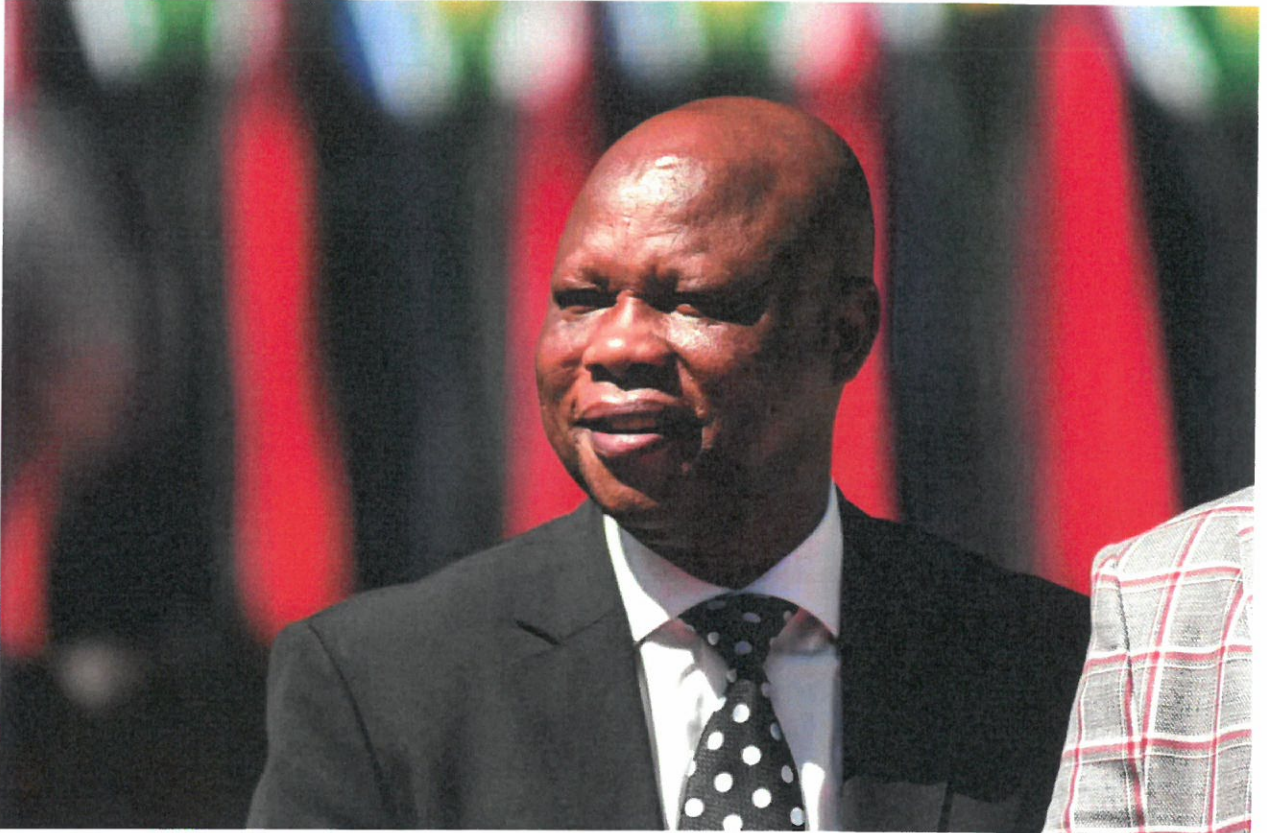


Super Zuma to address stock theft in KwaZulu-Natal

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Clive Ndlovu | 02 March 2023



Newly appointed KwaZulu-Natal Agriculture and Rural Development MEC, Super Zuma, has raised concerns about the myriad challenges facing the province's farmers.

Briefing the media in Durban on Wednesday, Zuma said he was concerned about challenges ranging from stock theft to load shedding, threatening the livelihoods of farmers in the province.

"We have a serious challenge engulfing our farmers which is livestock theft. Our district offices are inundated with reports of livestock theft from our livestock farmers. Livestock associations have raised this matter sharply with us".

Zuma, who has been receiving reports from the department's officials, said he was satisfied that some of the department's interventions would assist in solving the problem of stock theft.

“We will continue to work with the police and all other security structures to shine the spotlight on this menace. Our veterinary staff will join the police in different roadblocks throughout the province to ensure that the cattle movements have the necessary legal permits”.

The department, Zuma said, would soon be launching a programme to assist farmers in having their livestock branded.

The current power outages meant that some farmers in the province were spending large sums of money on fuel to run generators

With President Cyril Ramaphosa having declared the country’s power outages a national disaster, farmers in the province were hoping to receive financial assistance from government.

According to Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Minister, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, who is responsible for national disaster regulations, government would intervene to ensure that the power outages did not impact on the country’s food security.

“We are awaiting further guidance from our national minister with respect to the relief that the sector will provide to farmers. In the meantime, we will continue engaging with the farmers in KZN to explore solutions to deal with the problem”.

Some farmers in KZN, particularly small-scale farmers, are struggling to find money for farming equipment. Zuma said the department would be intensifying efforts to empower the province’s farmers.

“Good agricultural infrastructure is a requirement for achieving higher levels of agricultural productivity and profitability. Through this programme [community investment programme], the department is going to establish physical communal infrastructure for the purpose of improving agricultural and rural development. The beneficiaries of this programme are the farming communities and agricultural projects”.

The programme would see the department, among other things, assisting farmers with dip tanks, boreholes and grazing camp fencing.