



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

AGRICULTURE MEC KAMADLOPA-MTHETHWA SECURES MARKET ACCESS FOR STRUGGLING RURAL FARMERS

Jozini Local farmers have committed to producing a thousand tons of dry beans per month following deals between the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and several agribusinesses. These agreements culminated at Nondabuya Community Hall in Nondabuya, where the departmental MEC, Ms. Thembeni kaMadlopha-Mthethwa, oversaw the loading of the first batch of 10 tons of dry beans onto a truck bound for a KwaDukuza-based company.

Three other agribusinesses have also secured agreements that will benefit approximately 300 local farmers.

This programme falls under the Radical Agrarian Socio-Economic Transformation (RASET), which has intervened to address the insufficient funding and limited access to credible and stable markets hindering farmers' full participation in the agricultural sector. Limited access to markets has stifled the growth and development of historically disadvantaged producers of key commodities such as grain, crops and meat.

To address these challenges, KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Ms. Thembeni kaMadlopha-Mthethwa, emphasized the importance of creating linkages between farmers and agricultural businesses in stimulating local economic growth. She said that through RASET, farmers can elevate their businesses to new heights.

Local farmers have raised concerns, including the use of traditional methods in sorting beans and being short-changed by unscrupulous agents when they name their prices. kaMadlopha-Mthethwa acknowledged that the government will need to intervene in these challenges by providing solutions to ease the burden on the struggling farmers.

To professionalize their businesses, kaMadlopha-Mthethwa said that farmers will need to establish formal trading initiatives, adding that the Department will find ways to capacitate farmers.

"We want these companies to not only buy your products but also enhance your livelihoods through training in financial management and financial literacy and ensuring that your beans are of great quality and processed here for top grading. We want you to become successful farmers, as many of you are emerging and growing farmers. Our objective is for you to eventually supply the entire nation of South Africa and even export to other countries," said MEC kaMadlopha-Mthethwa.



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