



agriculture  
& rural development

Department:  
agriculture  
& rural development  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

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**SPEAKING NOTES BY KZN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT MEC, MR THEMBA MTHEMBU FOR THE VISIT TO THE  
ABATTOIR, JOZINI LIVESTOCK CENTRE AND A MEETING WITH  
LIVESTOCK FARMERS**

**WEDNESDAY, 27 JULY 2016**

**VENUE: BHAMBANANA COMMUNITY HALL, JOZINI**

Programme Director

Members of the Agriculture and Rural Development Portfolio Committee

Umkhanyakude District Mayor, Councillor S.J. Vilane

Jozini Mayor, Councillor B.N. Mthethwa

Councillors

Inkosi Nyawo

All Amakhosi Present

The Jozini Livestock Association

Farmers

Community Leaders

Departmental Officials

Ladies and Gentlemen

There are heavy snowfalls on the Drakensberg Mountains and in other areas of KwaZulu-Natal. The weather experts tell us that this is a good sign as it marks the end of the drought. These same experts tell us that we can look forward to a rainy season from October to March next year.

As livestock farmers you have suffered under the ravages of the drought but there is now hope for a better future.

The past few years have been tough and the Provincial government has been busy with the provision of drought relief across the Province. In Jozini alone the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has spent R4 million on drought relief. This has been in the form of bale feeds, concentrates, medication and Jojo tanks of 5000 litres each.

The support has had a positive impact for local farmers. Despite the drought you still managed to stage auction sales at the Jozini Livestock Centre and sell some cattle. I believe that from the 5 auction sales that have been conducted at the Centre a total amount of R4 million has been generated. Well done to you the farmers and to the officials from both KZN DARD and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform for the success of these auctions.

In fact, I would like to pay tribute to all farmers and farm workers. You face daily struggles, but you continue to plough the land and tend to your livestock to contribute to the food security of our country. My sincerest gratitude goes out to all of you.

Ladies and Gentlemen this is why I visited the Umkhanyakude District today. I wanted to get an update on the projects being implemented in this municipality that are aimed at uplifting livestock farming. The ANC-led Government has always recognized that for small-scale farmers to grow attention must be paid to rural infrastructure development.

A Provincial flagship infrastructure project that has been built in this district for the benefit of livestock farmers is the Bambanana Abattoir. The abattoir will be a channel for marketing livestock and the overall aim is to encourage farmers to improve their livestock management.

The project is 98% complete. Activities that have been undertaken include the construction of an administration block, the main abattoir, cold rooms, a guard house and a building for the generator. Support infrastructure that has been developed include water tanks, boreholes, a store for hides, a digester tank, change rooms, evaporator beds, holding pens, loading platforms, waterways fencing, road works and storm water drains.

The total cost of the abattoir is over R60 million and its successful completion is as a result of collaboration between KZN DARD and other role players including the Department of Public Works, Trade and Industry KZN, known as TIKZN, Umkhanyakude District Municipality and Umkhanyakude Livestock Farmers. As you can see together we can do more.

At present, KZN DARD is working on finding a strategic partner to operate the abattoir.

The project has 6120 beneficiaries of which 40% are females. Sixty temporary jobs have been created and it is envisaged that more than 100 jobs opportunities for local people will be created when the abattoir is fully operational.

You all know about the Jozini Livestock Centre. The aim of this centre is to help you the livestock farmers of Jozini to have a market and to generate an income.

The Centre is part of the KZN Government's strategy to improve livestock farming in the province. The focus of the strategy is to increase the working knowledge of communal farmers on animal husbandry, veld management and to improving the health and breeding of livestock and reducing disease.

Currently South Africa is a net importer of meat, this includes beef, mutton, pork and chicken. However, the province has the potential to grow its livestock industry and produce enough for KZN's own consumption and to be able to export to other Provinces and beyond the country's borders. For example small-holder farmers in KZN hold over 1,5 million cattle which is 55% of the Provincial beef herd but are contributing only about five percent to the meat industry.

To address this challenge, Red Meat production programmes have been introduced with the aim of uplifting previously disadvantaged livestock farmers in Jozini. The KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development introduced the Jozini and Manguzi Livestock Centres as part of its livestock infrastructure development initiative. The Jozini Centre was developed at a cost of R5 million.

Our gratitude goes to Inkosi Nyawo and his council for officially donating the land to the Jozini Livestock Association for the Centre. I was impressed to learn that this project has a total of 2800 beneficiaries and has created 55 job opportunities for the community.

Once the abattoir is opened, the livestock centre will become even busier and will be used for the improvement of cattle before they are taken to be slaughtered and sold.

Future plans for the Livestock Centre include:

- The building of feedlots.
- Selective breeding programmes to ensure that suitable breeds are obtained for the desired market.
- And, Heifer management will be attended to as well

This Livestock Centre is also the result of collaboration of various role-players including Heifer SA, The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, The National Department of Agriculture, the Jozini Local Municipality, the Nyawo Traditional Council, The KZN Department of Economic Development, the Agriculture Development Agency (ADA) and TIKZN.

I am grateful to the local Livestock Association for being partners in this endeavour. Please, let us continue to work together to build up the local economy. The livestock auctions that have been held show the potential of what can be achieved.

When the rains return by October, as the Weather Service has predicted, we will be well placed to boost the growth of the Jozini livestock industry. Let us work together as government, farmers and the community to achieve this goal. Government is committed to the improvement of the livestock industry within

the communal estates as we see this as key in our drive to eradicate poverty and create a better life for our people.

Last week I was in Umzimkhulu where we launched four sheep-shearing sheds and a Piggery Project. I told the farmers there that as government we have no choice but to work towards growing our economy to gain a lasting victory over poverty and hunger. This means that we have to create decent work opportunities and ensure sustainable livelihoods. This is what we are working towards here in Jozini.

Besides the Livestock Centre, KZN DARD has invested over R6,5 million in agricultural projects in this municipality. These projects include ground nut production on the kwajobezineshe Communal Estate. There is the Vukuzenzele River Valley Irrigation project for the cultivation of vegetables; the provision of two stock watering dams and two Livestock boreholes in Jozini. The Department supports the Isihlibhi Beef production operation and is involved in the development of the Mlube Livestock Feedlot.

The KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government has the following motto: that it is a growing, developing and caring province firmly focused on the future. Here in Jozini our commitment, as always is to ensure a better life for our people. I thank you.