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Department:  
**Rural, Environment and Agricultural  
Development**  
North West Provincial Government  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**



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## Media Release

### **DEPARTMENT ROLL-OUT CONTINGENCY PLAN FOLLOWING ALERTS OF FALL ARMY WORM IN THE BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA PROVINCE**

**Thursday, 23 February 2017**

**Mahikeng:** The Bokone-Bophirima Provincial Government through the Department of Rural, Environment and Agricultural Development (READ) has noted the alarming reports on the suspicions of the Fall Army Worm (FAW) within the Province. The Department has therefore established a Provincial Technical Committee (PTC) in this regard to urgently assess the suspected areas, starting from Bojanala District this week and to move over to Ngaka Modiri Molema District shortly afterwards.

Whilst the province-wide survey is underway, a Contingency Plan of Action has been developed and resourced to drastically contain any possible outbreak. Several Operational Teams led by the PTC will swiftly perform rigorous scouting for confirmation of FAW within the suspected areas in the province. In that light, effective and efficient control measures will be rolled out on an emergency basis before the end of the week. In doing this the Department hopes to avert the spread of FAW and possible economic losses which may be incurred by crop farmers to this effect.

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Following the recent rainy weather, the North West province has seen a rise in the multitude of insects. This happens mainly when the temperatures increase after the clouds disperse. FAW made its first appearance in the country recently and the continuing rainy weather is likely to give rise to it. It has been identified as potentially harmful with it having made its first appearance and notable damage in Southern Africa. It poses a threat to producers due to the pace at which it is spreading. This pest prefers maize plants but may also target vegetables such as cabbage, pepper varieties, soya, grain sorghum, sunflower, dry beans, wheat barley and pasture.

In response to the plight of farmers and Organised Agriculture on possible outbreaks of FAW in the province, our Member of the Executive Council responsible for READ, Hon. Ms Manketsi Tlhape said that *"The department is assuredly responsive towards its noble mandate on food security for the people of Bokone Bophirima and to put in place mitigations against risks thereof as in the case of FAW infestation. As part of the collective Provincial Government, we remain indefatigable to work with all stakeholders and the affected farmers to bring closure to this challenge confronting our critical sector"*

READ continues to alert farming Communities to take heed that not all moths and caterpillars are FAW. Proper identification has to be conducted to make sure that army worm is being confirmed for appropriate control. In case of any suspicion, Farmers and Community members in particular should visit the nearest READ service point to report such cases for immediate action. The department will continue to inform all Bokone Bophirima citizenry on the developments through media.

**## ends ##**

**Issued by the Communication Services Directorate  
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