

MEC

ON THE GO



rural development
& agrarian reform

Department:
Rural Development & Agrarian Reform
PROVINCE OF THE EASTERN CAPE

Covid-19



FROM THE MEC's DESK

As the department with greater elements of essential service, WE ARE ON THE MOVE and all our hands are on the deck to ensure this temporal measure as imposed by the pandemic, the COVID-19 does not become permanent measure of food insecurity within the province of the EasternCape.

Thus, we are working harder and smarter to keep our agricultural value chain facilities and the industry strong during this period of COVID-19 in our our country and the world. We are determined to maintaining production, supply chains and helping to protect the workforce from the industry.

We are well aware of the importance of the agriculture sector . Feeding the people of our province and the nation is an essential service. Working with the industry, we are determined to ensure high-quality produce reaches our people and maintain overseas markets reach where possible.

We are that department in the province with that enormous responsibility to ensure that the necessary precautionary measures are in place for all processes relating to the provision of food to prevent further spreading of the virus.

Our work which largely happens as response to COVID-19 is unfolding within certain regulations, as published in an amendment to the Disaster Management Act of 2002, which have been put in place specifically as part of the South African government's response to (COVID-19) pandemic, applies to the way in which farms and agribusinesses are to operate during the initial 21-day national lockdown period which was later extended by the President.

We urge members of the agriculture and agribusiness sectors, who have been granted a special dispensation to continue working under the present circumstances, to strictly adhere to the Government Gazette published regulations.

We recognised the acute shortage of sanitisers, which are desperately needed in the food production value chain, hence we collaborated with Rhodes University using the research capabilities found in our entity, Dohne. We have not ended there, we equally are producing cloth masks. These masks are intended to supplement those provided by the sector and help present the spread of COVID-19.





Just as if COVID-19 was not enough, we have discovered that certain pockets of our grasslands and pastures were infected with African armyworms, as the Department we activated a technical team to help fight these worms that are destroying pastures and grasslands in the three districts namely Amathole, Alfred Nzo and Chris Hani districts.

This outbreak comes hot on the heels of one of the worst droughts in living memory and affects our communities in tandem with coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

global pandemic. Districts that were heavily affected by drought, who are now experiencing a resurgence of greener pastures and grasslands are encouraged to conduct vigorous scouting for the insect both in maize fields and pastures.

The coronavirus must be contained. The coronavirus kills. Help save South Africa. Together, we can beat this.

Please stay HOME! Stay SAFE!



METH VIEWS THE FIRST BATCH OF SANITISERS

THE Eastern Cape Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR) in partnership with the Rhodes University's faculty of pharmacy has intensified its fight against COVID-19 by launching its own hand sanitizer production programme.

MEC for DRDAR, Nomakhosazana Meth formally launched the initiative in April 30 at Dohne Agricultural Development Institute of DRDAR.

The sanitisers are produced internally by scientists at the agricultural institute after attending a two- day training at Rhodes University.

According to Meth, the internal production of sanitizers is a move to ensure the safety of workers in the agricultural sector against COVID-19. Agriculture is listed among those rendering essential services after other sectors were forced to a halt amid the soaring figures of COVID-19 infections. "These will be for the benefit of farms and agricultural value chain facilities within the province," said Meth

Meth has been crisscrossing the province visiting farms specializing with different commodities where she checked compliance of farms in respect of the regulations set to curb the spread of the virus.

"During our visits we noticed that farm owners observe the regulations but some still need to be supported with PPE and sanitizers. The sanitizers we produce will go a long way in making sure that there is business continuity and farmers continue to produce food and make +sure the nation is fed," she said.

During the launch of the sanitizer production programme, Professor Rod Walker for Pharmaceutics at Rhodes University's faculty of pharmacy said in two days they +had managed to produce 900 litres of sanitizers. The team of five scientific technicians can produce a minimum of 600 litres a day. The sanitizers (80% alcohol) which are compliant to the World Health Organization (WHO) specifications and standards are made from a combination of ethanol (99%), glycerol and hydrogen peroxide.

"The production follow very stringent protocols and the process is recorded at all times to ensure traceability and confirmation of quality," added Walker. While the Dohne Agricultural Development Institute began producing hand sanitisers this week, the Tsolo Agricultural and Rural Development Institute has been producing cloth face masks which are also distributed to farms.

