



Produced by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

November 2023 | ISSUE. 7



## p2 COMMUNITIES URGED TO CONSERVE WATER FOR AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES—WORLD FOOD DAY 2023

### TOP NEWS

**p4** DALRRD MINISTER VISITS YOUNG ASPIRANT FARMER

**p5** PRE-AGOA FORUM—FARMERS COMPLAIN OF COMPLIANCE

**p9** FARMERS URGED TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS AGAINST EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS



 @DALRRDgov\_ZA  @DALRRDgovZA  @DALRRDgov\_ZA



**agriculture, land reform & rural development**

Department:  
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**



## COMMUNITIES URGED TO CONSERVE WATER FOR AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES—WORLD FOOD DAY 2023

Matsepo Malatswane

**T**housands of farmers and community members gathered at the Esixeni Sports Field in the rural area of Kwa-Maphumulo in KwaZulu-Natal for this year's World Food Day (WFD) celebrations under the theme: "Water is Life, Water is Food, Leave No One Behind", which acknowledges that South Africa is a water-scarce country.

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Ms Thoko Didiza, in her Keynote Address at the celebration, called for the conservation of water, saying agricultural activities consume a lot of water and therefore farmers must get into the habit of using water sparingly and reuse bathwater to irrigate their crops. Sugar cane farming, which requires high volumes of water, is the main agricultural activity undertaken in the area.

The minister was joined by the KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr Super Zuma, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) representative, local politicians, traditional leaders, other dignitaries, officials and community members.

WFD 2023 was declared by the FAO to highlight the plight of the hungry and poor across the world. The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) has been celebrating the WFD yearly and uses this opportunity to engage with communities to address issues of poverty, hunger and malnutrition.

The Kwa-Maphumulo community is characterised by high levels of poverty with many families reliant on subsistence farming for their livelihoods. As part of the WFD celebrations, 500 identified indigent households were given food hampers that were comprised of basic household staple food items. The food donations were generously sponsored by various commercial entities that included Unilever and the tomato producer ZZ2, among others.

Farmers in the Kwa-Maphumulo area, which is predominantly comprised of tribal land administered by the Ingonyama Trust on behalf of local communities, rely on rain for irrigation of crops.

According to the FAO, almost one in ten people globally are undernourished, and more than three billion cannot afford a healthy diet. Conflict, climate change and rising food prices are



PEO (THE SEED) is the newsletter of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development • Private Bag X250, PRETORIA 0001.

It is published by the Chief Directorate: Strategic Communication • Private Bag X144, PRETORIA 0001.

Opinions expressed in PEO (THE SEED) are not necessarily those of the editorial team. No part of this newsletter may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording or any information storage or retrieval system without prior permission from the chief director.

### EDITORIAL TEAM

#### Chief Director

Linda Page : 083 460 4482 • LPage@dalrrd.gov.za

#### Director

Moses Rannitsheni : 063 623 3012 • Moses.Rannitsheni@dalrrd.gov.za

#### Editors

Lutamo Ramuedzisi : 071 878 9618 • Lutamo.Ramuedzisi@dalrrd.gov.za

Lerato Mofokeng : 012 312 8303 • LeratoMOF@dalrrd.gov.za

Eben Rademeyer : 012 312 8310 • EbenR@dalrrd.gov.za

Princy Ramaite : 012 312 8309 • PrincyR@dalrrd.gov.za

Ramokone Teffo : 012 312 8308 • RamokoneT@dalrrd.gov.za

#### Designer

Sibongile Ngcezu-Lingwazadzela: 082 640 2051 • SibongileN@dalrrd.gov.za

#### Production Manager

Dorethea Samaai : 083 441 9946 • Dorethea.Samaai@dalrrd.gov.za

#### Coodinator

Rony Moremi : 066 084 6192 • RincertM@dalrrd.gov.za

#### Reporters

Matsepo Malatswane : 066 084 6355 • MatsepoM@dalrrd.gov.za

Themba Hleko : 083 400 4768 • themba.hleko@dalrrd.gov.za

Ramokone Teffo : 012 312 8308 • RamokoneT@dalrrd.gov.za

Samuel Kgatla : 066 084 6653 • SamuelK@dalrrd.gov.za

Ndivhuwo Thenga : 060 973 0058 • NdivhuwoTh@dalrrd.gov.za

Mphahlela Rammutla : 067 278 2052 • mphahlelar@dalrrd.gov.za

*Cont.*

all contributing to growing food insecurity around the world. WFD 2023 is marked at a time when the country faces food security challenges brought by the shortage of energy, high food prices, climate change and environmental degradation.

The objectives of the event were to inform communities on ways to mitigate the impact of rising food prices through the establishment of food gardens and supporting agricultural cooperatives, among others, in attaining food security, job creation and economic growth.



*ZZ2 was among the sponsors who donated food parcels.*



*Food parcels donated to the KwaMaphumulo community.*



*DG Ramasodi and mayor of Kwa-Maphumulo during the project visit.*

## DALRRD MINISTER VISITS YOUNG ASPIRANT FARMER

Samuel Kgatla

“It gives us hope when we see the graduates from our institutes practising what they have learnt at colleges. We need to support those who are willing to work on the land and I want to encourage Ntokozo Zondi to continue farming because this industry needs perseverance and hard work,” said Minister Thoko Didiza during her visit to Prospen Farm at Mthandeni, in the iLembe District Municipality of KwaZulu-Natal, as part of the World Food Day 2023 project visits.

