



agriculture  
& rural development

Department:  
agriculture  
& rural development  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

## Communication Services

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THIS WEEK. PICTURE: GETTY IMAGES

# MEC against corruption

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THE MEC for agriculture and rural development, Themba Mthembu, in the province, said the department was expecting the police to make arrests of officials and an external syndicate implicated in the embezzlement of funds amounting close to R9m.

Mthembu said in the past financial year, the department concluded internal investigations into 38 cases related to fraud and corruption, which were subsequently handed over to the police for possible prosecution.

Mthembu said the investigations into the misappropriation of funds allocated for drought relief revealed an entrenched corrupt culture orchestrated by the internal syndicate that operated parallel with an outside collective in "capturing" the department.

"We want to decisively state today that we have taken a zero tolerance approach to fraud, corruption and mal-administration. The law must and will take its course.

"All individuals inside and outside the department will be held accountable and will face the full force of the law," he said.

He said the syndicate's footprints were consistent and visible throughout the systems of the department and it worked to manipulate processes to the extent that of its R2.3bn budget allocation, only R400m was actually used for service delivery.

"This means the cost of bringing services to the people is high compared to actual services delivered," he said.

As part of ridding the department of fraud and corruption and turning it into a well-oiled service delivery machine Mthembu announced the imminent formation of a provincial agricultural master plan and an advisory council, which will take place during an Agricultural Summit next month in July.

During the summit stakeholders will be expected to give input into the development of an integrated plan for the provincial agricultural sector.

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