feed Basket, which monitors the feed costs of dairy animals nationally.
- He has been closely involved in the development of the milk quota system of NCD.
- He has attended courses to run the CPM and CNCPS computer software programs for advanced feed formulations and has stayed abreast of the Nutrient Requirements of Dairy Cattle, published in 2001 by the NRC. In addition, he has attended the satellite course to manage the above software.
- He has stayed informed of the latest AMTS feed formulations and management programme software and worked closely with Cornell University via the developers of the program in the United States of America.
- He has been employed as specialist to advise on herd health and nutritional matters by Meadow, Afgri and Alltech.

- He has served on the board of DIMSSA from 2003 to 2007 and has been involved in the development of the dairy management programme.
- He is a member of Pro Agri, an independent group comprised of all the Agricultural Writers' Association Farmers of the Year, focused on promoting and building agriculture in its totality in South Africa, with the full participation of everyone in the country.

## **International exposure and wider farming interests**

In earlier days, farmers' days were regular events to be hosted on the farm where the dairy division is located and various study groups and students are still visiting the farm on a regular basis. In addition, various international visitors and tour groups are visiting the farm regularly, which ensures valuable exchange of knowledge.

Over the years, Dr Hendriks has gained valuable local and international exposure through the various activities he has been involved in:

- He has acted as an expert on matters related to farming management, labour management and nutrition management, and he has presented lectures as veterinary and embryo transfer expert at farmers' days and veterinary conferences.
- He has been a consultant on nutrition, health and general herd management for various large dairy herds.
- He has also lectured widely on the important role of trace elements in dairy cattle nutrition.
- He has co-authored a scientific paper on cotton-seed poisoning in milk cows together with S Slippers and Prof L Prozesky, which was presented at the AFMA (African Food Manufacturers Association) and subsequently published.
- He has been employed as expert to evaluate protocols for research for the research committee of Onderstepoort, University of Pretoria.
- He has won three tours to the USA and three to Holland, which he used as study tours.
- In 2007 he visited France as a guest of the LFA and undertook extensive study tours of feeding plants and dairy farms.
- He has represented Clover at the International Dairy Federation (IDF) in Denmark, Australia and Ireland during which he has attended extensive technical tours regarding the dairy industry.
- In 2007 he has attended the International Mastitis Conference at Dublin University.

## **Contact details**

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