

Cattle production at Besters: the emergence of capitalist farmers

Land Divided Conference

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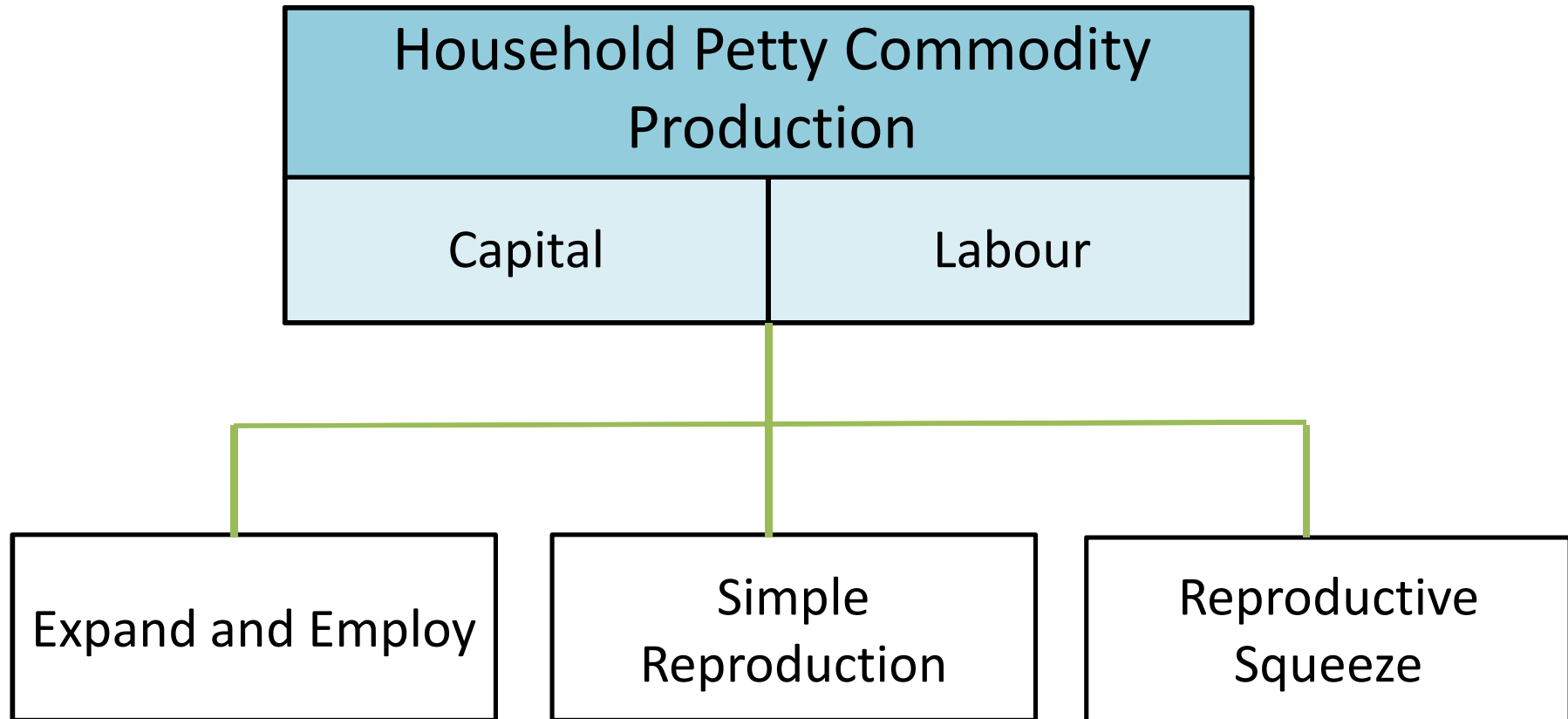
Then and now

- 1913 land act consolidated outcomes of late 1900s colonial political economy
- But 2013 is a different world
- So does land (and agrarian) reform (still) make sense?