She added that young people want to contribute to the agricultural sector, however, some of them do not know how and where to access information and resources. The minister applauded Zondi’s attitude and passion, saying this would take him far in the industry and further encouraged him to continue working hard and feed the people of his province. Zondi is a graduate of the Grootfontein Agricultural Development Institute (GADI) in the Eastern Cape.

Prospen Farm is a promising project led by Zondi; the farm is earmarked as one of the World Food Day 2023 legacy projects to

be supported by DALRRD for the next three years. The 28-year-old is currently involved in mixed farming producing vegetables (cabbage, spinach, butternut, aubergines, soya beans, maize, onions, carrot), and livestock (goats, cattle and chickens), that he sells to the local market. The young farmer employs seven permanent and eight temporary workers. DALRRD and the Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development have already supported him with mechanisation, seeds, seedlings and fertilisers.

The enthusiastic Zondi pleaded with government to assist him to find more land as he is currently farming on 8 ha. “I am pleading with our government to help me find land because I have big plans. I am trying my best and I really want to export my products in the future. I am glad that the minister decided to visit my project and the feedback has been good as I am receiving support from people in the sector as well,” he enthused.

DALRRD Minister Thoko Didiza with Mr Zondi



## PRE-AGOA FORUM—FARMERS COMPLAIN OF COMPLIANCE

Ramokone Teffo



*Taking into consideration the shared frustrations, Minister Didiza suggested a different platform where the agricultural sector role players could further engage with the aim of finding plausible solutions.*

In an effort to create greater awareness on the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and benefits of the programme, the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Ms Thoko Didiza, convened a pre-AGOA Forum information-sharing session with farmers in Pretoria.

The minister supported by Director-General Mooketsa Ramasodi hosted the session at DALRRD's Heritage Building on Saturday 28 October 2023. This served as a precursor to the 20<sup>th</sup> AGOA Forum, which was held from 1 to 4 November 2023 at the Johannesburg Expo Centre (previously known as Nasrec).

AGOA is a trade preference agreement that gives sub-Saharan countries preferential access to US markets, allowing for products to be exported tariff free. It was signed in 2000, authorised in 2015, and is currently set to expire in 2025.

AGOA offers 36 sub-Saharan African countries that meet the eligibility criteria set out by the Act duty-free access to the US market on selected products. With that goal, South Africa took full advantage of the trade deal, emerging among the participating countries as the leading country which exports a diversified list of products to the United States (US), raking in revenue to an estimated value of US\$270 million, mostly from key agricultural exports such as citrus, nuts and wine.

As the pre-AGOA session unfolded, a robust sharing of information and exchanging of ideas started out between farmers, food processors, government departments, key stakeholders in the agricultural value chain and small-, medium- and micro-enterprise (SMME) owners to strengthen collaboration, expand reach, and increase participation by all sector stakeholders. Farmers and SMME owners, mostly attending the session

remotely, shared what was termed "exports irritants" as major red tape disrupting their businesses' growth. A wine producer from Limpopo expressed his displeasure at the limited export opportunities offered, while a chicken feet exporter shared the same frustrations over the turbulent exporting value chain.

Lack of funding and racial and gender bias in the trucking and logistics sector were also mentioned as some of the major "export irritants".

Although DALRRD's Deputy Director-General: Agricultural Production Biosecurity and Natural Resource Management, Mr Dipepeneng Serage, acknowledged the farmers' concerns, he detailed probable causes in his presentation, adding that only a few establishments owned by previously disadvantaged individuals benefit from international trade agreements such as AGOA owing to factors such as poor volumes and quality, poor infrastructure, poor linkage with market agents, no food certification systems, knowledge gaps on sanitary and phytosanitary measures, and the inability to use trade analysis tools.

Taking into consideration the shared frustrations, Minister Didiza suggested a different platform where the agricultural sector role players could further engage with the aim of finding plausible solutions. She said that this would be done through agricultural working groups that meet monthly to tackle the so-called "export irritants" experienced in the agricultural sector markets. Additionally, farmer exchange programmes have been established to include emerging farmers so that they could gain experience and skills from the US.



*Seeking Help: Farmers of exports products plead for red tape elimination at the AGOA Pre-Forum.*

## KAROO LAMB FINALLY GETS THE RECOGNITION IT DESERVES

Mphahlela Rammutla



**T**he Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has hailed the registration of Karoo Lamb/ Karoo Lam as a Geographical Indication (GI) as a significant milestone for South Africa and for the future of Karoo lamb farmers and communities.

“The significant achievement of the SA-GI registration implies that for the first time, the socioeconomic and export protection of the South African product has been enhanced,” according to Billy Makhafola, Director: Food Safety and Quality Assurance at DALRRD.

The long-awaited gazetting of the Karoo lamb as a South Africa Geographical Indication on 27 October 2023 was welcomed by farmers in the Karoo and the agricultural sector.

Makhafola noted that the process has taken many years to be finalised due to amended regulations under the Agricultural Product Standards Act, 1990 (Act No. 119 of 1990). The regulations related to the protection of Geographical Indications and Designations of Origin used on agricultural products intended for sale in South Africa and abroad.

