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Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development



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New deputy minister: Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

The department warmly welcomes Deputy Minister Rosemary Nokuzola Capa.

We wish Honourable Deputy Minister well in her newly assigned role.
Malibongwe!



agriculture, land reform
& rural development

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



STAY
SAFE

YACCCINATE TO SAVE SOUTH AFRICA
TOGETHER WE CAN BEAT CORONAVIRUS

Ms Rosemary Nokuzola Capa has been the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform from 5 August 2021. She was Deputy Minister of Small Business Development of the Republic of South Africa from 29 May 2019 to 5 August 2021.

Hard-working female farmers commemorated

By *Samuel Kgatla*

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) celebrated Women's Month with hard-working farmers and partners in Gauteng on 24 August. The department through the Directorate: Land Use and Soil Management (LUSM) visited Masebe Farms in Vereeniging and Revelo Farm in Mogale City in Gauteng as part of appreciating their good work and commemorating Women's Month.

This was a great idea by the department to commemorate and end the Women's Month in style. The celebration was done in partnership with the Scientology Volunteer Minister (SVM) and Mrs South Africa, Thenjiwe Mdluli. Both farmers participate in the DALRRD's Women LandCare programme.

Masebe Farms is owned by Ms Tshidi Masebe in the Sedibeng District Municipality. This herb and vegetable farm initially produced vegetables and high-quality herbs for the domestic market, and later for export markets. The farm recently completed construction of a nursery, packhouse, security gatehouse, reservoir, flat top shade nets and growing tunnels fitted

with an overhead irrigation system. The Revelo Farm is situated in the West Rand District Municipality and is managed by two farmers, Mss Lungi Robela and Antoinette Robela. They farm with tomatoes, English cucumbers and sweet peppers.

Ramakgwale Mampholo from the Directorate: LUSM said he was excited to celebrate Women's Month with hard-working farmers in Gauteng. "This is important and shows that you are one of the best farmers in the province. We are doing this together with our partners such as Ms SA and SVM. Mrs Mdluli is our LandCare ambassador," he said. Masebe mentioned that the partnership with the department is the beginning of good things to come. "The agriculture sector is huge and you can only succeed through partnerships like this one. Government (both national and provincial) is working well with us," concluded Masebe.



Ms Tshidi Masebe on her farm.

Portfolio Committee and minister visits KwaZulu-Natal

By Samuel Kgatla

The Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and Select Committee on Land Reform, Environment, Mineral Resources and Energy together with Minister Thoko Didiza visited various projects in KwaZulu-Natal during August. These emergency oversight visits come after the social unrest affecting the agriculture industry. The intention of these oversight visits was to assess the extent of the damage and the impact of the riots and looting on

the farming sector and service delivery of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

They wanted to see how the farming sector was doing regarding flow of food from farms to storage places, supply of operation equipment and production inputs to farmers and how the government can respond and assist the affected farmers. Members engaged with various farmers of the Mvoti Heights Farm Project in Mooi River, Phangela Feedlot, Mampontshi Piggery, Mlalazi Sugar and the Durban Fresh Produce

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Minister Thoko Didiza listens to Thabiso Sithole of Mvoti Height Farm during the oversight visit in KZN.

Portfolio Committee and minister visits KwaZulu-Natal

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Market. The Mvoti Heights Farm is run by young Thabiso Sithole, who deals livestock and production of bales. His leased farm was affected by veld fires and his bakkie was hijacked and later recovered by the police.

The sugar cane industry was largely affected by the burning of sugarcane crops and the disruption of operations at some of the mills. Regarding the livestock and horticultural crops, the agricultural sector faced challenges relating to trade, auctions, abattoirs, processing facilities, access to cold storage facilities, and delays in processing imports and exports of poultry and citrus.

The chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Mandla Mandela said that, as Parliament members they had decided to visit KwaZulu-Natal to see the impact made by the unrest. “We visited some farms to see how they were affected by the riots. The committee was happy to have the minister doing oversight with them throughout the week. Everything

possible must be done to assist farmers. The committee resolved that all the spheres of government should work together to assist affected farmers,” he said.

Minister Didiza urged the Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to work together with DALRRD to assist farmers with production inputs. “The money for production support is not enough. I am happy that my colleagues (MPs) are here to see what our farmers are going through. The recent unrest had a huge impact on our farmers and this is a setback for our farmers, especially the emerging ones,” she said.



Mr Siphon Njikije is one of the sugarcane farmers affected by the recent KZN unrest.

Portfolio Committee monitors sugarcane farmers affected by KZN unrest

By Samuel Kgatla

Sugarcane farmers were affected by the recent unrests in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng. This was witnessed by the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and the Select Committee on Land Reform, Environment, Mineral Resources and Energy. They visited KwaZulu-Natal in July to see the damage caused by the riots. The purpose of the oversight visit by the Members of Parliament (MPs) was to monitor the damage caused by the recent unrests that happened in both provinces.

