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**ROOIVLEIS PRODUSENTE-ORGANISASIE**

**RED MEAT PRODUCERS' ORGANISATION**

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**REQUESTED INTERVENTIONS TO ENSURE FOOD SECURITY, INCOME SECURITY, JOB SECURITY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC SECURITY IN THE**

**LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY TO DEAL WITH THE IMPACT OF THE DROUGHT**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Livestock production in South Africa is a fundamental element of socio-economic development and a significant contributor to food security, food sovereignty and income security. 70 % of agricultural land can only be utilised by livestock and game, while livestock contributes to 27 % of the consumer’s food basket.

In South Africa, 1,2 million households own livestock. A total of 60 % of livestock belongs to the commercial sector, while 40 % is owned by emerging/subsistence farmers.

**GROWTH PATH**

The livestock industry aligned itself with the

* *New Growth Path (NDP),*
* *the National Development Plan (NPAP),*
* *the Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP) and the Agricultural Policy Action Plan (APAP).*

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The aim of the livestock industry is growth, the creation of employment, rural development and food and income security. The Red Meat Producers’ Organisation, as a producer organisation as well as the rest of organised agriculture is involved and should be involved.

**CRITICAL ASPECTS**

It is critical that livestock producers keep nucleus herds in a good condition through the coming winter. The current breeding season conception rate is also very important.

At this stage, the livestock industry needs to increase its calf percentage and lambing in order to rebuild the national herd. If the livestock industry is financially supported, it will still take two seasons to recover. If the livestock industry does not receive any help, it will take the commercial sector four seasons to recover, while the emerging sector will never recover.

It is currently estimated that 5 % of the country’s 13 million national beef herd will be lost. The nucleus herds of certain individuals will be completely eradicated.

The fact is that the emergent sector is much more vulnerable than the commercial sector.

**RISK ANALYSIS**

Agri SA identified a number of risks if the agricultural sector if is not assisted by government. This includes food insecurity, income insecurity and job losses. The erosion of tax basis, a socio-economic decline in rural areas and a drastic increase in red meat prices are also very real risks.

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**RECOMMENDED INTERVENTIONS BY GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO SPEED UP THE RECOVERY OF THE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY**

Some of the interventions proposed by the livestock industry include the subsidising of the purchase of feed and fodder and providing an interest rate subsidy for herd rebuilding to help livestock farmers on their feet again.

**RPO/UFS DROUGHT SURVEY**

The Red Meat Producers’ Organisation (RPO) outsourced a drought survey to the University of the Free State to determine and quantify the real impact of the drought in the livestock industry. It was a random survey involving 40 farmers and 5 abattoirs per province. This consisted of 30 commercial farmers per province and ten emergent farmers per province.

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