agriculture
Department:
Agriculture
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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REVOCATION OF THE DESIGNATION OF LEAF SERVICES AS ASSIGNEE IN TERMS OF THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT STANDARDS ACT 119 OF 1990

On 27 May 2025, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Mr JH Steenhuisen, revoked the designation of Leaf Services as an assignee in terms of section 2(3) of the Agricultural Product Standards Act 119 of 1990 ("the Act"). Leaf Services was designated in 2006 to apply or carry out inspection of grain and grain products that are sold in the Republic of South Africa as provided for in sections 3(1)(a) and (b), 3A(1), 4A(1)(a), 7, and 8 of the Act.

In arriving at his decision to revoke the mandate, the Minister considered the assignee's role and responsibilities in consulting transparently and inclusively in setting inspection fees. The Minister further considered the inordinate time that Leaf Services took in applying the Act, which is characterised by, amongst other things, a lack of substantive methodology upon which inspection fees are predicated, as evidenced by the outcomes of the 2021 Appeal Board. The Minister also considered the need for the assignee to comply with the procedural aspects of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000.

The mandate to apply the Act insofar as inspections for, inter alia, grading and labelling purposes on important food products such as Maize meal and Bread is not taken lightly by the Minister. The grain and grain industry is highly regarded for the sale of quality products. It is based on the acknowledgement of industry efforts that the approach to implementation of mandatory regulations must become an integral part of complementing private industry standards and other initiatives.

Leaf Services inspection fees for the grain industry would have added tens of millions of rands to the cost of grain and oilseeds.
Considering the importance of the need to ensure that products, which amongst others form stable diet of South Africans, are compliant with mandatory regulations, the Department of Agriculture's Inspection Unit will take over the mandate of inspection of grain and grain products whilst a potent Private-Public Partnership inpection model as provided for in the Act is expolored.

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