Several sugarcane farms were set alight and growers were hit the hardest. This has raised concerns about the harvesting season. The unrest also led to the shutdown of farming mills, impacting sugar processing. More than 500 000 tons of cane was damaged and this is a lot as growers lost more money. Growers also stood up against the rioters and protected the mills they are working with.

Sipho Njikije, a small-scale sugarcane grower of Dwala Farm in the South Coast of Durban, told the MPs that he

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Portfolio Committee members and government officials at Durban Fresh Produce Market during the oversight visit in KZN.

Portfolio Committee monitors sugarcane farmers affected by KZN unrests

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was really affected by the unrests and it was a setback for him and his workers.

“The unrest have affected us big time as small-scale growers. We are not commercial farmers and losing some of the sugarcane is a setback for us. We hire trucks to transport our sugarcane to the Illovo mill. I cut my own sugarcane and prepare it before it is taken to the mill. We are now running at a big loss. It is good that the Illovo mill is not far from us and they have been helping us to develop,” Njikije said.

Siyabonga Madlala, Executive Chairperson of the South African Farmers Development Association (SAFDA) said the devastation has exposed the slow transformation in the sugarcane industry.

He added that small-scale sugarcane growers must be prioritised. “What made matters worse, is the unrests happened during the lockdown regulations and it is not easy for the growers. The sector must be transformed urgently and we are appealing to government to intervene. Transformation of the sugarcane industry needs structural reform,” he said.

The Portfolio Committee members were shocked to see the damage caused by the unrests and how it was affecting the small-scale sugarcane growers.



Mr Mandla Mandela led the Portfolio Committee on visiting KZN.

Portfolio Committee members visited sugarcane farmers in the South Coast of KZN.

National System Dialogue towards United Nations Food Systems

Despite all the efforts in different food systems around the globe, regions and country-specific interventions, the problem of food waste and environmental degradation persists at unprecedented levels.

South Africa has been selected as one of the countries to conduct the Rapid Food Systems Assessment through the National System Dialogue towards the United Nations Food Systems Summit.

Ms Thoko Didiza, Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, hosted webinars in all provinces. The theme was: *“Leveraging public-private partnerships towards scaling up food systems solutions in South Africa during and beyond Covid-19”*.

For families around the world, hunger means more than going to bed with an empty stomach. Getting the right kind and quantity of food at different stages of life can mean the difference between becoming a healthy adult or not.

South Africa has vast rural areas, many of which are dotted with smaller convenience stores, which are more expensive and less likely to stock fresh, healthy supplies. In our current

system of food distribution, the number of markets and ways to access those markets are inadequate.

Throughout the provinces, the lack of infrastructure has been voiced as a real challenge. Poorly maintained roads are a huge problem in most provinces and this delay any transportation of goods. When the produce is perishable, it is susceptible to bacteria, insects and fungus that rot the food and contaminate it with disease, rendering the food inedible.

A high percentage of small-scale farmers lack convenient access to a market, which typically causes farmers not to sell their crops. Another challenge of smallholder farming in accessing the market is production quantities. Small-scale farmers produce primarily for household security and the residual products is used as surplus for trading.

For the rest of the article and photos, contact Mercia Smith at email: mercias@dalrrd.gov.za and cellnr: 060 973 3816.

Praise for women in the agricultural sector

By Ndivhuwo Thenga

The Minister for Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Thoko Didiza, praised women for their outstanding contribution to the agricultural sector during a webinar on Women in Agriculture on Thursday, 12 August in celebration of Women's Month.

While delivering the keynote address, Minister Didiza reminisced about women who were at the forefront in the fight against land dispossessions which began in earnest with the promulgation of the Native Land Act in 1913. The quest for women's access to land was also reflected in the Women's Charter of 1954 which preceded the drafting and adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955. "The fight against forced removals also had a woman's face. Mama Lydia Komape and Beauty Mkhize are amongst those we know. The late Mama Sizani and women in the Rural Women's Movement continue to wage struggles on land to this day," said Didiza.

According to the minister, women's activism has been disruptive in a positive way. Women have not always followed the norm but found alternatives

on how to do things and achieve the same and even better outcomes. She paid tribute to the late Dr Vuyo Mahlati who advocated for women's access to land and transformation of agricultural financial support. She was the founder of Africa's first indigenous wool processing plant in Butterworth, Eastern Cape, global director of the International Women's Forum, chairperson of the Advisory Panel on Land Reform and Agriculture and also a member of South Africa's National Planning Commission. Dr Mahlati passed away in October last year.

