



Produced by Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

September 2023 | ISSUE. 5



p4

DALRRD PARTICIPATES IN MULTI-SECTORAL ONE HEALTH WORKSHOP

TOP NEWS

p2 RABIES-DEADLY BUT PREVENTABLE THROUGH VACCINATION

p6 AGRICULTURE INSPECTORS AND POLICE CONDUCT RAIDS TO GET RID OF ILLEGAL PESTICIDES IN POTCHEFSTROOM

p7 AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH COUNCIL: A PILLAR OF SA'S VIBRANT AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY



@DALRRDgov_ZA



@DALRRDgovZA



@DALRRDgov_ZA



agriculture, land reform & rural development

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



RABIES-DEADLY BUT PREVENTABLE THROUGH VACCINATION

Mphahlela M Rammutla

The department has urged all cat and dog owners to ensure that their pets are vaccinated against the deadly rabies disease, this as the global community marked World Rabies Day on 28 September.

The Animal Diseases Act, 1984 (Act No. 35 of 1984) makes it compulsory for all owners of cats and dogs to vaccinate them against rabies. Failure to vaccinate domestic pets is illegal and is a public health risk.

The first rabies vaccine should be administered when the dog or cat is at least 12 weeks (three months) old. Older dogs and cats that have never been vaccinated can receive their first rabies vaccination at any age. After the first vaccination, a booster vaccine is required between one and 12 months after the first vaccine. After the initial two vaccines, a booster vaccine is required every three years, but in high-risk areas, such as Limpopo, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and the border between Free State and Lesotho, a booster vaccine should be administered annually. Other risk factors include your pets being in contact with wild animals such as jackals, foxes, mongoose and free roaming dogs.

Dogs and cats younger than 12 weeks (three months) old may be vaccinated, however, they must be re-vaccinated at 12 weeks old. A booster is still required one to 12 months later.



Control animal technician is seen vaccinating a cat at Lethakane Village

Rabies, although fatal to humans, can be prevented through the timely vaccination of cats and dogs. "Once an animal or human shows clinical signs of the disease, there is no treatment available, and death is unfortunately imminent. However, the important part is that the disease can be prevented in cats, dogs and humans," said Dr Alicia Cloete, State Veterinarian at the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

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

Coordinator

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

Reporters

Keitumetse Moticoe : 060 583 5288 • keitumetse.moticoe@dalrrd.gov.za

Mercia Smith : 060 973 3816 • MerciaS@dalrrd.gov.za

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

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

Tshepo Diale : 071 850 1751 • Tshepo.Diale@dalrrd.gov.za

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

Innocent Mhlanga : 063 693 0353 • InnocentM@dalrrd.gov.za

Cont.



A resident, Don Mcloede, getting his pitbul vaccinated at one of the vaccination stations in Lethakane Village

“Rabies infections that lead to unnecessary deaths can be prevented if pet owners take the responsibility of vaccinating their pets at no cost,” said Dr Mosenogi of the North West Department of Agriculture and Rural Development when commemorating World Rabies Day in Lotlhakane and Dithakong villages in North West on Thursday, 28 September.

World Rabies Day is an international awareness campaign coordinated by the Global Alliance for Rabies Control. It is observed annually on 28 September under the theme “All for 1, One Health for all”. The theme highlights that One Health is not for a selected few but for everyone.

Rabies, a zoonotic disease (which means that it can be transmitted from animals to humans), is usually transmitted through bites or saliva exposure from infected animals and remains a significant global health concern.

The signs of rabies may include an aggressive or wild animal becoming tame and calm, or a calm animal becoming aggressive, abnormal vocalisation such as dogs barking strangely, animals attacking inanimate objects such as biting rocks and foaming at the mouth.

According to Dr Mosenogi, rabies originates from wild animals such as jackals and mongoose that can live with the disease without showing any symptoms. It can

easily be transmitted to the domestic animals that are often companions with humans. “Rabies still continues to be a health threat to human beings, but the good news is that it is also preventable through widespread dog vaccinations, awareness campaigns, and early post-exposure prophylaxis following a bite,” said Dr Mosenogi.

Animal Technician, Oatile Sehlapelo of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in North West, praised residents in all four districts of the province for heeding the call to have their pets vaccinated on World Rabies Day. “There has been a notable change in villages as we noticed a huge number of residents bringing their pets to vaccination stations. Our residents are learning through this awareness campaign,” emphasised Sehlapelo.

