

Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan



Present at the signing of the Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan were from the left, Ms Rosemary Nokuzola Capa, Prof Mzukisi Qobo, facilitator of the Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan, Deputy Minister of DALRRD, Ms Thoko Didiza, Minister of DALRRD and Mr Mcebisi Skwatsha, Deputy Minister of DALRRD.

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**agriculture, land reform
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Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
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Highlights of the 2022 Budget Vote Speech by DM Skwatsha

Highlights of the 2022 Budget Vote Speech by DM Capa



Mr Mcebisi Skwatsha is the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.



Ms Rosemary Noku-zola Capa is the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

Land Acquisition

The department acquired 57 000 ha of land through the Pro-Active Acquisition Land Strategy (PLAS) in the 2021/22 financial year. This represents an improvement of 100% from the previous financial year when the department acquired 22 000 ha of land.

Land allocation

In line with the National Policy for Beneficiary Selection and Land Allocation Policy, the department to ensure that land allocation targets the vulnerable members of society, and to that extent, the 30 037 ha of the PLAS land allocated, over 50% was allocated to the targeted vulnerable groups.

Tenure reform

The department has set aside a budget of R217 million for acquisition of land to address security of tenure, in this regard, the department intends to acquire 5 000 ha of land in the current financial year.

Restitution

The commission was able to achieve and exceed its 2021/22 annual performance targets — achieving 103% on the settlement of land claims and 106% on the target of finalising land claims.

Through the National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC) Programme the department has recruited and trained youth skills in various TVET colleges across the country and created nearly 500 jobs for rural communities in the 2021/22 financial year.

The department also employed former NARYSEC youth and agricultural graduates on short-term contracts to assist farmers with applications during the implementation of the Presidential Economic Stimulus Initiative.

More than R600 million were allocated to rural infrastructure development.

This allocation will be directed to infrastructure projects, including those relating to the Animal Veld Management Programme, River Valley Catalytic Programme, Farmer Producer Support Unit and the Revitalisation of Rural Towns.

The department completed a total of 30 infrastructure projects supporting the Farmer Production Support Units. Sixty-four infrastructure projects were completed to support the Animal Veld Management Programme.

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Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan

The signing of the Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan (AAMP) took place before Minister Thoko Didiza delivered the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development's Budget Vote Speech in Parliament.

The AAMP is a product of negotiations between government, business, labour and civil society organisations in the agriculture and agro-processing sectors.

This document was co-signed with government and organised agricultural groupings, signalling an end to the first phase of the process, which started with the Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP) and the National Marketing Council (NAMC) drafting the initial concept document and ended in tough negotiations between social partners. The AAMP includes a list of economic enablers and targeted interventions needed in the livestock, field crops, horticultural and agro-processing subsectors to unlock inclusive growth.

The journey the department has undertaken since June 2020, builds on the work that has been done

since 2001 when the department first developed the Strategic Plan for South Africa's agricultural sector, the Sector Plan, Operation Phakisa and the National Development Plan.

All of these processes remain important milestones that aimed at the transformation of the sector, giving the department a vision to which the focus must be directed. This Master Plan is lifting the department's gaze to imagine the agricultural sector we want in South Africa.

"We want a prosperous and inclusive agriculture sector that thrives on better utilisation of its natural and human resources", Ms Didiza said.

"The AAMP is the first multi-stakeholder process to accurately quantify the investment needed in various catalytic interventions to unlock the sector's potential for inclusive growth," says Agbiz CEO Theo Boshoff. "One must understand that a social compact will always contain trade-offs and compromises between parties with differing interests. That being said, the Master Plan is built on sound economic principles that will allow parties to distil the concepts into actionable plans during the next phase."



DALRRD leaders and role players in the sector during the signing of the Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan.



