



## agriculture & rural development

Department:  
agriculture  
& rural development  
**PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

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### **MEC FOR KZN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, MR CYRIL XABA, ADDRESSES THE REVITALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE ON LAND REFORM FARMS DUNDEE, 29 MAY 2015**

We met here today to talk about revitalizing agriculture on land reform farms. As you have heard this means moving away from a troubled and divided past. The history of many of the farms has too often been characterized by squabbles and in-fighting.

I am not playing down the very real problems that exist, but going forward we are going to deal constructively and decisively with issues of disunity that comprise our ability to unleash the agricultural potential of our districts.

I am well aware of the high level of unresolved labor tenant claims in districts like uMzinyathi. As the champion for land matters in this province, I am engaging with the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform to ensure that these issues are addressed. There is similar engagement with investigation into allegations of fraud in the restitution process involving Land Reform officials.

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), has outlined how its new strategy for Agrarian Transformation is being put into action. You have heard of the support that will now be available to land reform farms, and the comprehensive package of interventions available. It is up to all of us to ensure that this transformation happens. If we follow both the letter and the spirit of the plan, we have the potential to make agriculture an economic game changer in the province.

We have no choice, Government has recognized that for South Africa as a whole to advance economically, the agricultural sector has to be transformed. It has to feed the nation, provide jobs and more

importantly, uplift the rural areas where the majority of our people in this province live in poverty.

It has long been recognized that towns and cities can no longer sustain the drift of people from rural to urban areas and that more has to be done to enhance the economic potential of our rural areas.

Small towns must start generating extra revenue to be able to provide services and infrastructure for the communities they serve. The only way to do this with guaranteed results, is to exploit the agricultural potential in these districts. A start is to revitalize farming areas that are lying fallow to become productive once more. Evidence from Asian, Latin American and other African countries has shown that increasing agricultural productivity is a powerful driver for wider economic development in an area. This is why President Zuma in his State of the Nation address, listed revitalizing agriculture and the agro-processing value chain as part of a nine point plan to grow the South African economy. The Presentation by the Agri-business Development Agency (ADA) has shown the possibilities available in this area and the services on offer.

To be able to unleash our agricultural potential, we have to ensure that we do not repeat past mistakes and rather than get caught up in our differences, we need to realize that we are all in the same team.

The agricultural sector has been characterized by deep divisions. There are the conflicts between farmers and labor tenants as well as between small-holder and commercial farmers. Ongoing tensions continue among CPA's, Trusts and Amakhosi in areas. This cannot continue. We have to bridge the divide between our first and second economies. We have to ensure that new entrant black farmers have the support and opportunities from the commercial sector to become players in the first economy.

In this regard, the Department has revised its vision statement which now reads: "**A united** sustainable and vibrant agriculture sector with thriving rural communities in balance with nature. "

The mission statement sets out how the vision is to be achieved and says: "**To promote, through partnerships,** sound agricultural practices that promotes economic growth, food security and advancement of rural communities in KwaZulu-Natal."

These are not just words on paper. Over the past year, I have been hard at work meeting with commodity organizations, organized agriculture and commercial farmers to find ways of how we can work together. I have met with CPA's Trusts and Amakhosi to iron out areas of conflict. I believe

we are making outstanding progress but there are still problems that need to be ironed out.

Thank you for your participation in this meeting and for the resolutions going forward.

As MEC, I will continue to work with you to build bridges. For your part, I urge you to focus on the bigger picture. Together, we can wake up a slumbering giant and unleash the agricultural potential of this province. We can do it through unity in the sector and through partnerships!

I thank you.



MEC for KZN Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr Cyril Xaba, together with Uthukela District Mayor Clrr Dudu Mazibuko and Endumeni Local Municipality Mayor Clrr. Thulani Mahaye addressing CPA's and Trusts on the revitalization on agriculture on land reform farms



MEC Cyril Xaba urging CPA's and Trusts to work together with traditional leadership and the community to ensure that the province of KwaZulu-Natal has food security

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Photos by Mbuyiselo Ndlovu