The possibilities of land reform

- Market redistribution to smallholders - efficient, equitable, labour intensive (Lipton)
- Importance of capitalist productivity, tendency to re-concentration, maybe a small role in wage/hoe livelihood mixes (Bernstein)
- Always space for petty commodity production (Oya, Neocosmos) and perhaps accumulation from below (Cousins)

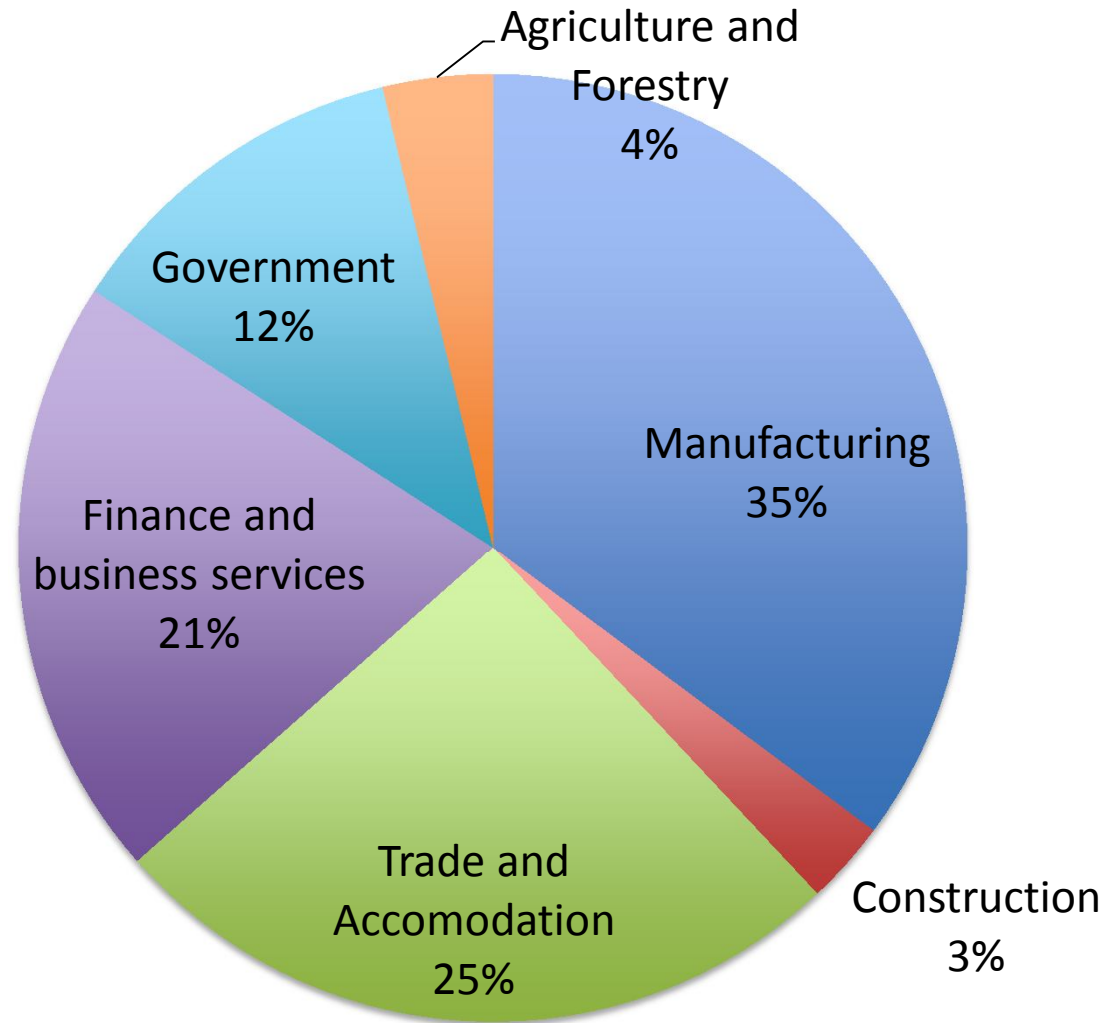
Class dynamics of petty commodity production