Holy Cross Church excited about land claim settlement

By Samuel Kgatla

The Holy Cross Anglican Church congregation, led by Bishop Tsietsi Seleokane, was elated after the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) settled their land claim. This was witnessed during the land claim settlement celebration hosted by the department on 14 May 2022 at Holy Cross Church in Flagstaff, Eastern Cape.

This land claim was lodged in respect of land that was formerly known as the Mkambati Leprosy Hospital in the Flagstaff Magisterial District, under the Ingquza Hill Local Municipality and OR Tambo District Municipality in the province. The dispossession of Holy Cross Parish's land started around 1951 when the then government decided to register the land as Crown land under the Crown Title 91/51. The Crown Title was registered in favour of the Republic of South Africa under the South African Bantu Trust.

The church opted for financial compensation as a form of redress for their land rights lost. The Office of the Regional Land Claims Commissioner commissioned a valuation to determine the monetary value of the land claim. The monetary value of the claim was R20 746 528,65, and the department presented it to the church and they accepted it. This is going to benefit the entire congregation and the community of the Holy Cross Anglican Church at large. The church has committed to use the money to assist the surrounding communities to implement projects, which will assist towards alleviating poverty in the area.

During the settlement celebration, Reverend Seleokane praised the department for finally settling their land claim. "We are going to look after their money and make sure that it helps our communities out of poverty. We will make sure that we respect this money so that it can benefit us all. We are committed to using this financial compensation for sustainable development for the benefit of the surrounding communities," he said.

Minister Thoko Didiza advised the Holy Cross Anglican Church members to think and do things smart-



Minister Didiza and DALRRD official posing with a member of the Holy Cross Church during the land claim settlement celebration at Flagstaff.



Church members of Holy Cross Parish received a cheque for the land settlement claim.

ly to develop their area. She added that there is lot of things the church can do to improve its life and that of those living around them. "The church is recommitted to develop the area, but I want it to do things in a smart way. It will be a nice thing to come here one day and find people planting smart vegetables.

Electronic certification system for phytosanitary certificates launched

Ms Thoko Didiza, Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, recently launched the electronic certification system. The introduction of eCert will enhance the capacity of phytosanitary inspectors by freeing a significant amount of time they used to spend on issuing paper certificates. “They will be able to concentrate more on actual inspections,” Ms Didiza said.

A phytosanitary certificate accompanies a consignment to the port of entry of the importing country, and therefore acts as a passport for the product.

The purpose of this system is to process export applications for phytosanitary certificates. This is a certificate that is required by some trading partners as part of the documentation for the export of agricultural products.

The eCert system provides the following benefits:

- All applications are completely managed online
- An automated response upon completion and

processing of the application

- Tracking of applications by clients
- Reduction of fraudulent activities.

The export certification of plants and plant products has been manual and involved the checking of numerous documents before certifying a consignment. This resulted in the inspector’s time not being utilised optimally as more time was spent on verification of documents, rather than on the actual inspection.

Initially, the system allowed for applications to be done online and the uploading of documents that still required an inspector to do document verification. This first phase was a major milestone as it coincided with the implementation of the hard lock down due to the Covid-19 pandemic. “It removed physical contact as well as traffic within the DALRRD offices,” Minister Didiza said.

Implementation of the eCert system started with exportation of grapes in November 2019, followed by citrus and other plant commodities in April 2020, going fully paperless in April 2021.



Minister Didiza with officials from DALRRD and officials of the Kingdom of the Netherlands who sponsored the launch celebration.



Damage caused by recent floods in KwaZulu-Natal

By Samuel Kgatla

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), Ms Thoko Didi-za together with Deputy Minister Mcebisi Skwatsha and MEC Bongwiwe Sithole-Moloi recently met with farmers and farming associations at Nto's Boutique Hotel in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). Furthermore, the leaders of the department also visited five projects affected by floods. The purpose of both the engagement and project visits was to assess the damage done by the recent devastating floods and to pave the way forward on government interventions.

