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Media Release

Female Farmer Entrepreneurs win

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Mahikeng - Female Farmers in the Bokone Bophirima Province have yet again claimed another victory in their efforts to bring economical spinoffs to the province. Farmers were honoured during the 2017 Provincial DAFF Female Entrepreneurs Awards (FEA). The Department of Rural, Environment and Agricultural development as part of celebrating August as women's month hosted the Awards at Kgora Farmers Training Centre, Ngaka Modiri Molema recently to accentuate the significant role played by women entrepreneurs in food security, job creation, poverty alleviation and economic growth.

Rosy Rakgoale, a broiler farmer from Haartebeesfontein was crowned the overall winner of the night, walking away with R250 000 cash price as well as R750 000 of Infrastructure grant. Rakgoale, also the Best Entrepreneur: Commercial Farmer category winner took home yet again R125 000 cash price as well as R750 000 Infrastructure grant price. An ecstatic Rakgoale, a former teacher by profession was lost of words as she expressed her gratitude for the accolades. In her brief remark Rakgoale said she appreciated what the working government was doing

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for communities especially women. She lauded the department as well as the provincial government for creating a legacy in the history of many people.

Having started farming in 2013, Rakgoale said she has never looked back as she saw an opportunity in Agriculture. To date she owns six broiler houses carrying 40 000 chickens each. Rakgoale said she doesn't only see her farm as an opportunity for her but also a contribution towards provincial economic growth and job creation. "I currently have 15 permanent employees and on constant basis take at least 30 for temporary work. I am also a contract grower for Supreme chicken, so the business is set for greater heights," she said.

Amongst her future plans, Rakgoale would like to increase her broiler houses with four making 10 in total. She also sees herself growing bigger and owning an abattoir.

Another winner, Keatlaretse Mosiane who herself is a person living with disability said she could not allow herself to suffer when she could still do something about her life. A poultry subsistence farmer herself, Mosiane started business in 2014. She currently has one broiler house containing 800 chickens. She sells eggs around Mahikeng town and emphasises that market access depends on identifying opportunities. She said her delivery of eggs to customer's doorstep has created a competitive advantage for her business. Mosiane plans to see herself growing and enabling her to work with bigger retail stores. She walked home with R50 000 cash price as well as R500 000 infrastructure grant price.

Handing over the accolades, MEC Manketsi Tlhape emphasised that days are gone when women in our country remained confined within the four walls of their homes and their immense strength and potential remained unrecognized and unaccounted for. "Women are increasingly participating in all spheres of our

country's socio-economic development activities. It is for that reason that we must continue to support women in Bokone Bophirima," she said.

Tlhape said honouring women was critical "taking into consideration Agriculture as one of the five developmental concretes of our province, and the need to rally behind a commitment on inclusion of women, youth and people with disability".

The 2017 awards attracted a lot of entries with 21 participants reaching the final round competing in five categories. The competitors included women in vegetable production, livestock production, broilers, processing as well as horticulture. The 09 final winners each emerged with R125 000 cash prize and runner ups with R32 000 each winner. The best female Farmworker category meant to acknowledge those who do basic work in the relevant sectors and have grown in the structures of farm operations get R50 000 as well as R250 000 infrastructure price.

Pictures:

0395: The Overall winner, Ms Kedidimetse Rakgoale of Selame Poultry in Hartebeesfontein.

0299: MEC Special Award winner Ms Keatlaretse Mosiane of Keatlaretse Tumedisso Farming.

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