



VERKLARING/PRESS RELEASE

Landbouplanne vir die droogte

Te midde van die erge droogte en rekordhoë temperature in Suid-Afrika, maak landbou instansies deurentyd planne om landbouers te probeer bystaan. Vrystaat Landbou het die week 'n vergadering gefasiliteer waar verskeie landboueiers, landboubesighede en bedrywe wat landswyd dienste lewer in Bloemfontein byeengekom het om kort- en langtermynplanne te bespreek. Verskeie landboubesighede en diensverskaffers aan landbouers het reeds planne in plek om hulle kliënte sover moontlik te ondersteun.

Die landboubesighede het uitgewys dat hulle terdeë bewus is van die uitdagings wat landbouers in die gesig staar en dat hulle toekoms afhanklik is van die voortbestaan van hulle kliënte. Die banke en landboubesighede werk tans hard saam om te verseker dat die sekuriteit van onder andere grond behoue bly deur likwidasies te probeer voorkom. 'n Groot uitdaging met die verlening van bystand is wel dat sulke bystand gaan verskil van landbouer tot landbouer, aangesien nie een boerdery dieselfde daaruit sien nie.

“Elke landbouer moet met sy finansierders gesels, want elke landbouer se situasie lyk anders. Die algemene boodskap van ons lede is dit: Dit tel nie in ons guns wanneer landbouers uit die bedryf val nie, ons sal alle weë volg om ons kliënte by te staan binne wetlike beperkinge,” aldus dr. John Purchase, HUB van Agbiz. Agbiz se lede het reeds in Augustus 2015 vergader om planne te begin maak vir die droogtesituasie en hoe om landbouers te kan bystaan.

Die droogte taakspan, wat insluit Departement Landbou, die IDC, Agri SA en sy affiliasies, Land Bank, Agbiz, die Nasionale Ramphulpfonds en burgerlike samelewing organisasies, vergader aan die einde van Januarie 2016 weer. Die statistiek van die situasie wat die bedryfsorganisasies en provinsiale affiliasies ingesamel het, sal dan bespreek word. Die mikpunt van die insameling van die data sal wees om voor die einde van Januarie 'n volledige voorlegging aan die Regering te maak in 'n poging om fondse geallokeer te kry vir droogtehulp, met die begrotingsrede wat op 22 Februarie 2016 gelewer word.

Volgens die Nasionale Rampbestuurswet van 2002 moet die hele land tot rampgebied verklaar word wanneer meer as een provinsie tot rampgebied verklaar is. Dit beteken dat Suid-Afrika tans 'n nasionale ramp beleef. “Hierdie is 'n ernstige situasie wat alle Suid-Afrikaners gaan moet help bestuur. Dis in nasionale belang dat ons omsien na ons produsente en dat ons voedselsekerheid in

Suid-Afrika vir die kort- en langtermyn bewerkstellig,” aldus Omri van Zyl, uitvoerende direkteur van Agri SA.

Die uiteinde van die droogte gaan nie net landbouers se sakke raak nie. Verbruikers sal ook die impak daarvan voel, met die effek van R1 verlore in die bedryf wat ’n verlies van R1,50 vir die ekonomie beteken. Vermenigvuldigende statistiek bepaal op plattelandse vlak is dit egter hoër, met elke R1 verlies wat vir landbou aangeteken word, wat ’n verlies van R4 vir die ekonomie beteken. Hoër voedselinflasie en druk op verbruikers se inkomste sal dus volg op die droogte.

Dan Kriek, president van Vrystaat Landbou, het dit finaal opgesom deur te sê: “Samewerking tussen rolspelers is in plek en die landboustrukture is reeds besig om oplossing te vind vir die kort- medium- en langtermyn uitdagings van die droogte.”

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Agriculture’s plans for the drought

In the midst of an extreme drought and record high temperatures in South Africa, agriculture institutions are constantly making plans to try and assist farmers. Free State Agriculture facilitated a meeting between national leaders in agriculture, agri businesses and industries in Bloemfontein to discuss short and long term plans. Several agri businesses and service providers already have plans in place to support their customers as far as possible.

The agri businesses indicated that they are very aware of the challenges which farmers face and that they know that they are dependent on farmers’ survival for their future. The banks and agri businesses are working together to try and ensure that the security of land remains intact by trying to avoid liquidations. One of the main challenges is that the help needed differs from farmer to farmer, and not one farming operation looks the same.

“Every farmer must speak to his financiers, because every farmer’s situation looks different. The main message from our members is this: It does not count in our favour if farmers leave the industry, and we will pursue all avenues to assist our clients within the restriction of the law,” says dr. John Purchase, CEO of Agbiz. Agbiz’ members started making plans around the drought situation in August 2015 already.

The drought task team, which includes the Department of Agriculture, the IDC, Agri SA and its affiliates, the Land Bank, Agbiz, the National Disaster Management Fund and civil society organisations will again be meeting by the end of January 2016. The statistics of the situation that will be provided by industry organisations and affiliates of Agri SA, will then be discussed. The main aim for the acquisition of data will be to make a thorough proposal to government by the end of January as part of an effort to get drought relief funds allocated with the national budget vote that will take place on 22 February 2016.

According to the National Disaster Management Act of 2002 the whole country must be declared a disaster area if more than one province has been declared a disaster area. This means South Africa is currently experiencing a national disaster. "This is a serious situation that all South Africans will have to help to manage. It is of national interest that our producers must be looked after and that food security is established in the short and long term for the country," says Omri van Zyl, executive director of Agri SA.

The drought will not only have an impact on farmers' income. Consumers will also feel the impact, with the effect of every R1 lost in the industry leading to a loss of R1,50 for the economy. According to multiplier statistics the effect of this R1 loss, means a loss of R4 for a rural economy. Higher food inflation because of the drought will thus have an effect on consumers' income.

Dan Kriek, president of Free State Agriculture, summarised the meeting by saying: "Cooperation between role players is in place and structures in agriculture are already finding solutions for the short, medium and long term challenges of the drought."

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