However, Sehlapelo indicates that though other breed owners appreciate the free vaccination and deworming aid offered by his department, the Greyhound owners are reluctant to vaccinate their favourite hunting dogs. They believe that the vaccination hinders their dog’s performance and hunting becomes impossible.

To get a free rabies vaccine, pet owners can contact their local state veterinarian or animal health technician. It is never too late to vaccinate your dogs and cats, rabies can be prevented through vaccination.

DALRRD PARTICIPATES IN MULTISECTORAL ONE HEALTH WORKSHOP

Samuel Kgatla

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) participated in a multisectoral One Health Workshop held at Southern Sun, Sandton in Gauteng from 7 to 8 September 2023. The main purpose of the two-day workshop was to engage stakeholders on the global One Health Joint Plan of Action (OH JPA) and its associated implementation plan, to align the current draft South African One Health Strategy with it.

The OH JPA was launched by the Quadripartite organisations, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH, founded as OIE), and the World Health Organization (WHO). In responding to international requests to prevent future pandemics and to promote health sustainably through the One Health approach, the Quadripartite developed the OH JPA (2022–2026). The Quadripartite has been playing a central role in promoting and coordinating a global One Health approach, in line with the OH JPA, which was launched in October 2022.

One Health is a collaborative approach, incorporating human, animal and environmental health to collectively address health risks. The OH JPA was developed through a participatory process and provides a set of activities that aim to strengthen collaboration, communication, capacity

building, and coordination across all sectors responsible for addressing health concerns at the human-animal-plant-environment interface. It builds on, complements and adds value to the existing global and regional One Health and coordination initiatives aimed at strengthening capacity to address complex multidimensional health risks with more resilient health systems at global, regional and national level.

Delegates revised the One Health Framework for South Africa in line with the Quadripartite (WHO-WOAH-FAO-UNEP) Global One Health Joint Plan of Action. They also reviewed the One Health Forum and steering committee terms of reference and adoption by provinces. Representatives from provinces also outlined the One Health activities that they are involved in and in line with the mission of One Health.

Dr Misheck Milumba from the Agricultural Research Council and a committee member of OH JPA said that they will consolidate everything after the workshop. “We appreciate all the information we got from this gathering, and we are going to align the existing framework with the OH JPA. We appreciate your dedication and passion on this journey. We are going to develop and finalise the proposal for One Health governance in South Africa. Thanks very much for your participation,” concluded Dr Milumba.



Committee members of One Health Joint Action Plan during their workshop in Sandton



Dr Misheck Mulumba from the Agricultural Research Council-Onderstepoort Veterinary Research was one of the presenters at the Global One Health Workshop

AGRICULTURE INSPECTORS AND POLICE CONDUCT RAIDS TO GET RID OF ILLEGAL PESTICIDES IN POTCHEFSTROOM

Rony Moremi

Hawkers and shopkeepers who sell illegal, unregistered agricultural chemicals and pesticides had nowhere to hide when the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) chief agricultural legislation inspectors and the South African Police officers pounced on them.

DALRRD officials accompanied by members of the South African Police Service (SAPS) carried out the raid in the Potchefstroom CBD and Ikaneng Township in JB Marks Municipality, North West on 24 and 25 August 2023.

Among the illegal chemicals confiscated was aldicarb, commonly known as Galephirimi. Aldicarb was originally registered for the control of nematodes, however, it was deregistered owing to misuse by criminals using it to poison dogs when breaking into homes. It is a banned product in South Africa and should not be sold or used in the country.

According to the Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act, 1947 (Act No. 36 of 1947), which covers the scope of agriculture, chemicals (pesticides and herbicides), fertiliser, stock remedies pest control and sterilising plant, no member of the public should sell products that are banned in the country. Doing so is in contravention of the Act.

DALRRD officials explained to shopkeepers who were selling unmarked animal feed that they should look for the V number and the Act 36/1947 registration when buying products to ensure that they are compliant with the regulation. Compliance with the regulation contributes to food safety because some of the chemicals pose a health risk.

Hawkers and shopkeepers who were selling unregistered pesticides were charged with J534 (a document that is used by SAPS for admission of guilt and the offender is willing to pay the admission of guilt fine) for selling of unregistered chemicals. One shop owner was detained because he was previously warned against trading unregistered chemicals but still continued. His matter will be heard on 3 October 2023 at the Potchefstroom Magistrate Court.

