**Budget vote 29: DALRRD 2022/05/12**

Chairperson, I believe I found a quote I can agree with from a person my colleagues from the ruling party benches might even listen to. He was an Irish politician, but a socialist and trade unionist at that. And at the turn of the previous century he said: “Agriculture was the first occupation of man, and as it embraces the whole earth, it is the foundation of all other industries.”

This also underscores what Bernard Baruch (famous for being an American financier and foreign policy adviser to Presidents Wilson, Roosevelt, and Truman) said: “Agriculture is the greatest and fundamentally the most important of our industries. The cities are but the branches of the tree of national life, the roots of which go deeply into the land. We all flourish or decline with the farmer.”

The department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has a back to front approach when it comes to addressing problems and starting projects.

Land Reform projects, the Agricultural- and Agro-processing Masterplan, the Cannabis Masterplan and all its facets, the AgriBEE fund, NARYSEC, to name but a few, are all examples hereof.

Die Departement gaan konkurente funksies en die provinsies, sowel as hul begroting seker blameer vir hul tekortkominge. Maar die punt bly steeds: die departement faal sy landbouers en gevolglik die land en sy ekonomie.

Michelle Grainger of the North Carolina Sweet Potato Commission said: "Farmers . . . not only produce the food and fibre we need, but they help ensure our national security and economic stability." It would do this department good to remember this/it.

To briefly highlight the programmes and their allocated appropriations:

The purpose of Programme 2 is to oversee livestock production, game farming, animal and plant health, natural resources and disaster management. Programme 2 received approximately 14 per cent of the total Vote appropriation.

Despite its important role in promoting agricultural production, managing biosecurity and sector related risks, plant and animal diseases and pests including disasters, Programme 2’s budget allocation has been stagnant and will further decline by an average of 1 per cent over the MTEF period.

Taking into account the FMD outbreak to name but one of the recent animal disease outbreaks, the ongoing locust problem, the issues experienced daily by vets regarding vaccines, our revoked OIE certificate concerning FMD and the most recent banning of our exports, specifically noting the banning of our wool to China (our greatest exporter of wool), also being reminded that our wool industry is an almost R5 Billion industry, this allocation as well as the findings in terms of monitoring and evaluation is a matter of grave concern…

There is also a misalignment between financial resource allocation and performance targets among and within Departmental Programmes. For example, the Administration Programme (P1) receives a larger budget than Programme 2 that is a programme central to agricultural production. 57% of administration’s budget goes to compensation of employees yet monitoring and evaluation within the department is weak. It remains a challenge and will continue to affect accountability and service delivery. Accountability that needs to assess and oversee the 53% of the total budget that goes to transfers and subsidies that includes the interventions implemented by provinces.

We cannot afford to have transferred funds not being optimally used.

Programme 3 that speaks to Food Security also has a waning budget that is continually being ill spent. We will never achieve true food security – not in the greater or household sense – if this remains the case.

Voorsitter, ons kan verder vir dae aangaan oor die entiteite, befondsing daarvan, hul magte en bevoegdhede of werklike mandate en wat hul eintlik hul dae mee besig hou.

Entiteite soos die LNR word onderbefonds en onderbenut deur die departement wat eerder van buite diensverskaffers gebruik maak. Die navorsing wat die LNR gedoen het rondom klimaatsverandering, weerspatrone aan ons kuslyn en verskeie ander faktore, kon gehelp het om die KZN ramp af te weer. As die departement maar net sy eie entiteit vertrou het.

Voorsitter dan het ons nog nie eers begin vrae vra rondom die eersteklas inentingsfabriek wat sedert 2015 in wording is, steeds vir begroot word en nog nie ‘n stap verder gevorder het nie;

Of die Bek-en-klouseer fasiliteit wat ook al jare in wording is en al miljoene rand gekos het nie;

Of die Landboumeesterplan wat op nommer 99 verander is omdat ‘n sekere landbou organisasie nie daarmee saamgestem het nie, maar basta met die res!

Die probleem is die ANC. Want die ANC pak alles ideologies in plaas van ekonomies aan en tot en met die minister en haar departement nie hierdie kopskuif maak nie, gaan alle landbouers altyd gefaal word.

Ek sluit af: “’n Volk wat vir sy landbou sorg, sorg vir sy toekoms.”