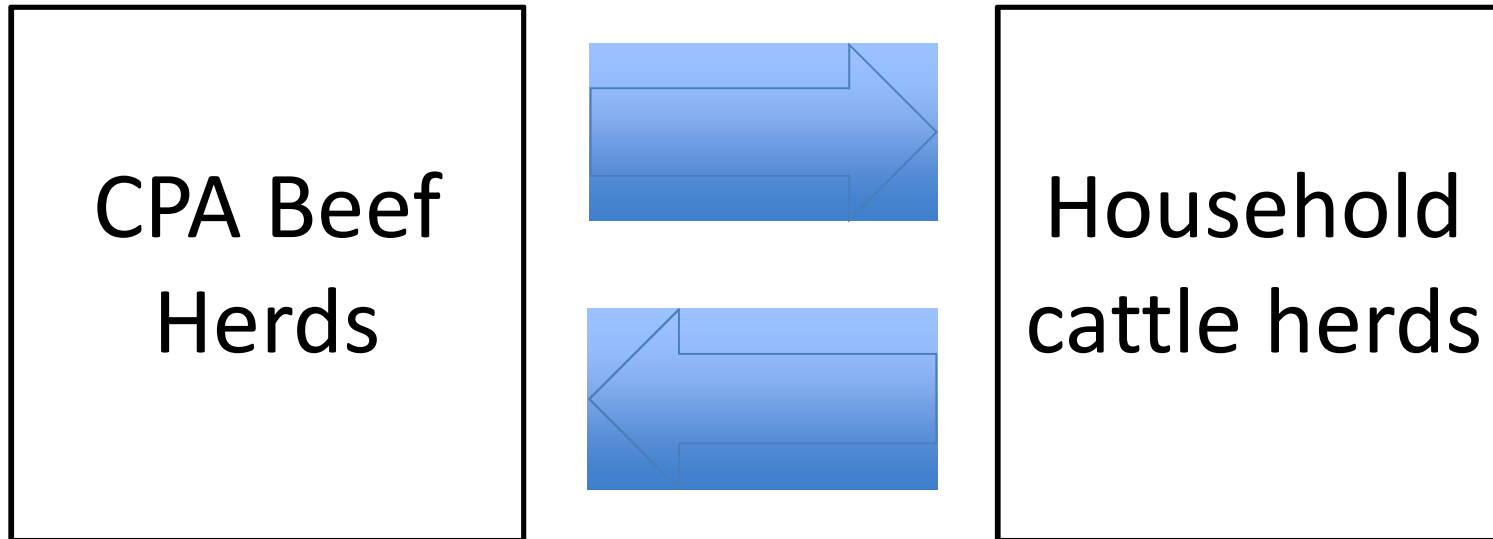
Land Reform at Besters in 2005

Beneficiaries	Land	Cattle	Cash
170 HH	13 farms Nearly 20% of district	938 beef cattle	R669 000 In year one
BUT By 2010 there's conflict and collapsing CPAs.			
WHY?			