DALRRD officials will continue with raids in other districts around North West to ensure that there is no trade of unregistered chemicals.



Unregistered chicken feed was confiscated from the stores that were selling them illegally



Gift Tshiambwa with some of the illegal products confiscated during the raid

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH COUNCIL: A PILLAR OF SA'S VIBRANT AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

Ndivhuwo Thenga



ARC serology laboratory at the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute during a visit by the Saudi Arabian delegation

Good investment on research and development is what differentiates successful companies or industries from those that are less successful. To gain a competitive advantage over its agricultural industry competitors, the South African government established the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) as the principal agricultural research institution in the country in 1990 through the promulgation of the Agricultural Research Act 86, 1990 (Act No. 86 of 1990). It is a schedule 3A public entity in terms of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act No. 1 of 1999).

Its core mandate is to conduct research, drive technology development and disseminate information to promote agriculture and related industries; contribute to a better quality of life; ensure natural resource conservation; and alleviate poverty.

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Thoko Didiza, appointed a new board to oversee the operations of the ARC on 1 July 2023. Its board positions are currently occupied by members who possess skills in agriculture, governance, auditing, legal and finance. It is chaired by Ms Joyene Isaacs and Dr Konanani Liphadzi as her deputy. These two women are vastly experienced in the agricultural sector and have served in various capacities. Ms Isaacs is the former Head of the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, and Dr Liphadzi served as the CEO of Fruit South Africa until 2020. Dr Litha Magingxa is the

President and CEO of the ARC. He previously served at the ARC as Group Executive: Agri-Economics and Capacity Development where he was responsible for research and development.

There are four business units in the ARC, which conduct research in their area of specialisation, and these are managed by scientific experts. These business units also maintain databases, which are national assets.

ARC: Animal Production

Based in Irene, Centurion, south of Pretoria, the Animal Production Research Campus has satellite stations throughout the country. It is under the stewardship of Professor Norman Maiwashe and it conducts both primary and secondary research, development and technology transfer with regard to animal breeding and improvement, rangelands and nutrition, and food science and technology to improve productivity and sustainable resource utilisation. This research centre also serves as the custodian of national assets such as the conservation of animal, forage and bacterial culture collection, genetic resources, including databases and their DNA banks. South Africa's livestock recording and improvement scheme and its database, the Integrated Registration and Genetic Information System (INTERGIS) are also managed by this research centre on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

Cont.



Various species of sheep photographed on a farm. The ARC Animal Production Institute manages the Animal Recording and Improvement System



The Animal Production Institute manages the Integrated Registration and Genetic Information System (INTERGIS) on behalf of DALRRD

ARC: Vegetable and Ornamental Plant Institute

The Vegetable and Ornamental Plant Institute (ARC-VOPI) is mandated to conduct research and technology development on commercial vegetables, indigenous and traditional vegetables, medicinal plants, and indigenous flower bulb plants. The institute maintains more than 9 000 accessions, including locally-collected and imported germplasm. Material in the various gene banks is maintained either as seed in seed stores, in vivo, in field and glass house gene banks or in vitro tissue culture. Most of these collections are linked to active research programmes at the institute with direct utilisation in either breeding programmes, plant pathology or cultivation research leading to the development of new cultivars and technologies.

The gene bank, for example, supports the only potato breeding programme on the African continent. The development of cultivars adapted to the warmer and drier climates can contribute to the availability of material that can address climate change and play a role in food security in the rural areas. Besides the research outputs, the genetic resources maintained at ARC-VOPI Roodeplaat play an important role in the sustainability of farmers. As the only source of disease-free and indexed material of potato, sweet potato and Lachenalia flower bulb cultivars in South Africa, the supply of material from the gene bank ensures that farmers receive quality material to sustain good harvests, meet the demand for production, as well as contribute towards food security.

ARC: Institute for Soil, Climate and Water

The Institute for Soil, Climate and Water (ISCW) promotes sustainable use and management of the agricultural natural

resources through research, technology development and technology transfer under the following four focus areas:

Agrometeorology

The agrometeorology programme focuses on the use of weather and climate information and monitoring of the forecast and prediction of the weather elements that have direct relevance on agricultural planning and the protection of crop, forests, and livestock. It also maintains the Agro-Climate Network and Databank.

