



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE MEC RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN LIMPOPO, Ms NANDI NDALANE ON THE OCCASION OF MINISTERIAL BRIEFING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES ABOUT THE MITIGATION OF THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON 25 AUGUST 2020.

HONOURABLE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP, Mr AMOS MASONDO

HONOURABLE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP, Ms SYLVIA LUCAS

HONOURABLE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, Ms THOKO DIDIZA

HONOURABLE HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF COMMITTEES AND OVERSIGHT Mr A J NYAMBI

FELLOW MEC'S

SALGA REPRESENTATIVE

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

A very good morning to you

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in Limpopo has welcomed the announcement of alert level two of Covid-19 restrictions with huge enthusiasm and increased levels of energy. The easing of restrictions in many areas of economic sectors will positively influence increased levels of activity in our area of work. We must, however, say from the outset that, agriculture and food supply service have been categorized as essential services, consequently, most activities within food

production value chain continued to function during lockdown. It is important to indicate though that lockdown restrictions resulted in unintended consequences. To mention but a few, at production level, crop productivity especially cash crop was affected by lack of access to inputs, such as pesticides. With restaurants and hospitality industry closed the produce targeted for this market was greatly affected. Producers suffered post harvest losses. Restrictions on informal trading also affected fresh produce hawkers market for farmers. Challenges in securing alternative market saw perishable produce losing shelf life and going into waste. Restrictions on the live stock auctions during early stages of the lockdown saw farmers struggling to get expected sales. In Agro-logistics, restrictions on intra provincial movement of trucks affected transportation of produce to markets.

Honourable Chairpeson

In mitigating the impact, the province welcomed the R1.2 billion Covid-19 Agricultural Disaster Support fund, to support small holder and communal farmers from the National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development. We mobilized our farmers to apply as a result Limpopo registered 7066 (seven thousand and sixty six) applications. Of these applications, 2445 (two thousand four hundred and forty five) applications were successful which amounted to R101, 718, 728.31 (hundred and one million, seven hundred and eighteen thousand, seven hundred and twenty eight rand and thirty one cents). As at 14 August 2020 5 491 (five thousand four hundred and ninety one) vouchers have been issued to 1938 (one thousand nine hundred and thirty eight) of the approved applications which is 79.2 percent. For now 2 284 (two thousand two hundred and eighty four) of the vouchers that were issued have been received by the farmers and redeemed at

various input stores. It is evident from the number of applications and the successful ones that most of our farmers could not be covered by the national agriculture relief intervention. As a result of this reality the Department conducted analysis on the remaining applications which identified 1494 (one thousand four hundred and ninety four) applications for further support. These were applications within the score of four following the same criteria. An amount of R57, 5 million received from the adjustment budget was used to support these farmers on the same production inputs as outlined in various commodities.

Honourable Chairperson

The Department has further planned to assist farmers and households to recover from the impact of Covid-19 in the 2020/2021 annual performance plan. We have planned to support 5300 households on various food security initiatives, 11 128 producers on various inputs, and mechanization service support to plough 7200 hectares for food production. We are hopeful that these mitigating factors will help our farmers and households to recover from the devastating impact imposed by Covid-19 restrictions. We applaud our farmers and farm workers who worked throughout restriction in order to ensure that food security is realized. At no stage have we been threatened by the shortage of food during the lockdown period. We will continue to support our farmers and our house holds for a poverty free society.

I thank you