



read

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



AgriCentre Building
Cnr. Dr. James Moroka
& Stadium Rd
Private Bag X2039,
Mmabatho 2735
Republic of South Africa

CHIEF DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE SERVICES
DIRECTORATE: COMMUNICATION SERVICES

Tel: +27 (18) 389 5684
Fax: +27(18) 384 4571
Email: esetlhako@nwpg.gov.za

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

30 October 2018

OVER R46 MILLION RAND FOR FOOD PRODUCTION AND COMMERCIALIZATION OF BLACK FARMERS

North West Department of Rural, Environment and Agricultural Development has set aside over forty-six million rand (R46m) to support eight-hundred and twelve (812) smallholder farmers of the province with crop production inputs and to cultivate 14000ha to be planted during the 2018/19 planting season. This was announced by MEC Manketsi Tihape last Thursday, 25 October 2018 in Welverdiend farm outside Delareyville town when she was launching the provincial planting season.

The launch of planting season is a clarion call by the department to all residents to gird up their loins and engage in food production activities of all forms.

The main objective of the planting season launch was to create awareness on the importance of food security through agricultural production and to encourage all stakeholders to join hands in eradicating hunger and reducing poverty.

WE BELONG

WE CARE

WE SERVE

This is done through departmental crop massification programme; an intervention by government to support both smallholder and identified black commercial farmers to put back arable land into production.

Speaking during the launch, MEC Tlhape said, in the last cropping season of 2017/18, a target of 13000ha was exceeded by 1628ha, to attain overall 14628ha. This was done despite late rains and early frost encountered in the province. North West farmers were able to produce an excess of 19016 tons of which 11409.84 tons was sunflower, 6655, 74 tons was maize, 190 tons of groundnuts and 760, 64 tons of dry beans.

Tlhape said this was a great achievement and has assured Bokone Bophirima residents that her department will continue to support all dedicated farmers within the borders of Bokone Bophirima to continue producing more food.

Currently, North West Province is the number one producer of sunflower in the whole country.

For years, the department has been supporting farmers in a variety of ways to produce more food i.e. through provision of crop production inputs, technical advice, holding of information and farmers' days, access to storage facilities, provision of marketing information as well as mechanisation packages within available resources and mandate.

MEC Tlhape reiterated that 50% of the budget in this financial year has been channelled to benefit women, youth and people living with disabilities

in the agricultural sector. “We need to do more to ensure that we give support to these groups in order for them to participate into mainstream agriculture as formidable players to advance the future of the sector by tilting the statistics as they remain,” emphasised MEC Tlhape.

Tlhape is adamant that the measures pronounced by the state President Cyril Ramaphosa will soon bear fruit and more farmers will benefit via the stimulus package, blended funding and other measures as announced during the recent job submit.

Farmers applauded the department for informative presentations they received from various organizations such as Grain South Africa, Omnia, Noord Wes Koporasië, Laeveld Agrochemicals, Agriculture Research Council, and The Grain Farmer Development Association on the day of the launch.

Amongst others; presenters shared the much needed planting tips which included safe use and handling of agro chemicals, information on the importance of crop and cultivar choice, requirements for planting and plant nutrition to mention but just a few.

One of the farmers; Solomzi Booyen, a farmer in Welverdiend welcomed department’s support in particular to smallholder farmers of the region.

“Government’s support is welcomed. We really appreciate it and ours is just to make sure that we produce,” said jubilant Booyen

For 2018/19 financial year, READ Department has earmarked (50) farmers for black commercialization programme.

Tlhape wished all crop farmers across the province a productive and profitable cropping season and she said that she is hoping that the Almighty will show mercy and bless this season with lots and lots of rain.

The event was used to encourage communities to engage in agricultural activities in general and planting of fallow lands in particular which will ultimately contribute to the Fetsa Tlala Food Production Initiative, a government programme used as an intervention for the Food and Nutrition Security Policy.

###Ends###

Issued by the Communication Services Directorate

Enquiries: Ms Emelda Setlhako

Tel: 018 389 5684

Cell: 060 745 4020

Email: ESetlhako@nwpg.gov.za

Website: www.nwpg.gov.za/Agriculture/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/nwpread