The department, as the custodian of the Act, requires applicants who applied either as a group of producers or as individual producers to, upon being accepted, inform the assignee designated by the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development to conduct an oversight visit in order to, inter alia, check and authenticate if the applicants indeed come from the approved area.

“In terms of this process, the producer must then be registered in the database of Karoo Lamb Producers and will then be pronounced as qualified to sell locally and, if possible, export their products bearing the official SA-GI logo,” indicated Makhafola.

Amongst the key requirements to operate under the SA-GI protection, the applicants must comply with specifications outlined by DALRRD. Specifications indicate that the lamb or sheep must be born, raised and slaughtered in the karoo region with a carcass mass of  $\geq 12$  kg but  $\leq 25$  kg at Age Class A. Furthermore, the classification should be of Class Age of A, Fat of 1 – 6 and only F1 damages allowed.

The Karoo mutton is characterised by its aromatic and sensory qualities which can be attributed to the geographical area. It is this unique quality of Karoo Raised lamb that makes the concept of karoo lamb most sought after. Various scientific studies have

shown that the grazing plants from the Karoo region impart herbal and musty flavours attributed to meat from sheep-breeds of this region.

Chief Food Safety and Quality Assurance Officer, Ms Thabang Rampa, outlined that in the case of a long dry spell on a specific farm or in a region of the Karoo where grazing conditions have deteriorated to a point that makes grazing impossible, the Karoo lamb (SA-GI) will cease to operate because the natural grazing that makes Karoo lamb unique will no longer be available.

The Deputy Director: Food Safety Quality Assurance, Dr Mbulaheni Mutengwe, emphasised the need to ensure that traceability and complete adherence to requirements as set out in the applicable regulations will be enforced to ensure that the integrity of the Karoo lamb is maintained. To that end the department, working together with the assignee, which is the South African Meat Industry Company, are hard at work finalising the supporting implementation documents to reinforce the application of the SA-GI regulations



The approval logo of Geographical Indication on agricultural product.



The logos are used to mark the agricultural product's origin and geographical area



## FARMER FINDS A GRIP IN THE MIDDLE OF AN OUTBREAK



Mr Khobo, second from left, with members of staff from RTC Layers adjacent to the newly built structure.



Mr Mudogwa flanked by his staff showing off his brand of eggs inside the pack house.

Themba Hleko

Observing the strict measures put in place when entering the farm at which the company RTC Layers PTY LTD produces eggs in Grootvlei, north of Pretoria, one quickly becomes aware that South Africa is in the middle of a highly pathogenetic avian influenza (HPAI) outbreak that has severely impacted the poultry industry.

According to the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), HPAI has spread across the country with 72 outbreaks confirmed nationally: these include 51 poultry locations in Gauteng, 11 in Mpumalanga, five in North West, four in Limpopo and one in the Free State.

The South African Poultry Association (SAPA) said that South Africa has about 27 million layer hens that produce eggs daily and as a result of the AI outbreak, seven-million had to be culled. This negative impact has cost the industry millions of rands and has contributed to the scarcity of eggs around the country.

Luckily, Mr Rudzani Mudogwa, a small-scale poultry farmer who produces eggs on 9 ha of land at RTC Layers has not been affected. He attributes this turn of events to his vigilance in observing biosecurity measures. "You see, as a farmer, biosecurity helps contain diseases, thereby preventing them from spreading to other farms and it also helps to insulate the farm by reducing the risk of disease agents entering the farm from outside sources," he indicated.

"My eggs are fresh and tasty, and customers love them," said Rudzani. This is true because as I arrived on the farm, I was given a plate full of scrambled eggs to taste. After cleaning my plate, I could attest to the adage that says: "the taste of the pudding is in the eating".

RTC layers has an outlet in Sunnyside, Pretoria where they sell the eggs to the informal market. "Now that there is an outbreak, the business is booming because as the law of economics dictates, when demand is high, we hike the price. Though profitability is good for the business, it is sad to know that this affects our customers, especially the poor because they rely on eggs for proteins as part of their staple diet," he added.

RTC Layers currently has two structures with a combined carrying capacity of 29 000 hens and adjacent to these structures is a newly constructed structure with a carrying capacity of 15 000 chickens. "You know, the department gave us packaging material and 48 tons of chicken feed. I did not buy feed for two months and from the profit I made, I managed to build a third structure," said Rudzani pointing to the newly built chicken structure.

“ Now that there is an outbreak, the business is booming because as the law of economics dictates, when demand is high, we hike the price. Though profitability is good for the business, it is sad to know that this affects our customers, especially the poor because they rely on eggs for proteins as part of their staple diet ”

Cont.

Rudzani heaped praise on the department, saying that in addition to the feed that he received, Mr Tegogo Khobo, a senior project officer from the department, has always given them valuable agricultural advice that played a significant role in growing their business. He also expressed his gratitude to the department for organising industry-specific training that has further empowered him and his staff.

Currently, the farm employs 16 people and it has absorbed one agricultural graduate allocated by the Gauteng Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment (GDARDE),

as well as four agricultural assistant practitioners who were brought to the farm by (DALRRD) to receive training.

“I am glad that we are hiring qualified youth with expertise on the farm, this fits perfectly to our growth strategy because we want to supply a formal market. I also bought a 4 ha farm nearby where I want to build a butchery to grow my business. My plan is to rear my chickens and livestock, supply the formal market and hire more graduates. This will also help in reducing the youth unemployment rate in the country,” concluded Rudzani who hails from Venda in Limpopo.



