**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2175**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER [No 21-2023 SIXTH PARLIAMENT]
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**2175. Mr N P Masipa (DA) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural:**

What measures has her department put in place to (a) complete the foot-and-mouth disease facility that was commissioned in 2010 and which was supposed to have been completed in the 2015-16 financial year is completed to enable the manufacturing of more vaccines to combat the outbreak of the specified disease and (b) ensure that fencing, as one of the biosecurity measures, is implemented and monitored in all provinces, especially in the rural areas, to prevent the spread of the disease? **NW2471E**

**THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:**

1. R214 million was allocated by National Treasury (NT) in the 2011/2012 financial year. In 2019 NT undertook to allocate an additional R400 million over the 2019-2022 MTEF in support of the project. With the additional allocation, the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccine production facility project has started, and the work is projected to be completed around October 2025.

With the design phase being completed, the final estimates will guide further investment(s) to complete the facility due to the significant time lapse from the date of commissioning of the project. In the interim, R55 million has been allocated to the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) for the procurement of equipment and infrastructure to assemble an interim production system that will be used to produce antigens at a 200-liter scale (sufficient to produce 200 000 doses per annum) whilst the factory is under construction. The interim measure is expected to be ready to produce the vaccine by the middle of 2024.

1. Erecting fences in areas where the fences will obstruct established patterns of livestock and people movements are generally ineffective, due to vandalism, theft, and the inability to legally control movements on roads crossing the fences. Animal Health is, therefore, moving away from relying on fences as a first-line effective disease control measure and rather making use of alternative measures such as the use of perennial rivers, mountain ranges and adjacent lower risk establishments like farms.

The use of fences to prevent the spread of disease can only be implemented effectively where the fences also serve a purpose to the local community. For example, the fences on the western and southern boundaries of the Kruger National Park serve a disease control purpose, by preventing FMD carrier buffalo from having contact with cattle in the adjacent communal areas. It also provides a barrier to prevent dangerous animals from the Kruger National Park from roaming into the villages and hence it has value to the local community. The fences on the Kruger National Park boundary are maintained by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and SANParks. There are also fences that are used for disease control purposes, specifically FMD in specific areas of Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and KwaZulu-Natal. The repair and maintenance of these fences is the responsibility of the respective provincial departments.