Soil Science and Analytical Services

This programme focuses on soil as a natural resource: Its formation, classification, and mapping; physical, chemical, biological and fertility properties, which are linked to the sustainable use and management of soils. It maintains the Soil Information System.

Geoinformation Science

This programme focuses on applied Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and earth observation/remote sensing research and provides leadership in applied GIS products, solutions, and decision support systems for agriculture and natural resources management. It maintains the Coarse Resolution Satellite Image Archive and Information Database.

Water Science

This programme uses a holistic approach in research and technology development to promote efficient and productive use of water, as well as the improvement and protection of water quality to contribute to sustainable agriculture.

Cont.

ARC: Onderstepoort Veterinary Research

The Onderstepoort Veterinary Research (OVR) play a central role in the management of animal diseases that may affect our national herd. Existing in various forms since 1908, the institute became part of the ARC in the 1990s. The primary objectives of the institute include diagnostics of controlled diseases for import, export, and movement of animals on a local scale; research that focus on development and evaluation of new and existing diagnostic tests; and disease epidemiology and surveillance. The institute also performs testing of various chemical and organic residues and pathogens that may be found in food and beverages. A major research focus area is the investigation of anti-microbial resistance that is becoming more prevalent.

The institute houses state-of-the-art South African National Accreditation System (SANAS)-accredited laboratories that focus on these aspects of service delivery. It also has National Collections for various disease transmitting vectors and parasites that allow for taxonomic identification. In this area, research focuses on vector distribution since this is intimately linked with outbreaks of vector-borne diseases and taxonomic and systematic research of vectors and parasites. The institute also produces blood vaccines for gall-sickness, heartwater and red water.

Moreover, the institute is building a new factory to produce a foot-and-mouth disease vaccine against all serotypes circulating endemically. In addition to blood vaccine production, research focuses on vaccine development and improvement with focus areas on all major diseases. In this regard, researchers possess

extensive expertise on animal immunity and execution and monitoring of vaccine trials to test efficacy and safety for registration purposes. The campus has several facilities that allow work with infectious organisms and vectors. One of these, the Tsetse fly colony aims to develop strategies for tsetse and nagana control using sterile insect technique. The institute strives to be a world-class veterinary research institute in providing scientific support and training.

The OVR hosts the Office International des Epizooties OIE reference laboratories for economically important viral diseases namely: African horse sickness, bluetongue, foot-and-mouth disease, lumpy skin disease, Rift Valley fever, rabies and African swine fever. Collaborating centres for both OIE surveillance and control of animal diseases in Africa and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations for the emergency preparedness for transboundary animal diseases for Africa is housed as well. These reference centres provide a wide range of applied research and consultancy, diagnosis, and surveillance on livestock diseases to the national and provincial governments, commercial customers and the continent. As part of the reference centres, the OVR houses an extensive biobank of reference strains and cultures that is used in diagnostics and research and development.

The programmes are structured to function optimally to deliver high quality diagnostic and research services to South Africa and the African continent at large.



ARC Vegetable and Ornamental Plants Institute produces sweet potato varieties such as the orange flesh sweet potato

UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE TO BENEFIT FROM RAINBOW CHICKEN'S R220 MILLION EXPANSION IN KZN

Samuel Kgatla



Minister Patel and Minister Didiza in the middle flanked by executive management of Rainbow Chicken



From left Mayor Mxolisi Kaunda, Dr Gcina Mhlophe and Minister Thoko Didiza during the 60-year celebration of Rainbow Chicken in KZN

Unemployed and retrenched people who lost their jobs when the Rainbow Chicken Plant at Hammarsdale in KwaZulu-Natal closed in 2017 are expected to benefit as the company commences operations following a successful public-private partnership. Minister Thoko Didiza joined her counterpart the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, Ebrahim Patel and the executive of the Rainbow Chicken Company at the opening ceremony of the second processing plant on 28 August 2023, which coincided with the 60-year anniversary of the company.

“The event was a symbol of success from a public-private partnership, which is uplifting confidence in agriculture and critical industries such as poultry,” said Minister Didiza

The new plant cost Rainbow Chicken R220 million. The company retrenched more than 1 200 workers in 2017 and this was attributed to the dumping of foreign products from Brazil. Rainbow Chicken, a division of RCL Foods, used to produce 1,2 million chickens per week, however, it had to cut this number by half, which forced the company to lay off workers who became redundant.