Mr Mudogwa hoisting trophies that RTC Layers won.



Mr Mudogwa with the packaged eggs ready for markets.

## FARMERS URGED TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS AGAINST EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS

*Above normal rainfall is anticipated for large parts of the country during early summer.*

**T**he Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) is advising farmers to be on the lookout for daily extreme weather warnings and implement measures to mitigate risks. According to the Seasonal Climate Watch advisory issued on 3 October 2023, above normal rainfall is anticipated for large parts of the country during early summer. Below normal rainfall is expected during mid-summer over the western and central parts of the country during mid-summer, even with an El Niño in place.

The South African Weather Services (SAWS) cautions that the effect of El Niño might still manifest its influence over the next few months and change the outlook of the rainfall forecast for mid- and late-summer. Both minimum and maximum temperatures are expected to be above normal countrywide. Taking into consideration the seasonal forecast and its accompanying caution, farmers are advised to approach the season with vigilance. Dryland farmers should wait for sufficient soil moisture before planting. Drought-tolerant cultivars should be prioritised in areas that constantly experience dry conditions, while in regions with reasonable conditions, farmers are advised to prepare in line with seasonal forecasts. They should not unnecessarily expand land under cultivation, and consider planting short-season cultivars.

DALRRD has reported poor to reasonable veld and livestock conditions in large parts of the country. Veld fires in several provinces have resulted in damage to grazing land and infrastructure, as well as contributed to livestock fatalities. Land preparations are underway for summer crops and assessments are being conducted by provinces to quantify the damage. The average level of major dams remains high in most provinces.

Farmers are also advised to put measures in place for pests and diseases associated with wet and hot conditions, as above normal rainfall and high temperatures are anticipated during early summer. Farmers using irrigation are advised to comply with water restrictions in their areas. Conservation of resources should be prioritised in accordance with the conservation of the Agricultural Resources Act (CARA), 1983 (Act No. 43 of 1983).

Livestock should be kept in balance with carrying capacity of the veld and provided with additional feed such as relevant licks. Additionally, livestock should be provided with enough water points on the farm as well as shelter during bad weather conditions. Veld fires have been reported in several provinces and the risk remains, especially in summer rainfall areas, until sufficient rain is received. Winter rainfall areas are drying out, increasing favourable conditions for veld fires. Therefore, the creation and maintenance of fire belts should be prioritised as well as adherence to veld fire warnings. Flooding resulting from rain-bearing weather systems is likely, therefore, preventative measures should be in place.

Meanwhile, the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) in its Monetary Policy Review published on 17 October noted that domestic food price inflation appears to have finally passed its peak, having reached a high of 14% in March 2023 before falling to 8% in August. "However, the onset of El Niño weather conditions as of May 2023, for which the world's major climate models indicate a more than 95% chance of persisting through year-end, puts South Africa at a high risk of a drought later this year, jeopardising the expected food price disinflation," the review states.

Ndivhuwo Thenga



*The average level of major dams remains high in most provinces.*

## COMMUNITY AND LEARNERS BENEFIT FROM VIABLE GARDEN SCHOOL PROJECT



Minister Thoko Didiza and the MECs of Agriculture, and Rural Development visited projects in Hazyview, Mpumalanga.

Samuel Kgatla

The community and learners of Siphumelele Secondary School in Hazyview in Mpumalanga are enjoying the benefits of a successful greenhouse garden project, which produces vegetables. The school project was visited by the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Ms Thoko Didiza accompanied by MECs of Agriculture and Rural Development on 30 October 2023. The project has changed the attitudes of learners and community members in the area for the better as some of them have started creating backyard gardens.

The greenhouse garden, which currently produces spinach, lettuce, butternut, beetroot and onions was started by learners with the guidance of one of the teachers. There are plans to grow other vegetables and commercialise the garden to assist the struggling school to gain additional funds. The project is part of the Mandela Day Outreach programmes and was initiated by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs (DARDLEA) and the Department of Basic Education (DBE).

The purpose of supporting the school is to strengthen the existing provincial school nutrition programme, strengthen agricultural skills among school learners and advocate for smart agriculture as a component of climate change mitigation efforts. The school received support from DALRRD and DARDLEA in the form of infrastructure, garden tools, fertilisers, seedlings and fencing. The greenhouse garden project has opened job opportunities for locals who were hired during its construction, five people are employed to maintain it. DALRRD has assigned an expert in greenhouse gardening to do regular site visits and to assist where there is a need.

The principal of the school, Mr Piet Milazi said that they were glad to be beneficiaries of the project as it has boosted their nutrition scheme. "The community also benefits from it; they support the project and are learning entrepreneurship because of it. We have learned a lot and our learners even apply what they learn from the project in class," he said.

One of the learners working on the project, Harriet Khumalo, mentioned that they are honoured to have such a greenhouse garden at school. "The garden is helping learners, especially those who come from poor families. The project has taught us about leadership and management skills; these are things we did not know before. We have nutritious food because of this project and people are no longer struggling to get fresh vegetables," she said.

Minister Didiza said that the department will continue to work with the school project. Furthermore, she encouraged the learners to take agriculture seriously and continue planting!



A worker from Siphumelele Secondary School greenhouse garden at Hazyview.

