



DEPUTY MINISTER
AGRICULTURE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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DEPUTY MINISTER CAPA (MP)

SPEECH DELIVERED IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON THE OCCASION OF THE BUDGET VOTE 2025, 8 JULY 2025 SEVENTH ADMINISTRATION



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Honourable Speaker;

All ministers and deputy ministers;

Chairpersons of portfolio committees of the Government of National Unity (GNU);

Premiers;

Local governments executives,

An African proverb says: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together”. It highlights the benefits of teamwork, cooperation, lasting success, and significant achievements attained through collective action over quick individual results.

As the Department of Agriculture, we are choosing the latter, to go together with traditional leaders (Amakhosi) other government departments, organised labour, civic society, farmers, food business operators, and the private sector in a collaborative effort, which is geared for collective marching forward in unison, tackling challenges and producing desirable results.

Madam Speaker, we are in Parliament today wearing a new cap as a reconfigured Department of Agriculture following the formal split from Land Reform and Rural Development.

We are bringing to the table sharpened focus, and cutting-edge plans to propel forward agricultural development, trade growth, and food and nutrition security aligned with national priorities of the Seventh Administration. We intend to also remove impediments of the sector in the name of diseases, funding, inputs, and access to markets, among others. We will strive to build a responsive and performance-driven organisation. This will be achieved through the 2024–2029 strategic priorities guided by Medium Term Development Plan.

FOOD SECURITY

In October 2024 we launched a National Food and Nutrition Survey with Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), which painted a gloomy picture of a higher percentage of households not meeting their food and nutritional needs.

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The Department of Agriculture is coordinating the implementation of the second iteration of the 2024–2029 multi-sector National Food and Nutrition Security Plan, which is aimed at achieving optimal food security and enhancing the nutritional status of all South Africans. The plan serves as a single, coherent blueprint, which embodies collective actions and harnessed efforts towards a common vision, which is to realise the right to food for all citizens as set out in the Constitution. It is a product of diverse stakeholders led by the Department of Agriculture. Interventions in agriculture, food systems, social protection and high impact nutrition are central pillars that underpin this plan.

Coordination of evidence-based targeting of food and nutrition security interventions at household level within the food insecure districts will be based on the results of the National Food and Nutrition Security Survey, which has provided a baseline of food and nutrition security at a sub-national level.

As part of the United Nation's food systems transformation initiative that culminated in the Food Systems Summit in 2021, South Africa in partnership with the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is coordinating the roll out of inclusive multi-stakeholder implementation of four food systems pathways. These are aimed at the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals 1 (No poverty) and 2 (Zero hunger). The establishment of inclusive local food value chains to support access to nutritious and affordable food is at the centre of both the National Food and Nutrition Security Plan and food systems pathways for South Africa.

DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MODEL

The District Development Model (DDM) aims to improve the coherence and impact of government service delivery with focus on 44 districts and eight metros around the country as development spaces that can be used as centres of service delivery and economic development, including job creation.

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The DDM is an integrated district-based approach to address service delivery challenges through, among others, localised procurement and job creation that promotes and supports local businesses and involves local communities. It calls for One District, One Plan, and One Budget. It aims to accelerate, align and integrate service delivery under a single development plan per district or metro that is developed jointly by the national, provincial, and local government, as well as business, labour, and community in each district. The department recognises the foresight of and contributing to the DDM integrated planning and approach to derive maximum benefits.

PARTNERSHIP WITH TRADITIONAL LEADERS

Many people, an estimated total of 14 million, reside where the institution of traditional leadership exists. Traditional leaders wield enormous power and influence. For projects of the department to succeed in these areas, consultation of traditional leaders, collaboration, involvement and buy-in from traditional leaders is a recipe for agricultural success.

Once consulted, respected and fully committing and coming onboard, traditional leaders can be catalyst of development and can also make land available for agricultural expansion, production of more food, growth, and jobs. In fact, cooperation with traditional leaders can unleash an economic development hub. Amongst other, traditional leaders are targeted for meaningful collaboration.

EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN, AND YOUTH

The saying: “You feed a woman, you feed a nation” is more suited when viewed against the role women play in food production, nurturing households and contributing to overall food security.

The Department of Agriculture remains committed to supporting agricultural producers towards intensifying the domestic food produce. For the past five (5) financial years, the department intensified efforts to increase domestic food production. In addition to the year-to-year budget that is allocated to Ilima/Letsema,

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the department has supported about 205,445 subsistence producers with agricultural production inputs through the Presidential Employment Stimulus (PES) initiative, over 60% of the beneficiaries were female.

This initiative was aimed at supporting the agricultural sector to retain self-employment, strengthening local food availability, and boosting food security.

Furthermore, policies are being amended to ensure gender equality, and we're creating rooms for women's unique insights and approaches for innovative solutions and foster creativity, and ultimately ensure social progress. As South Africa is currently holding the G20 Presidency, the Department of Agriculture identified four priorities under the Agriculture Working Group (AWG) which all touch on the issue of food security. These are:

1. Promoting policies and investments that drive inclusive market participation and support low-income and resource-poor farmers.
2. Empowering youth and women in agrifood systems.
3. Fostering innovation and technology transfer in agriculture.
4. Building climate resilience for sustainable agricultural production.

These priorities not only reflect the pressing needs within South Africa but also resonate with global concerns, offering a roadmap for collective action among G20 members.

We believe that with increased domestic food production, including backyard subsistence food production (small gardens), the market can have plenty of food and compel price drop and usher in a general access to nutritious food.

Affordability and accessibility of food has been placed at the forefront of the Food Security Task Force that has been established under the current South Africa's G20 Presidency. The Task Force is prioritizing tackling the pressing issue of high and volatile food prices, especially in developing countries and among vulnerable populations. We look forward to deliverables of the Task Force that will include the high-level principles and policy recommendations on commodity price stabilisation,

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climate-related interventions, and food systems to ensure access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food.

BRICS FOCUS

Madam Speaker, the world is fast becoming a global village and countries need collaboration, and cooperation to defeat food insecurity. The BRICS bloc of developing countries has in the recent past, August 2023, had their Agricultural Ministers making a Declaration of collaboration, cooperation, and agreement on various interventions among BRICS member countries on agriculture.

These include reducing the impact of climate change on agriculture and food production; ensuring access to food for the most vulnerable; agriculture trade and investment; enhancing agricultural technology cooperation and innovation and strengthening exchange of agricultural information.

On climate change, the BRICS Ministers of Agriculture called for the provision of means of implementation for developing countries to enable them to reduce the negative impacts of climate change on food security by enhancing the adaptive capacity and resilience of people, food, and agriculture production systems.

The Ministers noted that the challenges to achieve food security and nutrition are multi-sectoral and multidimensional. They emphasized the need for a collaborative approach among the BRICS countries in ensuring access to food for all.

CAADP

Another key intervention for food security in the African continent is the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). It held a food summit in Kampala, Uganda on January 9-11 and adopted the 10-year CAADP Strategy and Action Plan, and the Kampala CAADP Declaration on Building Resilient and Sustainable Agrifood Systems in Africa, which will be implemented from 2026 to 2035.

In summary, the 10-year CAADP Strategy and Action Plan aims to:

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- increase the continents agrifood output by 45% by 2035.
- transform its agri-food systems as part of its new plan to become food secure in a decade.
- Reduce post-harvest loss by 50% by 2025.
- Triple intra-African trade in agrifood products and inputs by 2035.
- Raise share of locally processed food to 35% of agrifood GDP by 2025, and
- Mobilize \$100 billion in public and private investment in African Agrifood systems by 2035.

Madam Speaker, the department is pursuing a multi-pronged approach and interventions to ensure food security, and with hard work and determination, we will win.

I thank you.