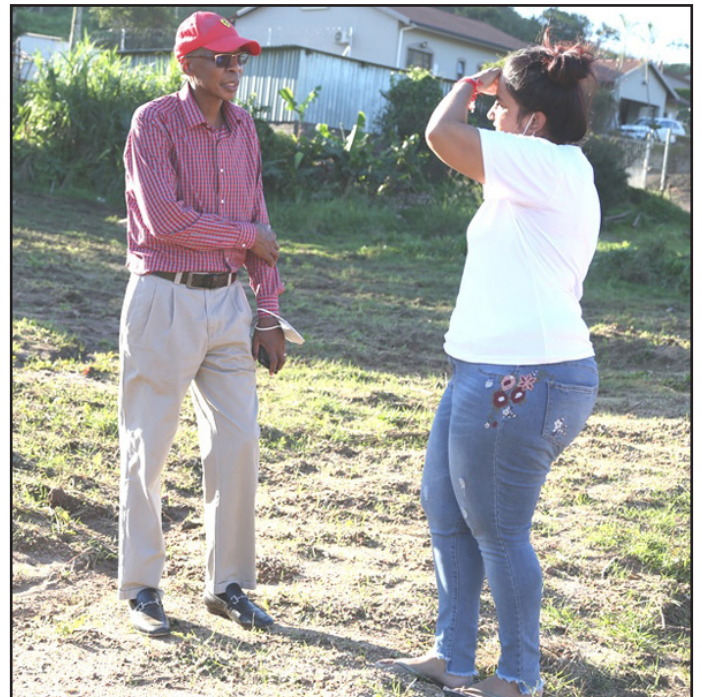
This province serves as an entry point for imported food products. The devastating floods damaged agricultural infrastructure and crops and killed animals. Roads from farms to ports were also affected, which influenced the transportation of products. Early assessment of agriculture losses in KZN amounts to at least R500 million. Those include crops, such as fruit, vegetables and sugar cane, livestock and infrastructure, such as roads and irrigation systems. The SA Canegrowers Association said that the total estimated damage in their sector stands at almost R223 million.

The minister, deputy minister, MEC and director-general of the department, Mooketsa Ramasodi, witnessed the problems facing farmers who have been affected by the floods. They visited Fresh Nest, the Elite Crop Project, Kosie Farm, Igeja Farming Services and the Senkombo Development Project. Their

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Minister Thoko Didiza and MEC Bongwiwe Sithole-Moloi leading a delegation during the site visits to the farms affected by KZN floods.



DG Mooketsa Ramasodi talking to one of the farmers affected by floods in KZN.





Shade net tunnels that were completely destroyed in the floods.

The crops inside these shade net tunnels were washed away in the floods.



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problems include a destroyed nursery, damaged crops and sugar cane plantations and farms being inaccessible owing to damaged roads.

Busisiwe Molefe of BBS Farm in Port Shepstone told the departmental leaders that she was also affected by the floods. She is the first black farmer from KZN to supply macadamias to the export market and local giant retailers. "Everything has come to a standstill and this has a negative impact on my farming. We lost the macadamia trees and tomatoes. I need to pay workers and have other expenses. I hope our government will intervene and rescue us from these problems," she said.

The minister said that a committee had been set up in the province to look at immediate intervention for

farmers after the floods. "The committee will be led by our national and provincial officials and representatives from farmers organisations. We have not concluded the assessment to determine the needed funds yet; we will soon approach Treasury once we have established the total damages. We would like to thank South Africans for really expressing their solidarity in many ways with the people of KZN. Some have donated food, clothes and money. We really appreciate your assistance during these difficult times," she said.

In conclusion, Minister Didiza said that they try as best as they can to ensure that there will be no corruption in the implementation of these relief programmes. 



Limpopo farmers benefit from conservation agriculture exposure visit



By Samuel Kgatla

Farmers from all the districts in Limpopo benefitted a lot from the conservation agriculture (CA) training and exposure visit to KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). The purpose of the visit was to expose the 45 Limpopo farmers to CA to create a platform where both Limpopo and KZN farmers can exchange experiences and learn from each other.

