

BUDGET SPEECH VOTE NO. 29
BY Deputy Minister of Agriculture (RN Capa)

Honourable Speaker, President of South Africa, Your Excellency Matamella Ramaphosa. Our Deputy President Paul Mashatile.

All Ministers and Deputy Ministers, Chairs of Portfolio committees of the Government of National Unity. Premiers, Executives of our local governments. My heart goes to all kings and kingdoms in all the villages of South Africa.

We are coming to Parliament today to present to you as a department our plans and funds to implement programmes in the form of Budget and outcomes, as well as goals to be achieved, please accept us as the departments and entities.

Since, the dawn of our democracy as led by the ANC and President Nelson Mandela, “Zondwa,” has been our practice to do so due to various challenges.

As our country grows, and our democracy matures, we agree with our President, Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa, that we must, all of us have our hands on deck.

In the Government of National Unity, we also operate as equals, we are ready to engage, disagree when necessary and continue to implement what is applicable at each time.

The leadership of the ANC has a history of engaging with other countries and gaining support during the struggle for the liberation of our country. They received support and provided education to the youth in foreign

lands. Now that we are back home, we must work together as a country and strengthen our democracy.

Throughout the history of South Africa, the Department of Agriculture has delegated some of its functions to different entities to support the growing population of farmers and the increasing demand for food. In our country, characterised by "two countries in one," the government's programs for supporting farmers have also mirrored this duality, creating two distinct agricultural worlds within one country.

Following the People's Congress that produced the Freedom Charter. To boost food production programmes, "the state shall help the peasants with implements, seed, tractors and dams to save the soil and assist the tillers". Those who care about an equal society supported clauses such as 1) Food for all and 2) Plenty of food. It is indeed a commodity not to be used only as a business "uyadla aze athengise" even in water use, the same applies. There is little sympathy for struggling farmers who wish to do business through agriculture, but their produce cannot even meet their daily needs.

As stated in the National Development Plan (NDP), Agriculture is a shared responsibility of the national and provincial governments, with its success relying on fundamental infrastructure and local planning decisions overseen by local government. Improving intergovernmental coordination (DDM) in these areas is essential. Integrated development plans offer a chance to enhance coordination.

Madam Speaker, it is important to consider the effectiveness and capability of these entities in fulfilling their developmental mandates. By working closely with the private sector, these entities can become more relevant to all farmers, thus boosting food production, fostering economic

growth, and ensuring a healthier nation. Nawe ke Somlomo, ziingane zakho ezi.

National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC)

The National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) is empowered to establish and enforce regulatory measures to intervene in the marketing of agricultural products. These measures include the introduction of levies on agricultural products. Since the introduction of these measures in 1997, the funding collected through these levies has contributed to the growth in productivity that has been experienced in South African agriculture over the past three decades.

An amount of R1 Billion was collected through levies, of which R 202 million was spent on transformation programmes. These amounts are far from being adequate in funding growth and inclusivity in the sector, hence the importance of better coordination of programmes and their funding between the government and the private sector. What the Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan advocates (AAMP) for.

Agricultural Research Council (ARC)

The ARC has a commendable footprint in our country and collaborates with universities, research institutes, national and regional departments, and private partners.

Through research, development and innovation in agriculture and related sciences we will be able to:

- **Firstly**, help drive innovation in modern technologies in crop and livestock breeding, pest and disease control, irrigation, and agricultural practices.

- **Secondly**, improve productivity through high-yielding pest and disease-resistant crop varieties to increase agriculture's contribution to economic growth.
- **Thirdly**, investments in agricultural research and development contribute to sustainability through promoting environmentally sustainable practices such as precision agriculture and soil conservation techniques.

We will in this period, intensify Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) - a conscious policy position of our country which will improve the integration of climate responsiveness farming and food production activities. We will also intensify the implementation of the seed system strategy to cater for smallholder farmers, especially women, youth and persons with disabilities.

KAONAFATSO YA DIKGOMO (FOR LIVESTOCK IMPROVEMENT)

Chairperson, smallholder livestock farmers already face a plethora of challenges as revealed **by a recent independent assessment of the Kaonafatso ya Dikgomo (commonly known as the KyD Scheme)** which underscored the need for increased market awareness, promoting participation of women and youth in KyD and capacitating the Scheme with more personnel to enhance the impact.

In response to these recommendations, Kaonafatso ya Dikgomo (KyD) accelerated its work on enhancing access to markets for communal farmers to ensure that these farmers participate actively in their rural economy and as such the mainstream economy of the country. This is key towards reversing urban migration which is detrimental to the socio-economic dynamics of rural communities.

ONDERSTEPSPOORT BIOLOGICAL PRODUCTS (OBP)

Madam Speaker, the OBP, has been producing animal disease vaccines since the year 2000. These vaccines have assisted South African farmers to prevent animal diseases that impact food security, human health and livelihoods. This year, we will work on the turnaround of the OBP to produce adequate vaccines and animal solutions for the country and the world. The Board has interviewed candidates for the CEO position, and we are optimistic about management stability at the institution.

PERISHABLE PRODUCTS EXPORT CONTROL BOARD (PPECB)

The PPECB is the most preferred export and cold chain certification body in South Africa and continues to ensure that South Africa exports perishable products of high quality. Through its digitisation programme, the PPECB aims to issue 60,000 export certificates electronically, from a baseline of 14,000 the previous year. Furthermore, PPECB will increase its analytical laboratory capacity for mycotoxin and pesticide analysis to support the South African export system. Aligned with our developmental objectives, the PPECB plans to train 600 smallholder farmers to comply with good agricultural practices. This is done in collaboration with all nine Provincial Departments of Agriculture. In supporting youth, the PPECB's internship programme, the Agricultural Export Technologist Programme (AETP) will have an intake of 50 students for the year 24/25.

I thank you.