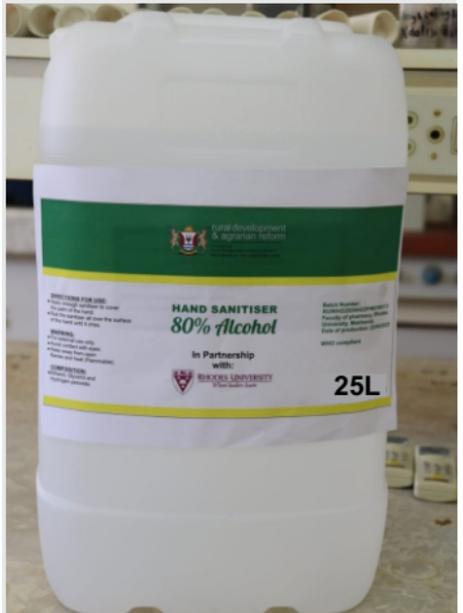




MEC Nomakhosazana Meth for EC DRDAR and Professor Rod Walker with the scientists from Dohne that are responsible in making the hand sanitiser.



25 liters of sanitisers made in Dohne Agricultural Development institute.



Branded 25 liter hand sanitiser packaging.





Prof Rod Walker and MEC Nomakhosazana Meth at the Dohne research institute.



Prof Rod Walker sanitising MEC Meth during her visit to Dohne.



MEC Nomakhosazana Meth observes as the hand sanitisers are being mixed.



Prof Rod Walker explaining the process of making the hand sanitisers to MEC.



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DIRECTIONS FOR USE:

- Apply enough sanitiser to cover the palm of the hand.
- Rub the sanitiser all over the surface of the hand until it dries.

WARNING:

- For external use only.
- Avoid contact with eyes.
- Keep away from open flames and heat (Flammable).

COMPOSITION:

- Ethanol, Glycerol and Hydrogen peroxide.

HAND SANITISER
80% Alcohol

In Partnership
with:



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

Batch Number:
RUWHO20200422PM01MV12
Faculty of pharmacy, Rhodes
University, Makhanda
Date of production: 22/04/2020

WHO compliant.

1L



LIFE LINE FOR FARMERS

MORE than 10 000 farmers across the Eastern Cape have responded to the clarion call made by government, to apply for financial relief during the COVID-19 the announcement came just days after President Cyril Ramaphosa declared the Coronavirus outbreak as a disaster and put in place a 21-day lockdown.

Minister of Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development Thoko Didiza announced that government has allocated R1.2-billion to provide financial assistance to small-scale farmers across the country so as to protect the country's food supply chain during the lockdown and beyond.

Amongst the commodities included in the financial relief are:

·Poultry:

Day old chicks, Point of lay chickens, feed, medication and sawdust;

·Other Livestock:

Feed and medication.

·Vegetables:

Seedlings, fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides and soil correction.

·Other commodity sectors were evaluated on a case by case basis, the Department continuously monitors the impact of COVID-19 on the sector at large.

It was also announced that farmers on Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) farms would benefit from the financial relief, in that R 400m of the R1.2 billion is allocated in line with the former Department of Rural Development and Land Reform's Stimulus Package. Part of the R 1,2-bn allocation is allocated to support communities in the OR Tambo District where the District Development Model is being piloted with hygiene products as part of an effort to prevent the spread of the pandemic.

Meth has also handed over personal protective equipment like gloves, sanitisers and masks to smallholder farmers across the province Applications are submitted in local offices and will be evaluated in in districts, Provincial and National structures.



MEC METH VISITS MTHONGANA FARM

AMID the COVID-19 outbreak that has forced the country into a lockdown except for essential service providers, MEC for Rural Development and Agrarian Reform, Nomakhosazana Meth continues to ensure business continuity in the agricultural sector takes place in compliance with regulations.

Agriculture was announced among the essential services when many sectors were forced to halt trade activities and close their doors as a measure to curb the spread

Since the announcement, Meth has taken an initiative to visit farms in

the province to enforce adherence of the lockdown regulations but most importantly to provide necessary support to the farms. The surprise visits began this month where Meth upon engaging with farm workers and managers distributes sanitizers and protective wear meant to flatten the spread of the virus.

Meth, accompanied by departmental officials and municipal leadership, visited the Ngqushwa- based Mthongana Farm that currently specializes in livestock and crop farming. Mthongana Farm operates within Ngqushwa Local Municipality under the Amatole District.



DRDAR MEC Nomakhosazana Meth engaging stakeholders during her visit at Mthongana Farm Peddie.



The Bonsmara cattle bred at the farm.



Xhanti Mthongana of Mthongana farm with DRDAR MEC Nomakhosazana Meth.



Dam at the farm dry due to drought.

MEC METH INSPECTS WILLOW TREE CITRUS FARM'S COMPLIANCE WITH COVID-19 REGULATIONS



MEC's donating PPE supplies to farm workers to help combat the spread of the virus.

