



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ELEVEN KZN FARMERS TO GET COMMERCIAL FARMS VIA GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

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Eleven commercial farms across KwaZulu-Natal are set to be transferred to local farmers as part of a major provincial drive to boost food security, job creation, and rural economic growth.



At the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) are KZN MECs for Agriculture and Rural Development, Thembeni KaMadlopha-Mthethwa, Public Works and Infrastructure, Martin Meyer and Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Musa Zondi, Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs head of department Nhlakanipho Nkontwana and head of department for the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Zibusiso Dlamini.

Photo: | KZN Department of agriculture and rural development

This development follows the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the departments of Agriculture and Rural Development; Public Works and ; Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs.



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Leading the initiative are KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development Thembeni Madlopha-Mthethwa, MEC for Public Works and Infrastructure Martin Meyer, and MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs Musa Zondi, who formalised the agreement during a joint media briefing in Durban on 21 October.

The briefing focused on the verification of government-owned infrastructure, the handover of assets to farmers, and the assessment of farms for agricultural use and economic development.

Speaking during the briefing, Meyer said the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure is currently conducting assessments of commercial farms suitable for agricultural use and economic development.

He said that, so far, 11 farms would soon be handed over to KZN farmers to support community and economic upliftment. However, no exact details or time frame have been provided yet.

“Where land stands empty, it doesn’t serve the people, and if it doesn’t serve the people, it needs to serve the people.

“Therefore, we are partnering with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to work on repurposing underutilised farms for community farms, food gardens, and other projects to promote rural and economic growth, benefitting provincial farmers and stimulating local economies,” Meyer said.

He added that the handover is expected to “significantly strengthen and aggressively revive community-based agricultural initiatives on a broader scale”.

Madlopha-Mthethwa emphasised the importance of access to land in tackling food insecurity.

“Addressing food insecurity requires a collective effort, starting with ensuring access to land. This MoU further aligns with our call to traditional leaders to release land freely for our farmers, particularly women and the youth.

“This will contribute to improving the fortunes of the people experiencing food insecurity in KwaZulu-Natal and will bring about development resulting in food production for many families struggling to make ends meet,” she said.

Madlopha-Mthethwa added that the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development would now begin assessing the farms to determine which are viable for crop farming, livestock farming, and other farming purposes before handing them over to farmers.



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“We will also explore and assist the revitalisation of critical industrial economic hubs in rural communities, the establishment of agricultural hubs, collection depots, and aggregation facilities to support historically disadvantaged farmers and the revitalisation of township and rural economies to empower women, the youth, and local communities to access opportunities.”

She said the department was also committing to ensuring plots of land, farms, and buildings taken over by the department are thriving and supported with agricultural support services.

“This will include production inputs, mechanisation, and extension advisory, all in line with the MoU. We further commit to securing funding and resources from our budget to develop the underutilised and vacant provincial state-owned land suitable for commercial activities,” Madlopha-Mthethwa concluded.