## LAND CLAIMANTS IN NORTH WEST RAISE THEIR FRUSTRATIONS WITH THE MINISTER OVER THEIR UNRESOLVED CLAIMS



The North West chiefs had an engagement with DALRRD in Mahikeng.

Samuel Kgatla

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Ms Thoko Didiza, is leading a concerted effort to settle long outstanding land claims in various parts of the country by engaging with the land claimants to resolve the disputes that have resulted in delays in concluding the claims. In the latest round of engagements, the minister met with land claimants in Mahikeng, North West, on 17 October 2023 where the Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights (CRLR) presented settlement offers to claimant communities.

The Barolong Boo Ratshidi community lodged their land claim in 1998 for where Mmabatho Township and the surrounding areas are currently situated during the first opening of the land claims process. Their claims include the land on which the government buildings, Mega City, the North West University, RDP settlement and units 1–15 within Mmabatho, among others, are located. The Office of the Regional Land Claims Commissioner received a total of 10 claims on the farm Mmabatho Town and Town lands 301 JO. The nine claims were lodged by individual families and the other claim was lodged by Kgosi Montshiwa on behalf of Barolong Boo Ratshidi community.

DALRRD and CRLR made them an offer in July 2023, however, the beneficiaries are still reluctant to accept the generous offer. The department has given the claimant community until the end of October 2023 to make their final decision on the offer.

Meanwhile, the beneficiaries of Mooiplaats Farm in the Mareetsane area lodged their land claim in 2014 and their main concern is having access to the graves of their family members as the current farmer removed a tree where graves are situated

and they are deeply disturbed that he is farming too close to the gravesite. The farm is a 6 000 ha-property with 10 claimants, three of whom are elderly.

Representative of Mooiplaats Farm claimants, Mr Joe Kwaeng, pleaded with government to engage with the cooperative on the other portion of the farm to permit them to visit the gravesite and ancestral birthplace to perform their cultural activities and rituals when there is a need. "I really plead with government to visit the farm and see what is happening. I trust that our government will find a solution for us. My worry is that some graves may be affected by the farmer who is farming there, and government must intervene," he pleaded. Minister Didiza gave her assurance that she would visit the Mooiplaats Farm with senior officials of the department and promised to deal with the challenges facing the land claimants. "I thought maybe we could meet in person and see how we can resolve the challenges you are facing. I am pleading with the claimants not to take the law into their own hands while dealing with issues of land claims. The department is dealing with a lot of land claims, and we will try to help the claimants," she said.



Kgosi Montshiwa represented the Barolong Boo Ratshidi land claimants during their meeting with the Minister.

## COMMUNAL PROPERTY ASSOCIATIONS TOLD TO UNITE FOR DEVELOPMENT



Deputy Minister Skwatsha handing over a certificate to Palesa Watch, owner of the Watch P piggery farm in Potchefstroom in JB Marks Local Municipality.



Members of farming community participating fully at the farmers' engagement session held at one of the department's leased farms in Syferfontein outside Ventersdorp.

### Mphahlela Rammutla

Speaking to CPAs and members of the communities, Deputy Minister Skwatsha emphasised that the constant internal strife within CPAs' leadership and among their members continues to delay the development and government interventions aimed at assisting the people.

He further reminded CPA members and the community that, "Land was taken by force after the passing of the Natives Land Act of 1913 by the oppressive regime; now is the time for people to show hunger in working the land." "It is appalling to experience shortage of food and unemployment while CPAs have more hectares of land and are not utilising it due to infighting," emphasised DM Skwatsha.

The Matlwana CPA members raised matters in relation to mismanagement of resources and non-responsive leadership. Members appealed to the principals for intervention in the interest of the community. Addressing some issues raised in the engagements, Desbo Mohono challenged the CPAs and restitution programme beneficiaries to change their known narrative of when they are handed a productive farm, the farm becomes a battle ground and ends up being vandalised. MEC Mohono pleaded with other CPAs to emulate the Dipati Communal Property Association that has delivered 56 calves from the cattle given to them by the department when they were handed over their land.

As part of the Imbizo build-up, the political principals handed over three projects and farming equipment to farmers in the JB Marks Local Municipality. These projects include the female-owned Watch P farming project, owned by Ms Palesa Watch operating on 8,5 ha. The farm is a piggery, breeding more than 30 sows and supplying the local market.



The deputy minister accompanied by MEC Desbo Mohono and officials during handover of the piggery project to the owner.

Infighting and leadership squabbles among communal property association (CPA) members are crippling government's efforts to develop farms that have been allocated to communities as part of the land reform process. Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Mcebisi Skwatsha, told members of CPAs in North West that the continuing differences among them delay progress and it becomes a challenge to avail resources owing to, among others, fear of vandalism, destruction of equipment, and the ultimate failure of projects.

The deputy minister was addressing CPAs ahead of the Presidential Imbizo in the JB Marks Local Municipality within the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District in North West. Deputy Minister Mcebisi Skwatsha called for peace and harmony within CPAs.

Accompanied by the MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development in North West, Desbo Mohono, he embarked on a three-day visit to engage with CPAs and farmers on various issues, including management of CPAs and infighting and its impact on communities.

## MPUMALANGA PROVINCE GETS ITS FIRST FRESH PRODUCE MARKET



Ndivhuwo Thenga

**M**bombela—The construction of the state-of-the-art Mpumalanga Fresh Produce Market will be completed by Friday, 15 December 2023. This was revealed by the Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs (DARDLEA), Head of Department (HoD), Mr Cain Chunda, during a visit to the project by the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Thoko Didiza, on Monday, 30 October. Minister Didiza was accompanied by the province's MEC of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs, Busisiwe Shiba and the Director-General, Mr Moeketsa Ramasodi.

