

Cattle branding to help curb stock theft in KZN

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KZN farmers say they are plagued by stock theft and have appealed to the agriculture MEC to intervene.

Livestock branding is among the steps the provincial department of agriculture and land reform will take to stem the tide of widespread stock theft plaguing the province.

MEC for agriculture and rural development Super Zuma said, "We have a serious challenge engulfing our farmers. Our districts are constantly being inundated with reports of livestock theft from farmers and association He said the department's veterinary workforce will join the police in different roadblocks throughout the province to ensure that cattle movements have the necessary legal permits.

The department will host an agricultural indaba in Durban at the weekend at which KZN premier Nomusa Dube-Ncube will discuss issues facing farmers and stakeholders.

He said the industry was also feeling the impact of load shedding.

Power outages threaten agricultural production and often mean farmers lose millions of rand while the industry runs the risk of a shortage of food supply. This has a knock-on effect on the price of food.

Zuma recently met with the national minister of agriculture and land reform Thoko Didiza to discuss the impact of load shedding on the sector.

“We are waiting for guidance from the national minister with respect to the relief that the sector will provide to farmers. In the meantime, we will continue engaging with KZN farmers to explore solutions to deal with this problem,” said Zuma.

The department was also pleased that national co-operative governance & traditional affairs minister Dr Nkosazana-Zuma had included food security among the key considerations of the [national state of disaster](#) gazette on February 27.