**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**AGRICULTURE AND LAND COMMITTEE WILL SCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARINGS ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE AGENTS AMENDMENT BILL NEXT TERM**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 8 March 2022** – The Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development today received a briefing from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and the National Agricultural Marketing Council on the processing of the Agricultural Produce Agents Amendment Bill. The committee was also given an overview of the local operational and regulatory environment for agricultural exports and marketing.

Portfolio committee Chairperson Inkosi Zwelivelile Mandela told the meeting that the briefing was to assist the committee to gain a better understanding of market access and trends, along with current practice relating to export markets and agents, including livestock agents, as these form part of the proposed amendment Bill.

The committee has already been briefed on the amendment Bill, which was introduced in 2020, and also called for written submissions from members of the public. The committee will engage further with the public on the Bill through oral public hearings, which will be scheduled in the next term.

The Chairperson cautioned the meeting, "As a collective, avoid actions that do not adequately advance our respective roles, as this undermines the role of Parliament and of this portfolio committee, and hence our collective duty to serve the nation."

The committee welcomed the presentation on the amendment Bill, current local and international market conditions, production input costs, food prices and food availability. However, the Chairperson informed the meeting that the committee will not deliberate on the Bill today, as the committee must still to hold public hearings on the Bill.

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

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