



agriculture, land reform
& rural development

Department:
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Media Statement

21 April 2020

Minister Thoko Didiza notes the statement of the Democratic Alliance (DA) on farmers receiving essential service permits directly from the department

Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development Minister Thoko Didiza, (MP), notes the statement by the Democratic Alliance (DA) on farmers receiving essential service permits directly from the department.

The Minister is reminding the DA and the entire citizenry, that before President Cyril Ramaphosa announced the lockdown, she established a task team, which includes most of industry role players in the Agricultural Sector and senior officials from the department.

This task team meets regularly to deal with challenges faced by all role players in the food value chain and all other issues pertaining to the industry during this lockdown.

“I would like to commend the farmer organisations for having been able to raise issues in the task team and directly with the Ministers, the Deputy Ministers and the MEC’s,” said Minister Didiza.

Minister Didiza does appreciate that challenges will from time-to-time occur and therefore would like to assure all political parties, farmers and community members that we stand ready to assist where we can as much as possible.

“MEC’s of Agriculture working with provincial Command Centres and Provincial Joint Operation Committees have been attending to challenges faced by small-scale farmers and all farmers in general,” said Minister Didiza.

The Minister has been in constant communication with the Chairperson of the Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, as well as the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) Chairperson of the Select Committee and all members on measures the department is putting in place to assist farmers during this COVID-19 pandemic.

"I can't over emphasise the importance of the Agricultural Sector value chain, especially our farmers and farm workers during this time. Food security and food production is very important to avert any food shortage in our country," remarked Minister Didiza.

The Minister also wishes to urge the Agricultural Sector to join her in ensuring that the safety of farm workers is prioritised and there are being provided with necessary protective clothing. The department has procured and issued 400 000 face masks to all provinces, to be given to farm workers, especially those who are currently in the fields at this time of harvesting.

-Ends-

For media enquiries contact the Media Liaison Officer (MLO), Mr Reggie Ngcobo on: 082 883 2458

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