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To all media houses

“CONVINCE THE CABINET AND CITIZENS OF KWAZULU-NATAL THAT YOU ARE WORTH YOUR SALT,” SITHOLE-MOLOI TELLS ADA BOARD DURING THE HAND-OVER OF A BLACK FEMALE-OWNED POULTRY FARM IN ILEMBE DISTRICT

KZN DARD MEC, Bongiwe Sithole-Moloi says her Department's entity, the Agribusiness Development Agency (ADA), will not have any budget increases until it has fully convinced the provincial cabinet and citizens of the province that it is indeed an exceptional facilitator for growth and sustainable agribusiness industry in KwaZulu-Natal.

Sithole-Moloi said this addressing the newly-appointed ADA board chairman and former KwaZulu-Natal Premier, Willies Mchunu, adding that ADA was unfortunate that it has an MEC who never gets excited by talks about work but is only convinced by tangible work results during the handover event of a 10 000-layer poultry facility to Amatshitshi Oqobo Primary Co-operative.

The cooperative received over R9 million funding from ADA and R2 million from Enterprise Ilembe to turn its dream of owning and running a 10 000-layer infrastructure on an 800-hectare egg producing farm a reality. It has also secured an off-take agreement with Nu Dawn Eggs Company to buy all their eggs, which will create six jobs as a start.

“After my inception as MEC of DARD, I sat with the Board of ADA and told them that unfortunately, I am not a kind of MEC who likes strategy talks much. They must do all the talks but I want tangible results from the funds allocated to them before I can be convinced that they need more funds. But if I don't see any results, there will be no budget increment talks,” she said.

Sithole-Moloi said her tough position on ADA funds is informed by a longstanding widely held negative narrative that the ADA entity is useless; that it should not be supported because its delivery is insignificant and therefore not deserving of a significant budget.

“So it's up to ADA board together with its employees to change that narrative. They need to prove their worth, get rid of the negative perception and image that has dragged on since the entity was established in 2009.

Secondly, they have to convince the provincial cabinet and citizens of the province by continuing with an exceptional delivery of impactful projects such Amatshitshi Oqobo Poultry, Summerhill Dairy, Tsar Beef and Aqhamile Agri-Enterprise farms, which most of them are Black women-owned,” Sithole-Moloi said.

She cautioned the board that it is unlawful for leadership charged with development and prosperity of its citizens to make empty promises that are not backed up by budgets, adding that if there's not enough funds; leaders must honestly say so to the people.

For more information, kindly contact Media Liaison Officer, Mr Mack Makhathini on 076 965 5870 and ADA Marketing and Communication Specialist, Siphuxolo Mazwi, on 078 509 1314