Emnambithi Local Municipality Sector Production Output in 2008



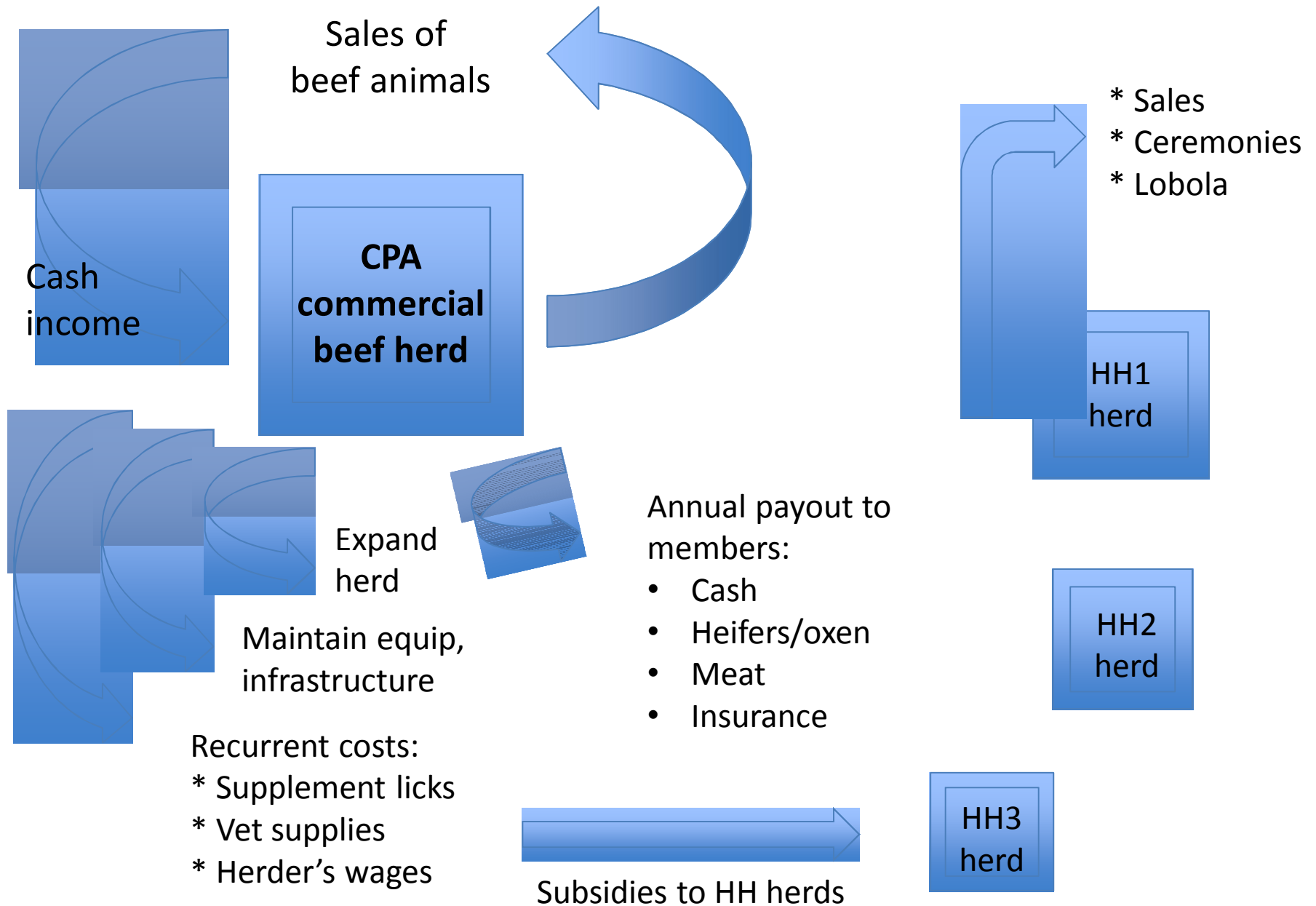
The Two Spheres of Cattle Production



Which households own cattle?

HH Asset Grps	No of cattle owned by Household		
	Count N=84	Sum	Mean
1	17	170	10
2	19	245	13
3	15	237	16
4	17	468	28
5	16	687	43

Reproduction/accumulation dynamic



Nyakanyaka CPA Herd
146 cattle in 2006

Cash from sales : R319,000
in 2007

4 full time wages,
feed, dip, diesel,
electricity

No dividends but all
HH cattle inputs
covered

Expand herd from
146 – 298 by 2009

Purchase combine
harvester, bailer,
plough, disc

2009 : the CPA splits into two

- N : “Government said we must farm, and I could see they were doing nothing. I know how to work. I was the first one to work here and I was by myself at that time with the mentor. Now they say I must come back, but I must bring 18 cattle.”
- Group B: “N said these are our cattle and I was struggling. These cattle really helped me.”
- Group B: “N is my brother-in-law so I followed him because what he said made sense.”

The re-formed CPA

- “People wanted to carry on with the CPA because we were respecting government”
- “We don’t think the same. I have troubles but I hold on and wait if I see a better future is coming.”
- “Some have jealous hearts. They want to be unnumzane, but in the end their cattle are finished.”
- “The problem is envy. Some don’t want others to go ahead. They can’t be thankful that another is going ahead.”

Household herd differences in 2010

	Group A (N=9)	Group B (N=6)
Households	10	6
Cattle mean	26	17
Min/Max	5 - 44	0 - 29
Sales total	25	11
Sales mean	2.8	1.8
Ceremony	3	6

2010-2012	CPA support	No CPA support
Big herds	29-45 13 sold, 1 died, 1 stolen Cash from sales: R48,000 Expenditure: Nil CPA: dividend, cattle inputs	58-64 14 sold, 11 died, 2 ceremony Cash from sales: R48,860 Expenditure: R2,770 in 2012 CPA: Nil
Small herds	5 – 0 3 sold; 2 died Cash from sales: R7,500 Expenditure: R600 CPA: Mineral lick + dip	1-2 1 calved Cash from sales: 0 Cattle costs: R550 CPA: Nil

Cattle deaths / CPA inputs

Number of cattle deaths in 2010	% HH where CPA provides inputs	% HH where CPA does not provide inputs
0	30%	23%
1-5	64%	60%
+ 5	6%	17%

Contradictions

- Where CPA cattle remain:
 - The more CPA herds subsidize inputs, the more HH herds can grow, and the more HH herds will compete with the CPA herds over finite resources (eg. grazing)
- Where CPA cattle have been divided:
 - With no ceiling on accumulation, bigger herds get bigger faster, take more grazing and resources, and squeeze out others. This compounds the conflicts that caused the dissolution in the first place.

Conclusion

- Yes, small capitalist farmers can emerge under LR but the processes that make their emergence possible also push others out of production, creating multiple interests that are difficult to manage in groups.
- Yes, “beneficiaries” that have the knowledge, skill and assets to do the farming that government supports them to do with the correct land and additional assets are more likely to succeed.
- Yes, CPAs can work, but they need support to manage the competing interests that emerge with differentiation – not training in chairing or records.