With the agricultural sector declared an essential service, the MEC for Rural Development and Agrarian Reform has taken a drive to visit commercial farms as well as small-scale farmer's adherence and compliance to the COVID-19 regulations.

With regulations outlined and published in the amendment to the Disaster Management Act of 2002 that have been put in place as the South African government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, farms are required to comply whilst food production for food security is less affected. These regulations apply to the ways in which farms are expected to operate during the country's lockdown period.

MEC was happy with the reports from workers confirming compliance by their employers. The report given by workers included the manner in which farm workers were transported and the precautions taken to ensure their health and safety during COVID-19.

MEC Meth said, "The manner in which this farm complies with COVID 19 regulations is impressive. They have appreciated the contribution of masks and sanitizers we have brought as addition from the department" During the visit, Meth explained COVID-19 and how farm workers could protect themselves against the virus , reduce chances of contracting and spreading it.



The MEC further joined workers as they were busy with fruit picking (harvesting).

MEC AID HAWKERS

In her capacity as MPL deployed in the Cradock constituency, Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform MEC Nomakhosazana Meth handed over food parcels, fresh vegetables, dignity packs and sanitizers to Hawkers in Cradock. With Hawkers being an integral part of the South Africa's economy, offering easy access to a wide range of goods and services in public spaces,

the impact of the COVID-19 on Hawkers and small businesses has been severely disrupted by COVID-19.

COVID-19 has affected Hawkers' businesses, with some being unable to put food on the table. MEC Meth therefore felt it necessary to help this sector to continue putting food on the table for their families as the business have been disrupted by COVID-19



MEC Nomakhosazana Meth handed over food parcels, fresh vegetables, dignity packs and sanitisers to Hawkers in Cradock.



TECHNICAL TEAM ASSEMBLED TO DEAL WITH AFRICAN ARMYWORM OUTBREAK



The deadly African armyworm.

THE Eastern Cape Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform swiftly reacted to the outbreak of the African army worms that pose a threat on the province's food security. On Thursday (April 9, 2020) the department responsible for sustainable food production distributed insecticides to farmers in Fairban Village in Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality under the Amatole District. The insecticides were accompanied by backpack and boom sprayers mounted to three tractors to fumigate a farmland of more than 400 hectares. The department has roped in youth to help in the eradication of the worms.



MEC Nomakhosazana Meth combatting the deadly African armyworm.

Armyworms attack leaves of plants mostly in the grass family which include maize, lucerne, sorghum and pasture. Because of the deadly cyanide poison that is associated with the armyworms, livestock that has fed or feeds on pastures infested with the worms are at a risk of dying. Among the symptoms of an animal that has fed on contaminated feed are swelling, twitching, and bloated stomach that lead to death. So far four animals goats and cattle- have died in the area as a result of the armyworms.

One of the farmers who grow animal feed in Fairban Village, Nobuntu Mbi (54) said they found out about the armyworm in their field on March 31 and immediately reported to the department.

Mbi is a member of a co-op that produces and sells livestock feed across the Eastern Cape Province.

"We had to act fast so we can save the feed we are growing at the farm. And the worms came at a time where we were preparing to harvest," she said.

MEC for Rural Development and Agrarian Reform, Nomakhosazana Meth said her department has activated a technical team to arrest the outbreak. The known affected regions are Amatole and Alfred Nzo.



She said in spite of the novel corona virus that has forced the country into a lockdown to help curb the spread of the virus, the country still needs to be fed and the Arican armyworm is a threat to food production.

“The country needs food even if we are on a lockdown”. It is for that reason that we had to make ways to deal with the situation before it worsens our problems. But we have a group of highly qualified experts to deal with such situations,” said Meth.



The youth of Fairben Village together with MEC Meth Combat the armyworm taking the necessary precautions to prevent the spread.



AGRICULTURE INTERVENTIONS TO COMBAT COVID - 19

The Eastern Cape Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR) is supporting the Department of Health (DoH) during the outbreak of Covid-19 by providing six mobile veterinary clinics to increase the field screening capacity.



MEC Nomakhosazana Meth outlines her department's plans for the agricultural sector and the interventions on safety of farm workers during COVID-19 pandemic that threatens the province's food security.

This was announced by DRDAR MEC Nomakhosazana Meth during a press briefing held at the Bhisho Massacre Memorial Center where Premier Lubabalo Mabuayane with some MECs were updating the media about the status Covid-19 in the province.

Meth added that the department has also made available on loan basis to the National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS), through DoH, three



Premier of the Eastern Cape Oscar Mabuayane during the media briefing in Bhisho calls for all hands on decks as the province intensifies its fight against the novel corona virus.

(3) Ribonucleic Acid (RNA) extractors and Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) "machine" (amplifier) to augment the existing provincial capacity for laboratory testing.