Conservation Agriculture is a response to sustainable land management, environmental protection and climate change adaptation and mitigation. Farmers and officials learned more about the effect of CA on farming and how to manage it. Farmers also enjoyed presentations by scientists on soil fertility and testing, soya harvesting machinery challenges, the soya market, pest control and disease control in no-till maize, soya and dry beans crops.

Furthermore, the Limpopo farmers had an insightful engagement with their counterparts, who are doing well with CA in Newcastle and Loskop. They engaged with a young passionate farmer, Ms Xeliwe Mazibuko of Tennyson Farm. Ms Mazibuko shared with the Limpopo farmers how she started and outlined the benefits of CA. She said that she has three years' experience in CA farming and has benefitted a great deal as a young farmer. She said that with CA, they were able to conserve soil and soil moisture, save on production costs and there is no soil erosion in their fields. She further shared the importance of soil sampling as a farmer practicing CA. She also attends farmer's days and teaches other farmers about the benefits of practicing CA."

The farmers' representative from Limpopo, Mr Rat-

shilumela Simon Makhale said that they have learnt a lot as farmers and they will try to implement some of the lessons learnt.

Mr Sanele Dlomo from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) also thanked DALRRD and KZN for hosting the event well. Mr Dlomo said that the FAO mandate is to support the department on matters relating to agriculture and the protection of resources for future utilisation. He further said that climate change is affecting the world and regional food security. All that needs to be done is to maintain and be able to achieve food security for all without leaving anyone behind. In his conclusion, he said that there is a need to ensure that the coming generations have food security. "We always believe in capacity development," he said.

Mr Ramakgwale Mampholo from the Directorate: Land and Soil Management thanked the organising team and everyone who participated in the exposure visit to KZN. He said that the intention of the department is to serve farmers in the best possible way. He further mentioned that a good team of professors, researchers and scientists complement the vision of cooperative governance and that if other provinces could have that, then they will go far. "The CA cannot be achieved if people work in silos. Farmers must work with Extension Officers or agricultural advisors to continue to learn more," he said.

As part of the expanding the Conservation Agriculture Farmer Innovation Programme, DALRRD together with the FAO are planning to bring more farmers from other provinces to KZN to learn further about CA.



Youth in Agriculture and Rural Development Consultation Workshop

By Rony Moremi

The Chief Directorate: Sector Capacity Development hosted a Youth in Agriculture and Rural Development (YARD) Conference at the Anew Hotel in Pretoria.

The YARD Conference was convened after the department consulted with relevant units responsible for youth empowerment in provinces to find out how many provinces had active YARD structures, with the exception of KwaZulu-Natal, whose status could not be established at the time. Findings of the consultations revealed that the Eastern Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga were the only provinces that had active YARD structures. To address this challenge, the Directorate: Sector Capacity Development consulted provincial YARD representatives to deliberate towards resuscitating the provincial structures and ultimately the national structure.

To understand and address the needs of youth in the agricultural sector, there is a need to have organised and active youth structures in the sector that will speak in unison when it comes to issues affecting youth in the sector. *Inter alia*, such organised youth structures should play a pivotal role to influence government's policy, legislative and strategy formulations and implementation.

During the workshop, officials from the Directorate:

Sector Capacity Development highlighted the importance of having functional structures that will enable youth to receive the support and funding they require for their farming enterprises. Although government should pledge its support where necessary to youth structures like YARD, it was emphasised that YARD should be autonomous from DALRRD.

After deliberations, a national task team was established to help with the revival of YARD in provinces that did not have active structures. The task team was also given the responsibility of drafting a framework that will guide the national structure of the YARD and planning towards the convening of the national YARD conference.

