



agriculture & rural development

Department:
agriculture
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PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

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SPEAKING NOTES BY KZN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT MEC, MR THEMBA MTHEMBU AT THE GAYEDE GOAT PROJECT AND DIPTANK LAUNCH

FRIDAY, 15 JULY 2016

VENUE: VUKAPHANSI SPORTS FIELD, UMVOTI

Programme Director Mr S.W. Haschke

uMzinyathi District Mayor, Councillor L. Ngubane

uMvoti Mayor, Councillor T. Ngubane

Councillors Present

Inkosi C. Dlomo of the Amangcolosi Traditional Council

Members of the Livestock Association

The Gayede Goat Project Team

Community Leaders

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with the greatest honour that I stand before you today to finally launch the Gayede Goat Project and present the project team with a cheque of R1 million. It is an honour because this is a project started by young people in the area, who have a passion to serve and uplift their community. To Mr Zenzele Dlomo and his team, congratulations and well done on not giving up on your dreams. You could have moved away from this area, but you saw the potential for goat farming and you started a project that gives hope to other young people in the area.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Gayede Goat Project is an example of how government and the community can work together to create a better life for the community. Mr Dlomo approached the KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development with his project plan. The officials saw that it was workable and so, a partnership began to get the project off the ground.

This is what we tell young people interested in farming, bring us your ideas. We have agricultural economists in the districts who will assess them to see if they have potential. We will help with drawing up business plans, see what inputs can be provided to get the project started and offer skills training. The aim always is to ensure that the project is sustainable and will contribute to the fight against poverty, job creation and economic growth.

The Gayede Goat Project met all these criteria. Mr Haschke describes Mr Dlomo and his team as passionate young people, who had a vision to raise and sell indigenous goats commercially.

This project has great potential to grow. The Makhabeleni area is ideally suited to goat production, due to its vegetation of low growing trees and shrubs, such as the acacia karoo that grows to about 120 centimetres from the ground, Goats are browsers and prefer this type of vegetation. Goats also do better in drought conditions as they need much less water and feed than cattle.

In addition, the Provincial government has a five-year master plan to grow goat farming in the Province and particularly, in the uMzinyathi District. The Master Plan aims to create 7000 commercial goat farmers to produce goat meat for local consumption and for export. In addition, 620 animal health workers are to be trained and provided with vet kits to assist the farmers. There are plenty of spin-offs for the Gayede Project. From breeding and selling goats, the co-operative can move on to manufacture different goat feeds and get involved in the agro-processing businesses involving the manufacture of goat meat products such as sausages. There is potential in the business of goat skins in the manufacture of such items as shoes, purses and cushions. So you can see Ladies and Gentlemen that together, we can do so much more to grow goat farming here in ward 6. We can work together to create a better tomorrow.

Initially, the Department provided 200 goats to the project. Currently, fencing is being erected and the Department is in the process of procuring a goat shed. So far nine people are employed on the project, made up of four females and five males who are all from the area.

To the Gayede team, I say well done and keep going. We are here to support you and help you grow. Your success means success for the community. You are far away from the big cities and towns, but you are not forgotten. Your project can put Makhabeleni on the Map and young people from other parts of the Province can learn from what you are doing.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there is a bigger plan to develop this area to become economically self-sufficient. We know that this can only be done to a limited extent with crop production because the area is dry and you struggle to grow vegetables.

However, we can make a difference with developing the livestock industry. This is why we are here today to launch the local Dip Tank as well. The ANC government realises that to grow the livestock industry and fight poverty, we need to concentrate on rural infrastructure development, which includes the building of such items as dip tanks, dams and storage facilities.

The provision of this Dip Tank has had its challenges and I want to thank the Umvoti Livestock Association and the local community for working with the Department. It is thanks to the local community that problems with the construction of the Dip Tank was noticed. Ladies and Gentlemen I am happy to report that the service provider was summoned to sort out these issues. Repairs were conducted and we are now carrying out quality control measures to make certain that the repairs are up to standard and there are no further problems. After the Launch today the dip tank will become operational.

I am also aware of recent challenges that you have no Animal Health technician in the area. The Department is sorting this out and an Animal Health technician will be moved to the local office from the Uthungulu District. Further good news is that the Department now has five mobile veterinary clinics and these are moving from area to area. Makhabeleni is on the schedule for a visit by the mobile clinic. Like doctors, Veterinary graduates have to also do a year's community service. There are currently ten veterinary graduates doing community service with the Department.

The diptank being launched today was built at a cost of R480 000 and will be of use to the more than 1500 cattle in the area, This facility is an essential service provided by government to help you look after the health of your livestock and control diseases. The Animal Health technician will be available to help you with medical service for the animals and provide advice. The technician will also keep records so that at any time government will know and will be able to act immediately if there are any outbreaks of deadly diseases.

Ladies and gentlemen as I said earlier, this is all part of a bigger plan to develop the livestock industry in the Province. Similar to the goat master plan, there is a livestock master plan. South Africa is a net importer of meat, this includes beef, mutton, pork and chicken. KZN is further importing 270 000 live goats per annum from the Eastern Cape and Namibia for various purposes. However, the province has the potential to produce enough for KZN's own consumption and even to export to other Provinces and outside the boundaries of South Africa. This will contribute to food security, economic growth and the development of the Province. The communal areas are where we can make our biggest gains. Small-holder farms in KZN hold over 1,5 million cattle which is 55% of the Provincial beef herd and 74% of the goat stock, but are contributing only about five percent to the meat industry.

This is why the launch of the Gayede Goat Project and the dip tank today are important events in Makhabeleni. It is part of the KZN Government's strategy to improve livestock in the Province. The focus of the strategy is to increase the working knowledge of communal farmers on animal husbandry and improving the health of livestock, reducing diseases and the death rate of our cattle.

The Department will continue to provide dipping material, vaccines, care and medicines that will help you build healthy livestock so that in turn you can participate in the meat industry so that when you sell your stock you can earn more income.

This is all part of a package of support for the area. The Department provided over R1,4 million in drought relief to Umvoti communal farmers. A dip tank including a reservoir and tanks have also been completed in Ward Five together

with the provision of fencing for a livestock grazing camp. A communal estate dry bean production project is being supported to the tune of R2,4 million in Ward 11 and currently 25 jobs have been created on this project. We will continue to work with you to improve the lives of our people. Don't forget that help is always at hand from the local department officials for the establishment of household gardens.

Our doors are open, please come to us, we are here to serve you. Government has a policy called Batho Pele or People First. Please remember that you come first.

I thank you!