Mme Gloria Tomato Serobe, a well-known South African female entrepreneur who founded Wiphold with Louisa Mojela, decided to invest in agriculture at primary level in South African and Lesotho rural areas. These women were not deterred by the communal land tenure systems in these two countries that are complex and scare investors away. They understood the importance of strengthening food systems as the ammunition to fight poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment. Today, the village of Centane in the Eastern Cape boasts

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Praise for women in the agricultural sector

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with a production hub with maize-filled silos to save maize to avoid post-harvest losses.

Young women in the sector were also recognised. Kamogelo Bombe, a poultry farmer from Gauteng, has been advising young farmers to “hustle”, diversify and continue to look for opportunities and have a drive to succeed. She farms with broiler chickens and decided to slaughter and sell packaged meat to her customers.

Minister Didiza indicated that the women she highlighted are not the only ones; there are many women who have entered the sector and caused disruptions in positive ways. Their success does not mean they have not had challenges. Throughout their journeys they have had many partners such as the government, communities and the private sector, who have made it possible for them to succeed. She identified access to land, financial support, extension and advisory services, access to markets and exports; technology transfer, and digitisation and tools and implements for production and

processing as some of the challenges that women in the sector are faced with. She highlighted some of the interventions the department has made to provide solutions to these challenges. For example, the government has committed to add 10 000 Extension Officers to the agricultural system within a three-year period. The department is rolling out a smallholder empowerment programme to enable farmers to know what is needed by the market in terms of products, quality and volume.

Indeed, women are a bedrock of our society. “Wathint’ abafazi, wathinta imbokodo, uZokufa.”



Celebrating women in agriculture

August, which is commemorated as Women's Month, is an opportune time to reflect upon women who have made an impact in agriculture.

Tongaat Hulett is committed to support women in agriculture. By creating and maintaining a vibrant working relationship with its female growers, contractors and all women in management and leadership positions in various projects, Tongaat Hulett is creating a sustainable future for all.

Nhlanhla Ntuli, Land Reform and Small-Scale Grower Manager, said that the company has implemented a wide range of tailor-made farmer support models over the years, to ensure that there was structured and targeted farmer support. These models include the communal leasehold model; the small-scale grower support model; and the land restitution programme to support communities whose land has been restituted.

There are 10 038 growers working in partnership with Tongaat Hulett under the small-scale grower support model, and 51% of these growers are female.

The growers are responsible for directing all farming activities ranging from land preparation to the development of a harvesting plans during the milling season.

There are 64 cooperatives that represent some 5 000 growers under the communal leasehold model, and 1 894 of these cooperative members are female growers who have made their land parcels available for sugar cane development. These women are also actively involved in food security projects in their communities.

In addition, there are 17 communities that work in collaboration with Tongaat Hulett under the land restitution programme. These restitution projects represent approximately 3 600 beneficiaries, of which more than 35% are women.

It is therefore clear that women are an integral part of Tongaat Hulett's agricultural activities and the sugar industry as well.

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The following are some of the women who play important roles within this sector.



Thobeka Zungu is a 29-year-old who is part of the Nkumbuleni Agricultural Project, a restitution project under the uMkhambathini Municipality. Thobeka works as a junior farm manager responsible for 31 employees and 323 ha under sugar cane. She has been in this role since 2018.

Lungile Nkosi is a 37 year-old administrator at Qwabe Nkanini Communal Property Association which is part of the Ilembe District Municipality. The association consists of 189 beneficiaries and has 663 ha under sugarcane. During the 2020/21 season, the association delivered 21 300 tons and created 75 seasonal jobs for the local community.



Nonhlanhla Linda is a 57-year-old female contractor providing agricultural services to growers in communal areas. Nonhlanhla is the owner of Kwanda Intwenhle Investments and she is operating under the Mandeni Local Municipality and the King Cetshwayo District Municipality.



Vaccinate your cats and dogs against rabies

By Rony Moremi

Rabies is a deadly disease that affects the brain and causes people and animals to die, but it can be prevented through vaccination. According to the Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC), rabies is responsible for 59 000 human deaths, of which 40% are children living in poor rural areas in Africa and Asia that are far from medical and veterinary services. It further states that millions of dogs and other animals suffer and die due to the disease and random culling because of fear of the disease. World Rabies Day is held annually on 28 September to raise awareness and advocacy for rabies elimination. The theme for this year's World Rabies Day is "*Rabies: Facts not Fear*". The theme aims to dispel myths and misinformation about rabies by sharing facts and important preventative measures against rabies. Rabies is a controlled animal disease in terms of the Animal Diseases Act, 1984 (Act No. 35 of 1984). Section 20 of the Animal Diseases Act states it is the responsibility of any owner or manager of land on which there are animals and any owner of animals to take all reasonable steps to prevent

the infection of the animals with any animal disease or parasite. Any owner or manager of land must prevent the spreading of animal diseases or parasites from their relevant land or animals to others. The Act makes it everyone's responsibility to report any suspected outbreak of controlled or notifiable diseases (which includes rabies) to the State Veterinarian.