It was also announced in the conference that the department is working in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the University of KwaZulu-Natal to develop a Youth Employment Strategy as an attempt to address the plight facing the youth in the sector. This strategy is, *inter alia*, envisaged to help identify specific needs of youth in the sector, as well as assist the department to develop programmes with targeted interventions geared towards addressing these needs. The YARD delegates commended DALRRD for affording them a platform to revive provincial and national YARD structures.



Provincial YARD representatives and officials from the Directorate: Sector Capacity Development during the YARD Consultation Workshop.



First International Day of Plant Health celebrated in Lenyenyene

By Rony Moremi

On 12 May 2022, the community and farmers of Lenyenyene in Tzaneen, Limpopo, celebrated the first International Day of Plant Health. The United Nations General Assembly adopted the resolution proclaiming 12 May as the International Day of Plant Health.

The main objective of this day is to increase awareness on the importance of keeping plants healthy to achieve the UN Agenda 2030, Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero hunger.

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) used the day to create awareness on the importance of plant health, integrated pest management, safe use of chemicals and legislation on pests and plant disease management. Farmers were taught about the significance of healthy plants and the impact of plant diseases and pests on food security, trade with other countries. Farmers were also taught about the legislation governing plant health.

Farmers can get involved

Mpho Sekgala from the Directorate: Food Import and Export Services (D: FIES) informed farmers on the ways in which they can get involved in protecting plants against diseases and pests, such as practicing good integrated pest management on their farms by scouting and safe application of chemicals. "Through plants we can fight hunger, through plants we can fight unemployment and through plants we can grow



Officials from DALRRD directorates plant health and food import and export standards who ensured that the message about the importance of keeping plants healthy is well understood by farmers in Lenyenyene.

our economy. We must work together to reverse the 40% crop loss by pests and diseases across the globe", said Mr Sekgala.

The district where the day was celebrated falls under the Mopani West Agri-Ecological Zone. According to Ms Nontokozi Zwane, from the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Mopani West Agri-Ecological Zone has been demarcated as an area of subtropical fruit, avocados and citrus production. The Mopani West Agri-Ecological Zone is also known for tomato production; this is where the ZZ2 and the Westfalia avocado farms are based. It was the perfect place to create awareness on issues of plant health because of its many fruit farms.

Quarantine pests of concern for South Africa

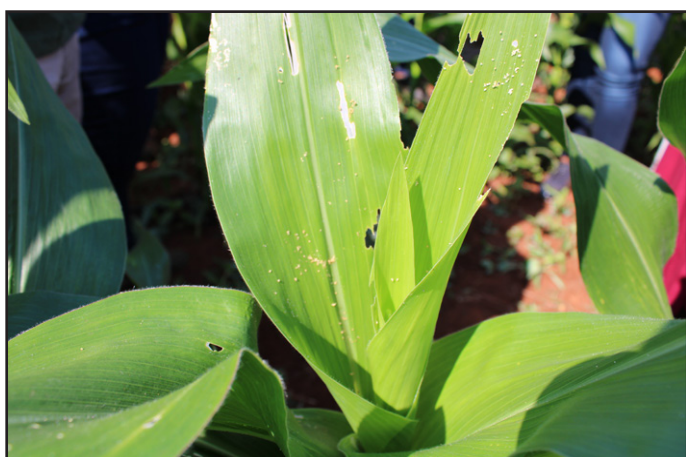
Farmers such as Rachel Molemane appreciated

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The Oriental fruit fly trap bucket at Tabani farms



A maize leaf damaged by fall armyworm.



Fall armyworm moth trapped in a bucket

being part of the International Day of Plant Health celebrations and the wealth of presentations done by officials from the department, ARC and FAO. She said that she learnt a lot from the presentation on quarantine pests of concern to South Africa and their effect to primary production and trade, which was done by Canny Makwaeba from D: FIES. "I did not know that fruit can spread pests such as the Oriental Fruit Fly".

