



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COVID 19 BRIEFING FOR THE PORTFOLIO
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT HELD ON
THE 29 APRIL 2020 AT 11H00 VIA TEAMS**

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Hon NN Sibhidla-Saphetha: Chairperson

Hon SA Duma

Hon S Mshengu

Hon B Zuma

Hon M Frazer

Hon N Mthethwa

Hon PN Msimango

Hon TJ Gumede

Hon C Pappas

Hon T Rajbansi

LEGISLATURE STAFF

NN Ndwalane: Committee Coordinator

S Nkosi: Committee Administrator

S Nxumalo : Cluster Manager

S Gudazi : Budget and Content Advisor

D Khuzwayo : Senior Legal Advisor

N Luthuli : Senior Researcher

N Madide : Public Participation Practitioner

W Hlongwa : Communications Officer

APOLOGIES:

Hon S Mthethwa

1.1 OPENING AND WELCOME

The Chairperson opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present. She mentioned that the purpose of the meeting is to establish what the Department's response is to the Covid-19 pandemic as guided by the strategic leadership of the legislature.

1.2 CONSTITUTION OF THE MEETING

The meeting was properly constituted.

1.3 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Hon Frazer moved for the adoption of the agenda, and she was seconded by Hon NB Mthethwa.

2. COVID 19 BRIEFING

Following the analysis of the Department's response plan and the Executive report on the Provincial response plan to the Covid 19 pandemic. The Committee's Researcher and the Budget Analyst gave a briefing to the Committee, as follows:

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Ms Thoko Didiza, made an announcement on the R1,2 billion that has been ring-fenced to assist mainly financially distressed small-scale farmers.

On the 19th of March 2020, the MEC had an engagement meeting with agricultural stakeholders, to address the impact of Covid-19 on the agricultural

sector and to ensure continuity of farming and preparation of the next planting season.

It was noted that the Department will provide seeds of the prioritized nutritious crops to households, and that there are 1070 kg of vegetable seeds available for distribution.

The Department has also indicated that they produce and provide sanitizers to 6 Departments, which were not identified in their report.

3. DISCUSSIONS

The Chairperson mentioned that she had hoped that a broader analysis will be done, and not just an analysis of what the Department presented to the Committee.

The following Questions/Inputs from Members were noted:

- How much will be used for food security during the Covid 19 Pandemic?
- What are the Entities' roles in response to the Covid 19?
- What is a lifespan of the seeds that are being provided?
- What is the Department's communication strategy?
- Which are the 6 Departments that the Sanitizers are being supplied to?
- What is the Memorandum Of Understanding for the supply of sanitizers?
- The Department must categorize the farmers in terms of their scale (small, medium and large), and what assistance they require during the Covid 19 Pandemic?
- A breakdown of how much the Province is getting from the R1.2 Billion, and what the Department is doing?
- While the Department of Agriculture ~~works~~/helps other Departments, it must not forget their main mandate, which is to assist farmers and rural households.

- Security Agencies need to be briefed on who qualifies for an exemption/permit during the lockdown period, to ensure that farmers are not negatively affected.
- The 5am to 8pm curfew may affect the food production chain.
- Protection of food production lines from the looting needs to be prioritized.
- Seed Production needs to talk to the correct planting season.
- How the Committee will strengthen the oversight role over the Department during the Covid-19 pandemic?
- The Department must present a clear short to long-term response plan to Covid-19.
- How safe are the sanitizers that the Department is producing? Which institution has certified the sanitizers as safe for human use?
- Noting that 70% of the sanitizers need to be ethanol, what substance is the 30% of the Sanitizers?
- The issue of illegal movement of animal products in the Province, which areas/districts are affected?
- Is the Department adhering to the 30 days SCM payment rule under the lockdown?
- Which public representatives is the Department working with, as mentioned in their report?
- Which officials were identified as essential in the Department? What are their levels in the Organization? and where are they deployed?
- Issue of PPEs – what type of PPEs and quantities procured and distributed so far?
- How will Covid-19 affect livestock farming and crop production in the Province?
- A proposal to invite Stats SA to do an updated presentation of Community Survey in terms of Agriculture.

4. RESOLUTIONS

The Committee resolved as follows:

- Researcher and Budget analyst to rework the briefing report, taking into consideration all the questions and comments that were raised by the Members.
- Updated briefing report to be emailed to Members on the 4th May 2020, and adopt it as a true reflection of what was raised in the meeting, before it is sent out to the Department for their response.
- Meeting with the Department on Covid-19 to be postponed from the 5th May 2020, to give them enough time to prepare for their responses.
- Suggested date for the meeting with the Department is the 15th May 2020.

5. CLOSURE

The meeting was adjourned at 12h15.

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Hon NN Sibhidla-Saphetha

The Chairperson

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Date