It was also forced to sell 15 of its 25 farms. The company is now producing 1,1 million chickens a week and is planning to reach 1,5 million in the future. The opening of the new plant is going to create 406 jobs within the province, including the re-employment of the workers it retrenched in 2017. Between 2019 and 2022, the

domestic production of chicken meat increased from 1,7 million to 1,84 million tons per year.

Marthinus Stander, Rainbow Chicken’s Managing Director said that business was slowly bouncing back and that they had to re-employ the workers laid off in 2017.

Minister Patel said that government was excited that its efforts to protect the local poultry industry from unfair competition had yielded positive results. “The government had to intervene after seeing what happened with Rainbow Chicken in 2017. Drought and bird flu had impacted on the industry, but cheap imports were the main reason as local chicken breeders had to compete unfairly in the market. As government, we had to develop anti-dumping policies and come up with increased tariffs to protect our local breeders. We are happy that our intervention has yielded positive results,” he said.

Minister Didiza added that the investments made into Hammarsdale were a sign of what the public-private partnerships could do. “The inauguration of the project, aimed at reinstating a second processing shift at Rainbow’s Hammarsdale processing plant, symbolised the success of several aspects of the Poultry Sector Masterplan, including investment, job creation, poultry exports and the establishment of black contract workers. Poultry was the single biggest industry in the livestock sub-sector worth R54 billion last year. The sector employs more than 100 000 persons,” she said.

DALRRD ENLIGHTENS FARMERS WITH AWARENESS ON FMD AND STOCK THEFT

Samuel Kgatla



Livestock farmers of Mopani District came in numbers to the FMD campaign

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) enlightened Mopani District livestock farmers about the foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), market access and stock theft. This happened at Ga-Mokwakwaila Stadium, Mokwakwaila Village in Greater Letaba Local Municipality, Limpopo on 21 September 2023. The intention was for the department to address challenges posed by animal diseases, market access and stock theft within farming communities in the province.

Farmers in the district are facing challenges of feedlot, fencing, market access, brandmarking of livestock, stock theft, limited abattoirs and no public dips. The province has had 27 open FMD outbreaks since 2019, all within the FMD-protection zone. Of these outbreaks, six were in Mopani District and 21 in Vhembe. The 26 outbreaks were in communal dip tanks and one in a commercial dairy farm in the Gravelotte area (Malati Dairy). Currently, there is no FMD outbreak in Limpopo and all outbreaks were resolved with the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) on 30 August 2023. There is no indication of circulating FMD viruses in the Mopani and Vhembe districts.

Major General Manana said that they have a lot of livestock theft cases in Mokwakwaila and they need livestock farmers to work with them. "There is a problem of stock theft in this area. Non-compliance is a problem and farmers need to brandmark their livestock so that they can identify their animals. Livestock farmers must look after their animals," he said.

Mr Collen Malatji, a livestock farmer from Phalaborwa, pleaded with the police to prioritise the issue of stock theft like they do other cases.

MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr Thabo Mokone, said that heritage goes with livestock because an animal is slaughtered every time there is a celebration during this time of the year. "For the past 10 years, there has been no auction in this area, and this should worry us. We must fight the issue of FMD. Some of you do not want to brandmark your livestock and this is a problem. We have agreed to form a task team with the Modjadji royal family and the municipality to work with farmers and start having auctions for livestock farmers again. I am happy because the national government is supporting us," he said.



Mr Collen Malatji is a livestock farmer in Phalaborwa area

OUTREACH PROGRAMME EMPOWERS THE YOUTH TO GET INVOLVED IN AGRICULTURE

Rony Moremi



The deputy minister donated agricultural implements to farmers in Magadimana-Ntweng Traditional Community in Limpopo



Young traditional dancers from Magadimana-Ntweng Traditional Community in Sekhukhune District in Limpopo

Young people are turning to agriculture for its easy entry requirements to create jobs for themselves and escape unemployment.

The ever-growing list of young people choosing to enter into the agricultural sector includes Ikamogeleng Pilusa who sees farming as a way for youth to stay away from the streets and become self-employed.

“There is wealth in agriculture, one can become your own boss and sustain yourself financially through agriculture,” advised Ikamogeleng Pilusa. Ikamogeleng who started farming at 27 years old, is one of the farmers who received the stimulus package from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) during an outreach programme on women and youth empowerment at Magadimana-Ntweng Traditional Community in Sekhukhune District in Limpopo that was held from 29 to 31 August 2023.

The Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Zoleka Capa donated water tanks, wheelbarrows, hosepipes and animal feed to the selected farmers on the day. Addressing the farmers, the deputy minister advised the community to utilise their backyards by planting more vegetables and less flowers to produce food.

The outreach programme was organised by the National House of Traditional and Khoisan Leaders (NTHKL) in partnership with the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional

Affairs. The aim of the programme was to promote socio-economic development, youth, and women empowerment in Magadimana-Ntweng Traditional Community.

Several government departments such as DALRRD, Home Affairs, Social Development, the South African Police Services and the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as Al-Imdaad and Africa Grain and Seed participated in the outreach.

Some of the government departments brought service closer to the community, including the Department of Home Affairs, which assisted community members to apply for identity documents while the Department of Social Development through the Social Security Agency of South Africa (SASSA) assisted them with social grant applications.

Kgoshigadi Ntwampe of the Magadimana-Ntweng royal family expressed her gratitude to the NTHKL for organising the outreach programme and bringing services closer to the youth of Magadimana-Ntweng. She also encouraged the youth to take up the opportunities provided.

Africa Grain and Seed provided 4 000 seedlings, which Zandile Mtiwaza, the Vice President of Africa Grain and Seed, said was not a donation but an investment. She said that it was important to change the narrative about agriculture being a tiresome, low-wage sector by working with the youth to help them understand that agriculture is wealth.

DEPUTY MINISTER CAPA CONDEMS POLICE ROLE AGAINST GBV AND FEMICIDE IN THE EASTERN CAPE



Observing a moment of silence for the victims of GBV and femicide

Innocent Mhlanga

Deputy Minister Zoleka Capa had strong words of condemnation for the perpetrators of gender-based violence (GBV) in Lusikisiki and the surrounding communities during her recent visit prompted by a spate of brutal attacks and killings of women in the area. The deputy minister vowed to mobilise women and lead a march saying, it is time they take a stand against what she termed the GBV pandemic.

She urged the women in that area to emulate the women of the 1950s: “We have marched for the rights of the police too and we cannot, therefore, be let down by the same police services. I will have to meet with the Minister of Police, Mr Bheki Cele personally, and ask him to respond to the complaints, especially about the poor service we receive from the police area commissioner,” she said.

The deputy minister was invited to address the community from the Kwa Tahle Village, in the Ingquza Hill Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape as the municipality is facing increased cases of GBV and femicide.

The Kwa Tahle administration area in the Lumphondo locality in Ward 25, which is regarded as a crime hotspot, saw the brutal killing of a 22-year-old girl who was shot and stabbed to death by unknown people; and a week later, five family members were found dead with bullet wounds on their bodies in the area.

Accompanied by the local traditional leader iNkosi Gebhuza, the speaker of the municipality and councilors, the deputy minister reminded the police that they are married to the communities, and as such, police should always avail themselves whenever they are called.

“As a member of parliament, I am married to my community, and as such, I will always avail myself whenever there is a burning issue like this one,” she added.

“I would like to register my dissatisfaction with the services we get from the police and the area commissioner. I am disappointed, firstly, as a woman from this area and secondly, as a community leader and a member of parliament. I am disappointed because we have not done enough to deal with and address the issue of GBV and femicide and I will take it upon myself to make sure that the issue is addressed,” the deputy minister continued.

She added that the poor service from police has exacerbated the situation, and that police in the area apply double standards as they protect each other when they are at fault and they have a tendency of throwing away dockets before issues are resolved, this must come to an end.

Police, she said, and especially the leadership, have a tendency of lying to the public on issues relating to statistics because they want to appear as if they are delivering on their mandate.

iNkosi Gebhuza also had some words for his community. He encouraged his subjects to report any member or any stranger who is seen roaming their streets, this is because people come from their places to commit crime in this area.

He emphasised the fact that his palace is always open for anyone who needs help. “We must work together with police and the minister so that we can defeat this scourge of violence against women and children,” iNkosi said.



Kwa Tahle community members do not support any form of GBV in their community

THE DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDISED INDICATORS FOR THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT SECTOR

Mercia Smith



Left to right: Ms Keneilwe Mahlangu (National DALRRD), Mr Fulufhelo Mavhandu (GDARD), Ms Abigail Thabethe, Ms Kea Mabalane and Ms Mabore Monama (all National (DALRRD))

A workshop for the development of standardised indicators for the rural development sector and the improvement of intergovernmental coordination was held at the Southern Sun Hotel in Pretoria on 7 September 2023. The aim of the workshop was to gain inputs from national departments, provincial departments of agriculture and district municipalities on the proposed rural development standardised indicators. The standardised indicators will enable the Branch: Rural Development to implement the Integrated Rural Development Sector Strategy and the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme in both provincial and national government through the District Development Model.