During a presentation, DARDLEA's Director: Infrastructure Development, Ms Faith Mdhuli said that the goal of the project was to use the fresh produce market as a catalyst to stimulate rapid inclusive growth of the agricultural sector and creation of more job opportunities. The objectives of the project are to enable Mpumalanga farmers to trade their fresh produce to local and international markets, ensure financial sustainability of the market facility and provide production, logistics and marketing support to farmers, particularly small-scale farmers.

The fresh produce market project was initiated and approved by the provincial government in 2011 to drive economic growth and link small-scale farmers with international, regional and local buyers. Its feasibility study was conducted in 2015 an amount of R1,5 billion was allocated to the project. Construction by the Enza Construction company began in July 2018 and the province's economic development agency, Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency (MEGA), conducted a bankable feasibility study to determine the financial viability of the market in 2019.

In terms of the business model, smallholder producers have formed partnerships with established commercial farmers for mentorship, facilitated by DARDLEA, which provides production input to these small-scale farmers. Their produce will be channeled to the fresh produce market through Agri-hubs. Simultaneously, well-established

commercial farmers will supply their products directly to the market. Market agents will receive vegetables and fruit from farmers and market them on their behalf. Altogether 70% of the market's total floor area is dedicated to vegetables, targeting both domestic and global markets. Oranges and other citrus fruit will be sold to agro-processors for juice production, while others will be sold raw to domestic and global markets. In addition, the fresh produce market has initiated the processing of locally sourced oranges into orange juice, thereby enhancing value for local producers. The market has an agro-pressing facility with a trading capacity of 7 925 tons of juice per annum.

The market facility will offer the following core services: cold storage covering an area of 5 225 m<sup>2</sup>, laboratory services covering 189 m<sup>2</sup>, agro-processing, packaging and ripening rooms covering 541 m<sup>2</sup>; coolers covering 615 m<sup>2</sup>, pallet racking, rental office space, on-site restaurant and café and commercial banks. Project architects adopted a compact design as opposed to a warehouse style of the Johannesburg and Tshwane fresh produce markets. Minister Didiza asked Ms Mdhuli why the Mpumalanga provincial government chose to operate the market facility itself, whereas in other cities, municipalities are responsible for this function. In response, Mdhuli said that the provincial government would appoint a management company to run the market facility on its behalf.

Inadequate funding to cover the operational costs associated with start-up activities, lack of clear value proposition to convince the private sector to use its services, lack of brand identity, trust between market agents and producers and inability of small-scale farmers to access its services are some of the risks facing the new fresh produce market. To mitigate these risks, a credible and experienced management company will be appointed to finance, operate and manage the fresh produce market. DARDLEA will also embark on information sharing sessions and marketing campaigns to raise awareness to smallholder producers in all districts of the province so that they can utilise the services offered by the facility. The project should have been completed by 2020, however, it experienced delays along the way.

## MINISTER DELIVERS THE SIXTH DR MOTSUENYANE ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE



Dr Sam Motsuenyane and DALRRD Minister Thoko Didiza engaged with attendees of the public lecture.



DALRRD Minister Thoko Didiza delivering the lecture.

### Ndivhuwo Thenga and Samuel Kgatla

Pretoria—South Africans from all walks of life converged at the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development's (DALRRD) National Office auditorium for the sixth annual Dr Samuel Mokgethi Motsuenyane public lecture.

This public lecture took place on 27 October 2023 and was organised by the Dr Motsuenyane Foundation which invited the DALRRD Minister Thoko Didiza to deliver this year's lecture under the theme "*Lehumo le tšwa mmung*", loosely translated to "wealth comes from the soil".

The foundation is empowering rural and township communities through skills and enterprise development to own the means of production. In her address, Minister Didiza said the lecture came at a time in which there is deepening global poverty, partly induced by the geo-political conflicts, climate change and pandemics. "These elements have disrupted governments' efforts in ending hunger and reducing poverty and brought new weaknesses to our food systems. It does not come as a surprise that the UN Committee on Food Security has reported that in 2022, the number of people who were food insecure had increased to 783 million people," she said.

The minister heaped praise on Dr Motsuenyane for his outstanding work, saying that he built a nursery that made good cultivars and varieties available that ensured the sustainability of the food system, underpinned by indigenous knowledge and local conditions.

The purpose of the public lecture was to celebrate and honour Dr Motsuenyane, whose life has influenced and touched the lives of many South Africans and Africans in the diaspora. The foundation is supporting and developing young farmers through a number of initiatives while also holding stakeholder engagements.

Dr Samuel Motsuenyane believed in building strong and resilient institutions rooted amongst the people. He served in the first post-apartheid Parliament and as a senator in the Senate (now National

Council of Provinces), where he continued his advocacy for economic empowerment and social justice.

The affable Motsuenyane served as an ambassador in several South African embassies of Gulf states including Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain.

After his ambassadorship in the Middle East, he came back home to Winterveldt where he is a citrus farmer and continues to transfer his knowledge to others. Motsuenyane's grandchildren are helping to run the farm and it has created employment for the local community. Samuel continues to serve the people of South Africa through the rural foundation bearing his name and shares his vision and leadership skills to uplift his fellow countrymen.

