



**COMMUNICATION SERVICES**

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# Poultry grows economy

MHLABUNZIMA MEMELA

KZN has identified poultry farming as a growth sector that could assist the province in enhancing its economy.

Chicken remains an affordable source of protein and the poultry industry is worth more than R27bn a year. Provincial agriculture and rural development MEC Cyril Xaba said the poultry sector is a crucial component of the new agrarian reform and transformation strategy, and a potential job creator.

Xaba said commercialisation of key farming sectors including poultry was pivotal to the achievement of KZN's economic growth targets.

"Market research has shown that poultry consumption will continue to grow and that per capita consumption of chicken is expected to exceed 45kg per person by 2020," Xaba said.

Addressing the poultry sector about the growth possibilities using the departmental strategy on agrarian reform and transformation at the Poultry Institute in Pietermaritzburg recently, Xaba said there was a huge market waiting to be exploited.



**GROWTH SECTOR:** The poultry industry, which brings in an estimated R27bn in revenue annually, is a powerful job creator. PICTURE: GETTY IMAGES

"We can grow our future poultry farms. The people who matter most are the farmers and the support given them to become successful."

Xaba said a sustainable agricultural sector is the new vision to create jobs. He said poultry farmers should be supported at local and district levels.

Ajallon Zondi of the Developing Poultry Farmers Association said the government's strategy to develop the poultry sector was a great opportunity.

"We are being given a great opportunity here. We can only emerge stronger. We must exist and grow."

The department is undertaking a cooperative arrangement with the KZN Poultry Institute for specialist poultry training for extension officers, animal health technicians and students from the department's colleges to build blocks of the new agrarian reform and transformation strategy.

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# Farmer victimised for poisoning

XOLANI DLAMINI

THE commercial farmer accused of poisoning communal farmers' livestock has gone into hiding following escalating threats from residents of Emthekwini village in Hluhluwe.

Residents have been storming the farm of Arno Raath, accusing him of poisoning 29 cattle drinking from a water trough at the Kaas Farm in May.

Last week, agriculture and rural development MEC Cyril Xaba and economic development, tourism and

environmental affairs MEC Mike Mabuyakhulu met with the communal farmers in a bid to defuse the tension.

Hluhluwe Commercial Farmers Association chairperson Peter Hazel confirmed Raath, who had denied responsibility for the poisoning, had decided to leave the area.

"He saw the need to leave the farm at the moment because of the threats. The situation was dire in the area with community members cutting the fence and stealing pineapples."

He said Raath will wait until the com-

munal farmers calmed down and the commercial farmers in the area found ways to restore trust.

Yesterday a resident, Makhosonke Dlamini, vowed that the community won't rest until Raath left their area for good. "We don't want him in our community. He must help by compensating the affected communal farmers and leave," he said.

Dlamini said cutting the fence on the farm was to show him that nothing can stop them from destroying him and his farm.

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