Apart from the support to DoH, the MEC also reported on the COVID-19 Disaster Agricultural Support Fund, COVID-19 Disaster Agricultural Support Fund to PLAS farms, COVID-19 Disaster Agricultural Support Fund to commercial farmers, DRDAR COVID-19 Household Food Security Programme and DRDAR COVID-19 Disaster Agricultural Support to commercial farmers.

The COVID-19 Disaster Agricultural Support Fund (CDASF) was



announced by the minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development Thoko Didiza with of R1,2 billion to cushion off farmers and households to continue food supply from the negative impact resulting from the pandemic across the country.

MEC Meth said DRDAR officials assisted farmers with the application process and received applications through all local and District offices.

From 23 April 2020, DRDAR offices registered 9885 forms that were hand delivered and 723 applications were lodged on line which gave a total submission of 10 608.

She said all the applications are currently being screened at district offices where DRDAR and the National DARDLR is represented and adjudication at provincial level is going to be concluded on May 8.

On the COVID-19 Disaster Agricultural Support Fund to land reform beneficiaries, which also Minister Didiza's initiative aimed at ensuring food security whilst the country grapples with the COVID-19 pandemic, MEC said seven farms were identified.

"These farms were identified prior to the COVID-19 disaster and as such the support will be provided in terms of their original assessment and related production inputs, key infrastructure including water provision and water board fees," she said, adding that the assessments of the specific needs of the farm has a budget of R 63.4m.

She added that farmers on Proactive Land, Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) farms will benefit in the R400m of the R1.2 billion that was allocated in line with the former DRDLR Stimulus Package.

She said there was also COVID-19 Disaster Agricultural Support Fund to commercial farmers, which is allocated an amount of R100million nationally and will be administered by the Land Bank.

Meth announced that DRDAR has established COVID-19 Household Food Security Programme, which has a budget of R20 million.

The MEC said this program will support the vulnerable household with the production needs that include vegetable production inputs, fertilizer, provision of free-range indigenous chicken's production pack that include 6 hens and one rooster as well as yellow maize and stress packs.

She added that DRDAR working with sister departments will provide households with hand sanitizers, face masks and hand gloves whilst households with no access to water will be supported with water harvesting equipment, that will ensure availability of water for backyard gardens

Meth said the National department has provided the province with PPE's that are being distributed to the farm workers and target hotspots. The MEC said 40 000 masks and 44 000 bar soaps had been delivered to the province for distribution to farm workers and DRDAR is currently



procuring 20 000 cloth masks and 20 000 gloves.

DRDAR, through its Dohne Agricultural Development Institute in collaboration with Rhodes University has produced 1 300 litres of sanitizers, which were packaged in 500 ml.

"The institution is currently producing 300 litres per day and the plan is to increase to 1000 per day. This initiative will benefit the surrounding communities, agriculture value chain facilities and rural communities" Meth said.

The Tsolo Agriculture and Rural Development Institute is also producing cloth mask to support the surrounding communities with the production expected to increase to reach 10 000 over a next two months

"The departmental continuity plan responds to the current issue that farmers are experiencing, to this effect farmers and officials were issued with movement permits for easy access to markets.

"The departmental support to the farming community through supply of PPE is ongoing and commercial farmers in Sarah Baartman and Amathole were visited for inspection and distribution.

"The technical units of the department had been visible in the communities doing scouting and treatment of African and Fall Army worms, as well as animal health related outbreaks," the MEC concluded.





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COVID-19

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID -19

**Wash your hands
more often for 20 seconds.**

Avoid touching staircase rails.

**Use hand sanitiser after
touching door knobs and pressing
Elevators.**

Avoid hand shakes and direct contact.

**Every one should avoid gatherings and
crowded places**



Frequently **WASH**
your hands



Sneeze
into your **ELBOW**



Use
hand **SANITIZER** often



Don't feel well?
STAY HOME



FEVER



COUGH



SORE THROAT



SHORTNESS
OF BREATH



How to wear your surgical **MASK CORRECTLY**



CLEAN YOUR HANDS



CHECK FOR TEARS AND HOLES



**ENSURE THE BLUE SIDE FACES OUT,
AND WHITE STRIP IS AT TOP**



PLACE LOOPS BEHIND EARS



MOULD STRIP AROUND NOSE



ENSURE MASK IS BELOW CHIN



**REMOVE MASK WHEN DAMP USE
EAR LOOPS TO REMOVE**



THROW AWAY IN BIN



CLEAN YOUR HANDS



**DON'T TOUCH THE MASK WHILE
WEARING IT**



**DON'T WEAR THE MASK ON
HEAD OR CHIN**



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