As a member of the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (NAFCOC) and its leadership structure he utilised his skills in running successful and resilient institutions. It was under the NAFCOC umbrella that the idea of forming a Black-owned bank was initiated and finally realised in 1975. The African Bank sought to create access to finance for Black businesses. Its first branch was opened in Ga-Rankuwa in Zone 16 at the Uncle Nuts Complex. It took him 10 years to raise R1 million as he started with R75, and not a single cent was lost because he is a champion of good governance and was a member of the King Committee on Corporate Governance from 1993 to 1994.

In his response, the 96-year-old Motsuenyane thanked DALRRD for partnering with him on this year's lecture. "We are always prepared to work with government to help; we are doing a good job as a foundation, and we have helped many people. My wish is to see us building good relations with government. There is a need for more agricultural programmes on TV so that our children can learn more about this sector. People can benefit a lot from my expertise, and I am always available with my foundation. Partnership is key in any business," he concluded.

ANNUAL RECOGNITION FOR  
**WOMEN**  
 IN AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

## OUTSTANDING WOMEN IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR HONOURED

**“It is for this reason that we acknowledge and recognise the role women play in agriculture. Agriculture is a business, and it contributes to economic growth,” said Didiza**

**Ndivhuwo Thenga**

**W**omen from the country’s nine provinces sang and ululated as the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Ms Thoko Didiza, conferred recognition awards on 45 outstanding women for their contribution towards hunger eradication, job creation and the improvement of rural areas. This took place during the Women in Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development Annual Recognition Awards ceremony held on the evening of Monday, 30 October at Emnotweni Arena in Mbombela, Mpumalanga. The awards were organised under the theme: **“Recognising the role of women in improving rural development, food security and increasing production and employment”**, and comprised of four categories, namely, smallholder, commercial, agro-processing, and female farmer with a disability.

Speaking during the awards ceremony, Minister Didiza said that it is important to acknowledge women who are playing a significant role in the sector because women were not fully recognised in the past, regardless of their involvement and valuable contribution to food security. “It is for this reason that we acknowledge and recognise the role women play in agriculture. Agriculture is a business, and it contributes to economic growth,” said Didiza. She appealed to recipients not to relax after receiving their awards. “Do not say that now I have this award, I am fine. Make sure that year after year, you flourish,” continued the minister.

Minister Didiza presented special ministerial awards to two female farmers, Ms Makhosi Cebekhulu and Ms Zokhanyo Bikani. Ms Cebekhulu is a member and the deputy secretary of the Ubizo Communal Property Association (CPA) based in Ubizo in Empangeni, KwaZulu-Natal. The CPA manages 2 547 ha of land, which were restored to 149 households in 2015 through the restitution process. Ms Cebekhulu also manages a farm that produces and supplies Tongaat-Hulett with more than 95 000 tons of sugar cane per season. As part of her duties, she manages 150 employees, of which 80% are from the Ubizo community.

Ms Zokhanyo Bikani, on the other hand, started her own mushroom business, which is based in Masakhane outside Gansbaai in Western

Cape. She was trained by the Grootbos Foundation to educate community members, especially women, about urban farming methods to enable them to grow their own food at their homes. Ms Bikani established small groups made up of women and a few young men who dropped out of school and encouraged them to learn to be independent by starting their own household vegetables to feed their families. When submitting her needs for her Presidential Economic Stimulus (PES) initiative voucher, she made it clear that she only wanted organic pesticides and insecticides as she cares about the environment. She plants a variety of vegetables on 0,25 ha of land and uses the garden to train subsistence farmers.

The awards provided a platform for women in the sectors to showcase their work and share experiences, and to support efforts to increase the active participation of women in agriculture, agro-processing and rural development. The awards ceremony was attended by MECs of Agriculture from Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape.



*Ms Makhosi Cebekhulu with her trophy and certificate. With her is Minister Didiza, Mbombela MMC for Corporate Services, Cllr Mashego, DM Skwatsha and DG Ramasodi.*

ANNUAL RECOGNITION FOR  
**WOMEN**  
 IN AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT



*Ms Selwane Hilda Nthebe is the general manager of the Masibambisane Disabled Group of Matsulu Trust in Mbombela, Mpumalanga.*

### SMALLHOLDER FARMER CATEGORY

RECIPIENT'S NAME	ENTERPRISE	ACTIVITY	PROVINCE
<b>Patience Nonthuzelo Mbele</b>	Nomtobi Project	Vegetables and livestock	Eastern Cape
<b>Maletsatsi Maria Tswayi</b>	Scheerpan Farm	Livestock	Free State
<b>Tshifhiwa Emmah Mutavhat-sindi</b>	Faranani Sechaba Trading & Projects Primary Cooperative	Vegetable and crops	Gauteng
<b>Zinzi Manana</b>	Sir Rooster Farms	Poultry (Broiler)	KwaZulu-Natal
<b>Munyadziwa Violet Masutha</b>	Lusutha Farming	Tomatoes and other cash crops	Limpopo
<b>Constance Mashaba</b>	Mashaba Farming and other projects	Grains, soya beans and vegetables	Mpumalanga
<b>Palesa Watch</b>	Watch P Piggery	Pork	North West
<b>Dorothy Joseph</b>	Freeheim Eggs	Eggs	Western Cape

