

PROVINCIAL PLANS TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN AGRICULTURE, LAND AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

COVID-19 MANAGEMENT PLAN

25 AUGUST 2020

*PRESENTED BY
MEC FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT*



agriculture & rural development
Department of
Agriculture and Rural Development
FREE STATE PROVINCE

PROVINCIAL PLAN TO MITIGATE-COVID-19 IMPACT

- The Department is complying with the Regulations linked to the Disaster Management Act, in that only 1/3 of officials will return to office in a phased-in approach.
- The department participates in the PROVJOC and the PROVJOCOM/PCCC structures and attend meetings on a daily basis.
- The department has established a WAR ROOM to discuss and monitor compliance to the various DPSA circulars and as well as the guidelines from the Department of Labour.
- The WAR ROOM also monitors compliance to the various departmental COVID-19 management plans, i.e. Transport, Auxiliary, Health Protocol, PPE, etc.
- Teams were established at Head Office and District level to assist with the screening of officials entering all departmental premises.
- The total staff complement of the Department is currently 1 078.
- We have 32 officials over the age of 60 which is equivalent to 3.3% of the total staff and are currently operating from home and majority are not identified as rendering essential services.

PROVINCIAL PLAN TO MITIGATE-COVID-19 IMPACT

- Free State's share of the Provincial Equitable Share Formula (PESF)—equals 5.57%: Therefore the province was required to contribute R1.114 billion which must be sourced from the baselines of all the departments.
- For the 2020/21 financial year the Departmental final allocation was decreased by 5.8% on equitable share allocation from the initial allocation.
- The department has received a budget allocation of R712.258m in 2020/21 R854.102m and R903.247m in 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years respectively.
- Overall decrease to the Departmental fiscal allocation is 2.1% for 2020/21 financial year compared to the adjusted allocation for 2019/20.
- In responding to the COVID-19 pandemic the Department has identified funds (-R51, 901 million) from the non-core items in the allocated equitable share budget.
- We have stopped funds for social gatherings that do not adhere to social distancing requirements in the current financial year.

PROVINCIAL PLAN TO MITIGATE-COVID-19 IMPACT

- As announced by the Minister in-excess of 55 155 applications were received nationally and 15 036 applications have thus far been approved by the National Committee to the value of R 500 million.
- In the Free State province 5 384 applications were received and **389** applications have thus far been approved by the National Committee to the value of **R 17 268 519** million. Approval for support was also granted to the **21** Proactive Land Acquisition (PLAS) farms to the value of **R 94 460 096** million:
 - Mangaung Metro: 179 farmers
 - Xhariep: 6 farmers
 - Thabo Mofutsanyana: 117 farmers
 - Lejweleputswa: 55 farmers
 - Fezile Dabi : 34 farmers
- We are in the process of reviewing the unsuccessful applications for approval under COVID-19 Disaster Scheme and up to date we have identified 3 300 qualifying applicants in our province.
- Several outreaches were conducted to the farming community where hand sanitizer, masks and food parcels were issued and awareness was conducted under the community members regarding the COVID-19

PROVINCIAL PLAN TO MITIGATE-COVID-19 IMPACT

- For the 2018 we have registered 17.1 percent of household involved in agricultural activities, compared to 16.9 percent in 2017 an increase by 0.2 percent.
- For the Financial Year 2020/21, we have initially received R 176, 167 million under CASP conditional grant of which after reprioritization due to COVID-19 the final revised allocation for CASP is R 143, 374 million.
- With this allocation we are planning to implement 31 projects and 8 programmes:
 - ✓ We will create 584 jobs. (*permanent jobs: 295 and temporary jobs: 289*),
 - ✓ Benefiting 1 082 beneficiaries. (*Females: 538, Males: 441, Youth: 102 and People with Disability: 1*) and
 - ✓ 1 242 farmers will be supported. (*Subsistence: 943 and Smallholder: 299*).
- For Ilima/Letsema conditional grant an initial allocation was R 68, 442 million, the revised allocation is R 51, 331 million.
- We are planning to implement 37 projects and 5 programmes:
 - ✓ We will create 309 jobs. (*permanent jobs: 98 and 211 temporary jobs*),
 - ✓ Benefiting 26 122 beneficiaries. (*Females: 13 096, males: 13 026, youth: 7 015 and people with disabilities: 30*) and
 - ✓ support 11 503 farmers. (*Subsistence: 11 416, Smallholder: 76 and Commercial: 11*).
- For LandCare and EPWP we have received R 8, 378 million and R 2, 000 million respectively.
 - ✓ With this allocation we are planning to implement 12 projects and 1 programme (EPWP):
 - ✓ We will create 128 jobs. (*women: 77, youth: 71 and people with disabilities: 3*), and
 - ✓ Benefiting 949 beneficiaries. (*women: 563, youth: 518 and people with disabilities: 22*).

CLOSING REMARKS

- Our Projects and Programmes are structured to contribute to the challenges and opportunities we are confronted with.
- The economic and socio-economic effect of COVID-19 pandemic is largely felt by the Rural and Farming Community and the response to the COVID-19 crisis will reduce poverty and inequalities particularly to the vulnerable groups.
- Among others, the negative impact felt by these rural vulnerable groups is lack of access to water which is their Constitutional Right, Chapter 2 of the Constitution of South Africa provides that: “Everyone has the right to have access to sufficient food and water.” Of which the purpose of this Act is to provide for the right to basic water supply and basic sanitation services.
- On the basis of that I have written a letter to the Honourable Dr Lindiwe Sisulu-Minister of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation requesting her assistance to Drill and Develop Boreholes for Farmers especially targeting Communal Farmers, and to Enhance Boreholes already drilled by the State Drill targeting communal and small-holder farmers.
- Our Municipalities are struggling to transport water on a daily basis to nearby farms.
- The department has supported our farming communities (Farm-workers and Dwellers) with sanitizers and face masks.
- We are working closely with other departments such as DESTEA and Social Development to explore other opportunities towards Covid-19 that will benefit our farmers.
- I am also in constant contact with Organized Agriculture: Free State Agriculture, AFASA and the Industries-Itau Milling plant, SPARTA and other processing plants and factories/projects.
- I continuously visit farms to get the first hand information from our farmers and farm workers about the impact of Covid-19 pandemic.

THANK YOU



agriculture & rural development

Department of
Agriculture and Rural Development
FREE STATE PROVINCE