What are the symptoms of a rabid animal?

All mammals are susceptible to rabies. Changes in behaviour are typical (e.g., wild animals may appear tame, while domestic animals may become aggressive), salivation (drooling or foaming at the mouth), incoordination, paralysis (loss of ability to move) and inability to swallow or drink water. The symptoms worsen over time.

What to do if bitten by a rabid animal?

People who have been bitten, scratched or licked (on wounds or mucous membranes) by a suspected rabid animal, must wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water and

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Vaccinate your cats and dogs against rabies

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immediately seek medical treatment at their nearest clinic or hospital to prevent rabies infection. This will include a series of vaccinations against rabies and potentially rabies-immunoglobulin therapy if necessary.

When to vaccinate?

The Animal Diseases Act makes it compulsory to vaccinate dogs and cats 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 to 12 months after the first vaccine. After the initial two vaccines, a booster vaccine is required every three years but in high-risk settings, a booster vaccine should be administered annually.

Vaccination for disease prevention

Canine (dog) mediated human rabies is controlled and prevented effectively

through the vaccination of dog (and cat) populations. If we all make sure our dogs and cats are vaccinated, we help to safeguard our communities. Humans are only vaccinated if they are exposed to an animal with signs of rabies or if they practice a high risk job (e.g., a veterinarian or an animal handler).

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development calls on all dog and cat owners to vaccinate their pets against deadly rabies. 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.

For further information, contact your nearest animal health technician or private/State Veterinarian. Link for provincial contacts: <https://www.dalrrd.gov.za/Branches/Agricultural-Production-Health-Food-Safety/Animal-Health/contacts/provincialveterinary>

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MACADAMIA

ASSITANCE WITH SAMPLE COLLECTION



GENERAL

Dear Macadamia producer, we require your assistance in collecting as many as possible macadamia samples showing ringspot symptoms as shown in this flyer. The aim is to try and understand the geographical distribution of this symptom on Macadamias in the country. The project is conducted by the ARC and is funded by SAMAC.

HOW TO PACKAGE AND SEND YOUR MACADAMIA SAMPLE

Send only samples showing symptoms as indicate in images included in this flyer.

2-5 Leaves will be sufficient for each sample taken.
An individual tree is seen as one sample, please do not mix leaves from different trees.

Leaves per sample can be placed into individual plastic bags and shipped without requiring additional cooling.

Please include the following information:

- Location of sample*
-Farm and Province
- Age of tree*
- Cultivar*

Please mark individual samples clearly

PLEASE CONTACT DR RONEL ROBERTS TO ARRANGE FOR COURIER COLLECTION OF THE SAMPLES:

Dr Ronel Roberts
ARC-TSC
Cnr Bosch and R2296
Nelspruit

Email: ViljoenR@arc.agric.za
Tel: 013 753 7027

YOUR ASSISTANCE IS GREATLY APPRECIATED



Ringspot symptoms we are investigating

Vultures play an important role in cleaning up carcasses that could cause disease in other animals

Vultures are an important component of an effective scavenger guild and have evolved a number of adaptations that allow them to locate and dispose of carcasses quickly and efficiently. Guilds are groups of species that exploit the same resources. A recent paper, co-authored by EWT staff, discusses the ecosystem services provided by vultures and the consequences of the continuing decline of African vultures.

African vultures have evolved several specialisations to deal with their diet and any harmful pathogens that may be present in the carcasses they feed on. They therefore play an important role in cleaning up carcasses that could cause disease in other animals, which could then be passed on to humans. The decline of African vultures threatens the stability of the African scavenger guild, which may result in increased carcass decomposition times and consequently the more rapid development and spread of harmful bacteria. Their absence may also result in changes in the composition of the vertebrate scavenger guild, with an increase in mammalian scavengers, which may increase the risk of viral disease transmission to humans, livestock and other wildlife.

The economic value of vultures in terms of the sanitation or clean-up services that they provide has been evaluated for some species or countries outside of Africa (e.g., US\$700 million per year for Turkey vultures). Although they can only be deduced for Africa, they must also be substantial. For example, in East and West Africa, vultures consume up to 100 000 kg of organic waste annually, which aids local communities as they would otherwise have to pay for these services. Although the contribution of vultures to the economics of human health and veterinary care has not yet been quantified in Africa either, efforts to conserve vultures should not be deterred. Rabies is an important example of where the loss of vultures has led to substantial human health costs. In India, human health costs due to the loss of vultures were estimated at US\$1,5 billion per year due to the increase in feral dogs and rabies.





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