

Courtesy of *Farmer's Weekly*, April 2009

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WHEN ONE VET SERVED THE WHOLE CAPE

1912 THE FIRST PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL UNION to be founded was the Cape Agricultural Union in Cape Town in 1899.

The first time the *Farmer's Weekly* reported on its annual congress was 1912. At the time there was a critical shortage of veterinarians and the subject was one of the main subjects discussed at this 13th congress.

Here follows excerpts from the report, which appeared in our issue of 11 September of that year.

" Mr Vosloo said the government had been very generous in giving the service of vets free, but the present number of them was totally inadequate and that the attention of the government should be drawn to the fact. Mr Starke remarked on the enormous areas covered by vets, who should be assured of an adequate return for their services. He said private vets should be placed at the disposal of the government and should be placed on the same salary footing as district surgeons, but should also be allowed to charge according to a fixed scale for private work. Mr Malleson mentioned that there was only one vet in the whole of the Cape area to attend to the desperate needs of the farming community. Mr Arnold requested that a small fee should be charged for the services of vets. He said no farmer would object to this and it might induce the government to get more vets.

"Mr Gray (chief veterinary officer) referred to a suggestion that had been made for districts to guarantee a certain salary for a vet, so that arrangements could be made for one to settle in a district. He said if farmers would combine to make this guarantee, then the department may make necessary arrangements".

Ed's note: The more things change, the more they stay the same.