**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2520**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER [No 42-2020 SIXTH PARLIAMENT]
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**2520. Mr N S Matiase (EFF) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform:**

1. Whether, since she had announced her department’s plan to release state-owned farms to aspirant farmers, her department conducted an audit of all the specified farms to ascertain the details of the (a) current occupiers, (b) rights of holders and informal rights holders and (c)(i) value and (ii) current use of any infrastructure on farms; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details in each case;

(2) Whether her department has made any projections regarding support to aspirant farmers; if not, why not; if so, will the support be quantified? **NW3190E**

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

1. Yes, the Department conducted the assessment of the land in question to determine the state of occupation, immediately identifiable encumbrances and suitability for cultivation or grazing. It is through this work that about 300 000 hectares were identified for restitution, leaving about 700 000 hectares for release. This study further revealed that some pieces of land had occupiers, but the circumstances under which they had obtained possession of the land were not immediately ascertainable hence an enquiry would be necessary to establish, amongst other things, how they accessed the said land

(a),(b),(c)(i),(ii) Falls away.

1. Yes. Assessments and verification of the farms has been conducted bya team of engineers and other crop and livestock specialists. The aim is to assess the farms’ conditions in terms of infrastructure and input requirements. The analysis will be used to provide support in the form of start-up packages in accordance with available resources and in terms of each property’s needs. Support will be guided by the norms and standards for specified infrastructure on these farms. Training for successful beneficiaries is being prioritized and this will involve a skills audit which will be conducted, followed by relevant training. The Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) is geared to support the settled beneficiaries. There are 2 450 Extension Practitioners available in all Districts to support the settled beneficiaries with technological transfer of the latest agricultural production practices.