

THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANT AND SOIL SCIENCES HOSTS LEARNERS FROM WOODHILL COLLEGE

The Department of Plant and Soil Sciences at the University of Pretoria on 1 September hosted a School Science Day for Grade 11 learners and teachers from Woodhill College. Themed “GMOs: The future of sustainable agriculture?”, the aim of the day was to introduce the pupils to the various science disciplines within the department. Several members of staff and students in the department took part; including Prof. Dave Berger who introduced the learners to genetically modified organisms and Dr. Bridget Crampton who discussed the generation of GMOs and biosafety.



The learners were given a mini-project to work on which involved testing for GMOs on various food products. Through this exercise, the learners were introduced to the inner workings of a laboratory as well as issues of safety and etiquette. The group was educated on why the Plant Science Complex is referred to as a “green” building by the curator of our botanical garden, Jason Sampson.

The day was organised by PhD student Johan Liversage, who was assisted by postgraduate students in the department including Sewes Alberts, Tintswalo Baloyi, Zane Coles, Bianca Fibrich, Lizo Masters, Candice McGladdery, Zimbili Mlunjwa, Molly Molefo, Thabang Msimango and Liezl van der Hoven. Sponsorship by Inqaba Biotec, Lasec and the South African National Seed Organization made the day’s activities possible.

