

Increase in black farmers

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THE NUMBER of previously disadvantaged people who own agricultural land has shown an increase since 1994.

According to a recent national land audit by Agri Development Solutions (ADS), previously disadvantaged farmers owned 14.9% in 1994.

"Previously disadvantaged people now own 26.7% of all farmland in South Africa.

This is significantly more than the 14% that this group owned in 1994.

"White farmers now own 73.3% of farmland compared to 85.1% in 1994," the report stated.

AgriSA said it had long been aware of the need for a land audit.

"Policy formulation is driven by emotion and perception, rather than facts. Since 2005 nothing has come of the many attempts to facilitate a thorough land audit.

"Gugile Nkwinti, Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, will apparently soon be releasing the results



Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform Gugile Nkwinti

of the government's land audit," AgriSA said. It is stated that ADS processed the deeds office data in a scientific manner.

"The outcome is a database that indicates the amount of agricultural land purchased and sold, as well as by whom

and at what cost, between 1995 and 2016. AgriSA commissioned an external audit to be conducted by the auditing firm Nkonki," AgriSA said.

Meanwhile, the research also showed an alarming decrease in the amount of available agricultural land in South Africa.

"In 1994, available farmland totalled 79 million hectares, but this has declined to 76 million hectares.

"This is worrying because commercial farmers will have to produce food for an estimated 80 million people by 2035," the ADS study said.

AgriSA president Dan Kriek said the land policy in South Africa had been based on perceptions and emotion instead of facts for far too long.

"Sound, sustainable policy formulation must be based on facts. This land audit now provides these facts.

"Further research will be conducted to determine which types of land reform projects are sustainable and which types fail," Kriek said.

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