**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE WELCOMES NEW MARKETS FOR AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 04 February 2020 –**The Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, today received an update from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development on the outbreaks of diseases such as foot-and-mouth, African swine fever, brucellosis and anthrax. The Department provided information on the areas of the outbreaks, their movement and the control measures that are in place to manage such diseases.

The committee is of the view that there should be more awareness campaigns about these diseases in the communities that are close to the areas where these outbreaks take place, to educate the people about how dangerous are these diseases, especially swine flu, rabies and anthrax amongst others.

The committee welcomed the update by the department on the new export markets for agricultural products.

In the 2019/20 financial year, the following new markets have been opened which are welcomed as exports contribute to economic growth and job creation in the agricultural sector.

South Africa exports poultry meat to the United Arab Emirates, sheep to Kuwait, beef to Oman, China and Jordan and live cattle, sheep and goats to Qatar.

The committee notes with appreciation that the negotiations for beef to Saudi Arabia, beef and wool to Malaysia, fish meal to China and genetic material to Brazil have reached final stages.

Since 2018, South Africa has been exporting bulk reefer shipments of citrus fruit and Lucerne to China, apples to Taiwan, citrus to the United States, and last year (2018) saw the exportation of blueberry propagation material to Peru and table grapes to Vietnam.

There are various fruit export protocols negotiations that are at final stages, for fruits such as pears, avocados and citrus fruit to countries such as China, Japan and the Philippines.

The committee is aware that, whilst South Africa is exporting its products to other countries, those  countries too, also require South Africa to import their products.

“Therefore, the Department of Trade and Industry must work in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture for the mutual benefit of South Africa and the countries we are exporting to,” said the Chairperson of the Committee, Nkosi Zwelivelile Mandela.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, NKOSI ZWELIVELILE MANDELA.**