

NORTHERN KWAZULU-NATAL COURIER.CO.ZA – 27 JULY 2019



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Local news

Search for answers continues after over 1000 head of cattle perish

Results from the toxicology expert suggests poisoning as the cause, and we are currently trying to determine if it was human error or deliberate.

July 27, 2019



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AUTHOR
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Tests are still being conducted to determine what caused the death of over 1000 cattle on a Wasbank farm over the last two weeks.

The cattle died after they were fed cattle feed. A video, showing rows of dead cattle, went viral on social media and speculation was rife that the animals were maliciously poisoned as a "ploy of getting to the land".

The cattle owner, who requested not to be named, said that was not true. He added that samples of the feed mix had been submitted to different laboratories for testing.

In a statement posted on their website, Molatek who supply the mix to the feedlot where the cattle perished, said:



“We are deeply saddened by the recent tragedy that struck a cattle feedlot near Dundee. Upon hearing of this incident, we immediately dispatched our most senior expert ruminant nutritionists as well as independent vet and also contracted in external experts in different fields to investigate the possible cause of cattle deaths as well as minimize the losses.

“These people took various samples of all raw materials and water and to date we have already received over 200 results from different independent laboratories. The results received for the Molatek production retention samples as well as all Molatek samples from the feedlot confirmed that the Molatek product was within specification and not the cause of death. We continue to support the owners of the feedlot through further tests done by experts to determine the cause.

“Results from the toxicology expert suggests poisoning as the cause, and we are currently trying to determine if it was human error or deliberate.

“This unfortunate incident was obviously a stress test for the Molatek product quality, control system and service levels. As already stated all the results received concluded that the Molatek product is safe, within specification and not the cause of death.

“Our confidence in our products, processes and controls are solidly in tact, but despite this we will use all the learnings to raise our own standards even further.”

Molatek is currently one of the leading animal feed companies in South Africa. Their products are sold in Namibia, Botswana and Swaziland.



An image taken for the video that went viral.

The incident also attracted the attention of a SABC news crew that visited the area this week.

Kwanalu CEO, Sandy La Marque, told the Courier that “Kwanalu had been informed that the feedlot is experiencing a serious problem and that tests are being conducted on the feed mix which has allegedly resulted in a number of animals perishing”.



“We believe that no foul play is suspected and that the video post is being spread to destabilise the farming community. We call on all social media users to verify information and not to blindly forward posts”.

“In addition, this was also circulated to all provincial unions in an attempt to set the record straight. It is shocking that unscrupulous people/ organisations will create such a post with far reaching consequences.”

For more on this story see this week's Courier.

