



## agriculture & rural development

Department:  
agriculture & rural development  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

To all media houses

19 June 2020

### **SMALL-SCALE FARMERS IN KZN ARE BREATHING A SIGH OF RELIEF AFTER RECEIVING A VITAL LIFELINE FROM THE STATE'S COVID-19 RELIEF FUND**

More than 2700 small-scale farmers across KwaZulu-Natal, whose agricultural activities are hamstrung by Covid-19 prevalence, received a much-needed lifeline when KZNDARD MEC, Mrs. Bongiwe Sithole-Moloi, officially launched the handover process of about R98 million worth of vouchers at an event held in Howick, today.

The R98 million worth of vouchers, which are part of the national government's R1.2 billion Covid-19 Smallholder Farmer Disaster Relief Fund, will be distributed through DARD's district offices to 2786 farmers who successfully applied for the Covid-19 relief package in KwaZulu-Natal.

MEC Bongiwe Sithole-Moloi said the intervention aimed at providing material support across various commodities, strengthening food security programmes and promoting increased access to food by vulnerable groups in our communities will benefit 1119 women and 500 youth enterprises that are actively farming across the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

She said the commodities that were prioritized for support, included poultry, livestock, fruits, winter field crops and vegetables, which are key to KZN's fight against food and nutrition insecurity.

"We are pleased that this intervention came timeously during June, a month of great significance in the liberation struggle by our youth. We are also delighted that 500 youth enterprises will benefit from this relief package in this month. This augurs well for agriculture in the province as it clearly indicates that our youth has woken up and is partaking in the economy through agriculture," Sithole-Moloi said.

Sithole-Moloi said the vouchers, not worth more than R50 000 each, will help farmers to buy essential inputs that will enable them to resume farming activities that contribute in the growing of the economy, creating job opportunities and ensure a food and nutrition secure province of KwaZulu-Natal.

She added that while they are pleased that the majority of emerging farmers in the KZN have benefited from the relief fund, they are inviting those that were not successful to apply again at their nearest agriculture offices.

**For more information, kindly contact acting Media Liaison Officer and Director for DARD Communication Services, Mr. Vusi Zuma on 082 419 2887.**