According to Dr Shamla Govender Van Wyk, Director: Systems and Procedures, from Rural Infrastructure Development, there are six desired outcomes, namely:

- Pillar 1: Infrastructure development, maintenance, and investment
- Pillar 2: Economic development, industrialisation, and job creation
- Pillar 3: Education and skills development
- Pillar 4: Provision of basic municipal services
- Pillar 5: Land, agrarian reform, and tenure security
- Pillar 6: Social and community development

For rural communities to reap maximum benefits, rural development initiatives need to be planned and well-coordinated. To give impetus to government efforts to develop rural areas, DALRRD conceptualised the Integrated Rural Development Sector Strategy, which seeks to build productive, economically vibrant, connected, healthy, socially cohesive, equitable and sustainable spaces and livelihoods addressing the developmental needs of communities in line with district-specific conditions.

Dr Govender Van Wyk added that the standardisation of indicators for sectors with concurrent functions is a process through which all provincial departments within a sector and their national department, must develop core sector results and a set of indicators to measure progress.

In terms of Chapter 14, Schedule 4 of the Constitution, rural development falls under functional areas of concurrent national and provincial legislative competencies.

At national level, the rural development function is located within DALRRD mandated for policy, strategy, legislation, programmes, and oversight in respect of implementation and reporting.

At provincial level, the function is located under provincial departments of agriculture and rural development. They are responsible for provincial coordination, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the CRDP through the six pillars of the strategy.

At municipal level, local government must:

- provide a democratic and accountable government for local communities;
- ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner;
- promote social and economic development;
- promote a safe and healthy environment; and
- encourage involvement of communities in the matters of local government.



Left to right: Mr Sizwe Ntuli Acting Director from KZN PDA and Mr Wiseman Mkhize Chief Director from KZN PDA

BATLHAKO REAPING THE SWEET FRUITS OF THEIR LABOUR



Some of the in-service training students working in the farms

Tshepo Diale

Batlhako Temo Services Primary Cooperative Ltd (BTS Co-op) is one of the land reform farms which are striving for greater heights. The successful farm is a registered legal entity consisting of five members (two females, one youth and two males).

The project occupies portions 588 and 595 of the farm Hartebeespoort No. E215 JQ in 2012. The farm was acquired in terms of the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy in terms of a 30-year renewable lease agreement with an option to purchase.

BTS Co-op's main farming business is citrus production and, currently, 23 004 trees have been planted on 44 ha of which 22 ha is GAP accredited for export market. BTS Co-op has created jobs for 109 people (14 permanent, 80 seasonal, and 15 in-service training students), including 20 allocated by the IDC-Solidaritat Programme. Citrus Growers Association-Grower Development Company (CGA-GDC) is a commodity organisation appointed to assist with the implementation of this farm.

BTS Co-op's market is both local and international (+700 tons exported and +900 tons locally sold in 2022). The local market comprises Hawkers, Magalies Citrus Company (MCC) located in Brits, and Sir Juice in JHB. International market involves exporting the fruit to middle east via market agents.

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development acquired 10 shares from the farm for access to this market. The project has received Blended Funding to build a packhouse, with an intention of minimising the high cost from using neighbouring farmers packhouses before produce goes to the market.

Funding amounting to R10 000 000,00 (Ten Million Rands) has been provided by department through Land Development Support Programme (LDSP) in 2020, for establishing a new 13 ha orchard; maintenance of 27 ha existing orchard, mechanisation and equipment (eight-ton truck, two tractors; trailers, citrus spray, upgrade of irrigation system) and building of storage shed, farm house and workers' houses.



Primrose Moilwa one of the managers holding oranges from the farms

DEPUTY MINISTER CAPA HOLDS AN ENGAGEMENT SESSION WITH EASTERN CAPE FARMERS



Farmers and CPA at the Tobi Kula Community Hall in Queenstown

Innocent Mhlanga

Another successful farmer engagement session was delivered by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD). It was hosted by Deputy Minister Zoleka Capa in Queenstown at the Thobi Kula Indoor Sport Centre, falling under both the Chris Hani and Joe Gqabi district municipalities, in the Eastern Cape, on 10 August 2023. The engagement was part of the buildup activities ahead of the ninth Presidential Imbizo in Cofimvaba.