The presentation on the Safe Use of Agro-chemicals by Edith Ramocaeli from D: FIES was an eye opener to Ms Maria Rasemana, a crop farmer who commented that, "I'm very grateful that our province and our area were selected to celebrate this day. I learnt a lot, I didn't know that I have to check that the chemicals and pesticides that I use on the farms are registered."

It is a criminal offence to not report plant diseases and pests

One presentation that had farmers looking suspiciously at each other was the presentation on the negative consequences of not following legislation and regulation for pests and diseases management, presented by Mr Maanda Rambauli of the Directorate: Plant Health. He alerted farmers that it was a criminal offence not to report the presence of plant diseases and pests. He informed farmers that it is a legal obligation of the farmer to report the pests and plant diseases identified on the farm.

To help farmers understand how to do integrated pest management properly, Ms Julie Mokwele from the Directorate: Plant Health demonstrated how to do scouting and set traps for pests, such as the Fall armyworm (FAW) and the Oriental fruit fly at Tabani Farms. The ARC also informed farmers about the services they offer to farmers such, as the mobile plant health clinic and that farmers can take their plant samples to the clinic for diagnostics.

Why Open Geospatial Standards Matter Webinar

By Ndivhuwo Thenga

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development's National Spatial Information Framework in partnership with the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) and the Committee for Spatial Information (CSI) hosted the Why Open Geospatial Standards Matter Webinar. The purpose of the webinar was to share information on the importance of universal geospatial standards that are applied in the development of geospatial products and services used in spatial planning, socio-economic development and related activities.

In South Africa, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development is responsible for implementing and monitoring the Spatial Data Infrastructure Act (SDI Act), 2003 (Act No. 54 of 2003). The SDI Act was operationalised in 2015 and through this legislation, the South African Spatial Data Infrastructure (SASDI); the Committee for Spatial Information (CSI) and the Electronic Metadata Catalogue (EMC) were established. To achieve the objectives of SASDI, data custodians and data vendors must implement standards to facilitate the use, sharing and integration of spatial information.

During the webinar, presentations were made by representatives of OGC, the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD) and South Africa's Geospatial Information Science (AfriGIS) specialists. The Open Geospatial Consortium, an international voluntary consensus standards organisation was established in 1994. Its headquarters are in Rockville, Maryland in the United States of America (USA). According to Athina Trakas, the OGC is made of the standards and innovation programmes. This standards programme working group deals with the development of standards and discuss interoperability issues while the innovation programme is responsible for problem solving and exploration of new ideas. The innovation programme publishes engineering and best practices reports.

An OGC standard is a document, established by

consensus and approved by members, which provides rules and guidelines aimed at the optimum degree of interoperability in a given context. The OGC Application Programming Interface (API) was developed to make it easy for anyone to provide geospatial data to the web. These standards build upon OGC Web Service Standards but define resource-centric APIs that take advantage of modern web development practices.

Anastasia Wahome from the Nairobi-based Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development says standards enable interoperability and seamless integration of information, geoprocessing software, and geospatial services. The use of OGC standards rather than custom interfaces accelerates development of geospatial products and services. According to Wahome, being a member of OGC enhances the institution's profile as its standards are internationally recognised. This serves as an advantage when the institution bids for contracts.

In the marine sphere, the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) was established in 1921 with the aim of ensuring that all the world's seas, oceans and navigable waters are surveyed and chartered. This includes the development of standards. Membership is through national hydrographic offices and it currently has 97 Member States. The OGC Marine Domain Working Group has worked on marine limits and boundaries pilot programmes. It released a report on the development of spatial data infrastructure for marine data management.

Globally, the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management was established in 2011. The objective of this committee is to set the agenda for the development of global geospatial information and to promote its use to address key global challenges.

Membership is through national governments and experts from international organisations serve as observers. It is comprised of five regional committees, eight functional groups and four thematic groups.

