



## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

28 November 2023

### **KZN FARMERS ANTICIPATE BUSINESS TO BOOM AS GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED BY AFASA, STRIKES A DEAL WITH KARAN BEEF**

Thousands of farmers are set to benefit from a one of a kind public private partnership that will see soaring profits once formally launched in February 2024.

During a visit to uMkhanyakude on Tuesday, 28 November 2023, MEC Super Zuma revealed that the ground breaking deal between the KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) and Karan Beef would bring a boost to the sector and that their working relations were in line with DARD's goal of grooming future commercial farmers who would work towards owning their own agricultural firms.

On Monday, MEC Super Zuma accompanied by AJ Mthembu, the president of the African Farmers' Association of South Africa (AFASA) met with Ivor Karan, the owner of Karan Beef South Africa.

The public private relationship was solidified by an agreement between all parties for providing abattoir services and a market to rural livestock farmers. Farmers will supply the livestock giant with cattle monthly and will cut through the red tape to sell directly to the beef industry leader.

Ivor Karan established his feedlot on the Karan family farm in 1974 with less than 100 head of cattle. Over the years, the capacity of the feedlot has increased to accommodate over 130 000 head of cattle - making the Karan Beef feedlot the largest in Africa.

MEC Super Zuma encouraged farmers in uMkhanyakude saying this opportunity would place previously marginalised black farmers back on the map. MEC Super Zuma emphasised that the Livestock Beef Improvement programme, aimed at improving cattle genetics, would hugely benefit farmers as breeding bulls provided to communities by DARD, would ensure the birth of calves that can be sold to world markets.

"Farmers will have to meet the target set for them by Karan Beef monthly and failure will not be an option for us. KwaZulu-Natal stands ready to take full advantage of this marketing opportunity offered through the Karan Beef transaction and we will ensure that as farmers, you grow flourishing businesses on our soil" said MEC Zuma.

MEC Zuma added that DARD would also be addressing stock theft by introducing new measures that would serve as a deterrent to stock thieves.

"We will be launching an Anti-stock Theft Awareness campaign where we will hand over specialised livestock branding kits to livestock associations. We have many programmes that you will benefit from. Let us create jobs to alleviate poverty and groom another generation of successful farmers," said MEC Zuma.

Mr Mbatha, executive committee member of the provincial Livestock Association who has been a livestock farmer for well over two decades, said their sector was the backbone of the economy of the province. Therefore, it was of great importance to have development programmes.

"We depend on farming and we are working towards becoming commercial farmers. When our cattle suffer from disease, it hinders growth and robs our farmers. That is why we are grateful for the assistance that we receive from the government," said Mbatha.

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Issued by the KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development