### COMMERCIAL FARMER CATEGORY

RECIPIENT'S NAME	ENTERPRISE	ACTIVITY	PROVINCE
<b>Kwethani Siphesihle</b>	SIDECA	Vegetables and poultry	Eastern Cape
<b>Vuselwa Maseko</b>	Vuvu COJ Trading	Beef and livestock feed	Free State
<b>Dimakatso Ramahlodi</b>	Maledi Fresh	Vegetables (spinach, beetroot and onions)	Gauteng

ANNUAL RECOGNITION FOR  
**WOMEN**

IN AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

RECIPIENT'S NAME	ENTERPRISE	ACTIVITY	PROVINCE
<b>Philile Mzobe</b>	Nguvane Farm	Crops and livestock (crop, poultry, piggery, goat and sheep).	KwaZulu-Natal
<b>Mulalo Munyamela</b>	Palatable	Maize, wheat, sunflower, and livestock	Limpopo
<b>Lebogang Dhludhlu</b>	Nkanyezi Group	Poultry	Mpumalanga
<b>Maria Kanthwa</b>	Kantwans livestock farming project	Livestock (cattle, sheep and goats)	Northern Cape
<b>Lerato Moilwa</b>	Bathako Temo Services	Citrus fruits	North West
<b>Beverly Josephs</b>	Zelpy	Hops and proteas	Western Cape

### AGRO-PROCESSING CATEGORY

RECIPIENT'S NAME	ENTERPRISE	ACTIVITY	PROVINCE
<b>Nokuzola James</b>	Processing juice and preserved fruits and smoothies	Nursery and fruit farming	Eastern Cape
<b>Keketso Mokhutu</b>	Motswako Immune Boosters	Processing natural ingredients such as oranges, ginger, lemon and garlic to produce immune boosters	Free State
<b>Leeko Mokoene</b>	Made with Rural	Sauces made from chillies	Gauteng
<b>Sibongile Ntsabe</b>	Sibocali	Processing amadumbe, cassava, sweet potato and turnips into snack chips	KwaZulu-Natal
<b>Retang Phaahla</b>	Setsong Tea Crafters	Producing artisanal and herbal tea products using indigenous flora	Limpopo
<b>Angel Mbatha</b>	Huku Poultry Farms (PTY) LTD	Poultry	Mpumalanga
<b>Nomasonto Montsho</b>	Farm and grow to succeed	Vegetables (chillies, green peppers, onions and herbs), poultry and sauces	Northern Cape
<b>Mpho Elizabeth Bogatsu</b>	KTNM Business Enterprise	Honey and waxes	North West
<b>Marelise Niemann</b>	Momento Wines	Wine making	Western Cape

ANNUAL RECOGNITION FOR  
**WOMEN**  
IN AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

## FARMER WITH DISABILITY

RECIPIENT'S NAME	ENTERPRISE	ACTIVITY	PROVINCE
<b>Boitumelo Mshoeshoe</b>	Ahang Ngaqayi Project	Maize, vegetables and potatoes	Eastern Cape
<b>Patience Majikijela</b>	Majikijela Poultry & Vegetable	Poultry and vegetables	Eastern Cape
<b>Nomsa Mdladlamba</b>	Nomsa Sheep, Piggery & Vegetable Project	Livestock and vegetables	Eastern Cape
<b>Kholiswa Dabula</b>	Dabula vegetable project	Cabbages, spinach and potatoes	Eastern Cape
<b>Portia Mokoena</b>	Portia Poultry Project	Poultry	Free State
<b>Mathene Betty Rasekoai</b>	Thandolwethu Project	Grains and vegetables	Gauteng
<b>Cynthia Bontle Mosweusweu</b>	Moarabi Project	Vegetables and bee keeping (honey)	Gauteng
<b>Matebogo Victoria Motuane</b>	Voice out Deaf	Tomatoes and other vegetables	Gauteng
<b>Suzan Ngoveni</b>	Goitse Modimo Care and Support	Vegetables	Gauteng
<b>Khulumile Thokozile Msezane</b>	Vegetable production Project	Vegetables	KwaZulu-Natal
<b>Ntombi Ncengwa</b>	Masibumbane Entertainment and others	Dairy	KwaZulu-Natal
<b>Prema Naicker</b>	Dhemi Farms	Vegetables	KwaZulu-Natal
<b>Lindiwe Zulu</b>			KwaZulu-Natal
<b>Vainah Baloyi</b>	Kulani Agricultural Primary Co-operative Limited	Vegetables, maize and groundnuts	Limpopo
<b>Mmatumelo Suzan Mutakusi</b>	Phija poultry and vegetables	Poultry and vegetables	Limpopo
<b>Selinah Mulovhedzi</b>	Nyandzanga Nursery Investments	Nursery	Limpopo
<b>Phumzile Nhlapo</b>	Lombhindza Trading	Livestock and vegetables	Mpumalanga
<b>Thandi Annah Masilela</b>		Vegetables	Mpumalanga
<b>Selwane Hilda Nthabe</b>		Maize and vegetables	Mpumalanga
<b>Thembeni Likhuleni</b>	Pilgrims Agricultural Primary Cooperative	Poultry	Mpumalanga
<b>Thelma Brand</b>			Northern Cape
<b>Grace Tshogofatso Kgongwana</b>	Phepani Farm		North West