

CHRONOLOGICAL EVENTS

1834-1835: Fort Cox was established as a military post during the sixth Frontier War by Major William Cox of the British Army under the orders of Cape Colony Governor, Sir Benjamin D'Urban.

1850: Around Christmas, when Sir Harry Smith was the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Cape Colony, he was actually besieged at Fort Cox with a party of Cape Mounted Rifles at the start of the Eight Frontier War.

After the war, the Ngqika lands were sold to farmers and white magistrates who then had total administrative powers over the land and its people, thus replacing chiefs.

The chiefs were given land by magistrates for their personal use and indeed until recently, a grandson of Chief Sandile (Ngika's son and successor) lived at Cwaru village adjoining Fort Cox.

1926: Under the influence and guidance of great leaders such as Professor D. D. T. Jabavu and Mr. M. Peteni, the Magistrate of Keiskammahoek Mr. E. Beal recommended that Fort Cox and a portion of land around it be purchased, with a view to establish what was then termed the "Native Agricultural" School, and this was agreed to.

1927: The property of 650 ha was eventually purchased from Mr. Timlett. Shortly thereafter, the contract for building the school was given to Lovedale College at Alice.

1930: The school was officially opened in September by then Minister of Native Affairs, Hon. E. G. Jansen.

1934: Further 704ha was purchased from Chief Sandile, bringing the total area of the Institute grounds to 1 354ha. In these early years, the Institute provided training in agriculture only up to 1969.

1970: In January, the forestry students and staff of Swartkops College near Pietermaritzburg were transferred to Fort Cox and a diploma course in Forestry was instituted.

1974: The construction of the "New Institute" campus began on the land bought from Chief Sandile in 1934. This phase of the additional development of Fort Cox was completed in 1976.

1977: The new Fort Cox Campus was opened officially on the 9th of February by the then Chief Minister of Ciskei. Mr L. L. W. Sebe.

The new campus comprised the administration block, classrooms, student and staff residences, as well as a workshop.

1982: When the Institute was first opened as an agricultural school in 1930, the entrance requirement was Standard 6. This was raised to Standard 8 in 1950.

In 1982, it was further raised to Standard 10; the equivalent of Grade 12 or National Senior Certificate and the duration of the training was increased from two and a half to three years.

1983: Phase 2 of the New Institute campus saw the construction of the sports stadium and the assembly hall. The latter was named the Mgolombane Hall in memory great Xhosa Chief Sandile.

1985: A Ciskei Special Committee chaired by Professor T. J. Bemridge was appointed by the then President of Ciskei, Chief L. L. W. Sebe, to investigate and recommend measures that might improve the standard of training of all levels of manpower engaged in agricultural and rural development.

The existing agricultural training programme at Fort Cox was scrutinized closely and the Institute authorities unanimously accepted modifications recommended by the committee.

1986: The Institute introduced a three-year diploma in Nature Conservation. This was inaugurated in July.

1990: In April, the Decree No. 5 of 1991 of the former Ciskei granted Fort Cox an autonomy, thus making it to be the only Institute of Agriculture of its own kind in South Africa.

1991: The Institute became affiliated to the University of Fort Hare. A memorandum of agreement by and between the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development of Ciskei on the one hand, and the University of Fort Hare on the other, was signed at Fort Cox on 11 June.

1993: Phase 3 of building programme started in June with the construction of:

- New classrooms
- Laboratories
- Residences
- A new library
- Diagnostic center
- Boardroom as well as
- New livestock handling facilities and a new field irrigation system.

1994: Phase 3 was completed and Fort Cox opened its doors to new intakes, with one of the best facilities and amenities for agricultural training in the country.

2000: Fort Cox, like other Institutes, decided to remain under Higher Education and offer training under quality assurance criteria set by the accrediting CHE (Council on Higher Education).

2002: Fort Cox academic programmes received full accreditation from CHE.

2004: The accreditation status of the academic programmes of Fort Cox was re-affirmed by CHE.

2010: The curriculum of Fort Cox was reviewed and implemented in line with the industry and socio-economic needs of the country.

2010: Fort Cox hosted the PANNAR rugby week for South African Agricultural Institutes for the first time in its history.

2012: Fort Cox academic programmes were re-accredited by CHE.

2012: On the 1st of February, Fort Cox through its Rural Development Centre (RDC) launched the Narysec project with the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR).

2012: A fully-fledged Institute Board of Governors was appointed and approved by the MEC (Hon Z. Capa) for DRDAR.

2013: Fort Cox Agriculture and Forestry Training Institute adopted the CBL principles as expounded through the TACATI project lead by DAFF.

2015: On the 4th of December, Fort Cox Institute Interim-Provisional Bill was promulgated in the Eastern Cape Legislature.

2016: The Institution undertakes the second curriculum review process for both Diplomas in Agriculture and Forestry. The Forestry Diploma drops a six-month Workplace Learnership in favor of an annual one.

2016: Southern African Regional Meeting (SARM) took place at Fort Cox: In this event the institute hosted the SADC International Forestry Students Association (IFSA) local committee's symposium, which was also graced by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Honorable Deputy Minister Beki Cele.

2017: Fort Cox successfully hosted its second PANNAR rugby week for South African Agricultural Institutes, as well as The National Agricultural Colleges Soccer and Netball Organization (NACSANO) week, within the same season for the first time in its history.

2017: The Institute also hosted the International Forestry Students Symposium (IFSS); an event in which South Africa welcomed forestry students from all over the world.

Thus, Fort Cox Forestry Students, as one of the IFSA local committees in the SADC region, had an opportunity to host the event and share the experiences with the international students about the Institute as well as the forestry industry's activities in the Eastern Cape.

2018: The Institute successfully conducted self-evaluation and peer review exercises in preparation for the 2020 academic reaccreditation process of all agricultural institute.

2019: The Institute received accreditation for the three Advanced Diploma qualifications including Horticulture, Animal Production and Forestry Management from the Council on Higher Education.

2020: The Institute marked 90 years in existence.

2021: Fort Cox became a partner and participated in the European Funded Forest 21 Project.

2022: Fort Cox received accreditation for Agricultural Engineering from the Council on Higher Education

2022: A new Academic Centre was opened, named the Nkosi Jongumsobomvu Maqoma Academic Centre

2024: The Agricultural Engineering Diploma was given provisional accreditation by (ECSA), Engineering Council of South Africa.