During this session, farmers raised their concerns, which included the challenges of late payments by the department, lack of proper fencing on their farms, and challenges relating to the export of commodities.

Farmer representative, Mr Xhobani Sibeko from the Tsembeyi Communal Property Association (Tsembeyi CPA), raised issues regarding the fencing and non-payment of employees. He said that their employees were never paid for the fence that they erected, and they have sent numerous letters to DALRRD through the district to the provincial department for assistance, however, the requests ended in vain.

Thobeka Mdakane Tebe, Provincial Secretary of the African Farmers Association of South Africa (AFASA), also raised a complaint about their challenge of exporting livestock to some countries, especially sheep. He said that they have a close

relationship with a company based in Kuwait, which seeks to develop farmers to produce sheep that are of good quality for exports.

In her response to the grievances, Deputy Minister Capa said that it has been a challenging issue for some time for the department as countries they have export relations with do not in detail stipulate or clarify the processes and standards that they expect from the exported sheep. "Therefore, as a department, we are in the process of convening an information session on how the process of exporting takes place, which will strive for making exporting easy for farmers," confirmed the deputy minister.

Responding to a question about the difficulties facing women farmers, the deputy minister said women have always been excluded from owning land; women have always been the leading farmers while their husbands were working at the mines. They should, therefore, be given space and land to continue doing what they do best, which is farming.

Accompanying the deputy minister was the Eastern Cape MEC for Rural Development and Agrarian Reform, Nonkqubela Pieters, who addressed the complaints about farmers who lose grazing land for their livestock to plots. "As a department, we are in talks with chiefs to stop offering land that is used for grazing; we need land for ploughing and grazing to ensure that we maximise production," she concluded.

NARYSEC DOING ITS BIT TO CURB YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Mphahlela M Rammutla



NARYSEC participants during their drill as they prepare for the welcoming ceremony in Nigel

With a bleak future facing the youth of South Africa, employment being a scarce opportunity to come by, the 832 National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC) Programme participants were encouraged to grab the opportunity presented to them with both hands during the welcoming ceremony.

Speaking at the NARYSEC welcoming ceremony of the second intake of participants across all nine provinces, Director-General of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Mooketsa Ramasodi, appealed to 832 young people to grab the opportunities presented by his department to acquire necessary skills to navigate the labour market.

“This is the opportunity you need to grab with both hands, the programme is in its crucial years of providing mechanisms that actively engage the youth in job preparations and employment opportunities”, emphasised the director-general.

The ceremony was held at the Dunnottar Military Base in Nigel, where rural youth across the country will embark on the induction programme and later, the Youth Leadership Programme prior to enrolling in the courses.

Engaging stakeholders at the Council for Scientific Industrial Research (CSIR) International Convention Centre in Pretoria weeks before the welcoming ceremony of the participants, Deputy Director-General Thandi Moyo said that she has managed to mobilise multiple stakeholders like Ford Motors, Agri-Tech companies, and a solar company to be part of the programme’s exit strategy.

Multiple companies and organisations have shown interest in absorbing the participants in line with their area of work.

Skills development opportunities will be provided by public technical vocational education and training (TVET) institutions and colleges of agriculture. Recruitment is linked to the critical skills and occupations that are deemed scarce in the Republic of South Africa.

NARYSEC was established in September 2010 as one of the department’s contributions towards alleviating the high levels of unemployment among young people in rural areas. It is also linked to the National Development Plan (Vision 2030) and Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP).

Anele Makwethu from the Northern Cape, a NARYSEC former participant who joined the programme in 2010 during its piloting stage, said that he is the founder of a successful company called Libhongo and Luncumo Enterprise. His company has employed more than 47 youth, including former NARYSEC participants. Anele studied construction at the time when it was referred to as community house building. “If it was not for NARYSEC giving me the needed construction skills, I would not be standing here,” said Makwethu.

Among the new participants was Kealoboga Masikoa from Rustenburg. He said that he enrolled for agricultural studies, though he initially had wanted to study Information Technology. “I am chosen to be part of the programme and very happy about that, even though I did not get the course I had wanted,” concluded Masikoa.