# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WRITTEN REPLY

**QUESTION 2637**

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**2637. Mr N S Matiase (EFF) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:**

What (a) practical plans does the Perishable Produce Export Control Board have to avail training and financial support to small-scale fruits vendors in Tshakhuma in Limpopo and other popular open free markets and (b) is the breakdown by area, gender and age of export-market participation and benefits by (i) commodity and (ii) farmer category?

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

1. The Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB) is a schedule 3A National Public Entity that is primarily responsible for regulating the export of perishable produce from South Africa. PPECB therefore conducts temperature monitoring and equipment certification of all perishable products and related equipment destined for export.

In addition, PPECB is appointed in terms of Section 2(3) of the Agricultural Products Standards Act, 1999 (Act No 119 of 1990) as an assignee of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), to conduct product inspections on regulated agricultural products destined for export. PPECB has as such not budgeted any funds towards training and financial support of small-scale fruit vendors of Tshakhuma and other open free markets. However, aligned with its organisational strategy, the PPECB also runs an export readiness training programme in conjunction with DALRRD and all 9 provinces. The Export Readiness Program is a national food safety certificate program that focuses on:

* + Good agricultural practices;
  + Food safety; and
  + Responsible use of pesticides.

Smallholder farmers are selected by relevant Province through DALRRD and then provided to the PPECB for training.

1. To date the PPECB has trained 20 women and 10 youth from Nwanedi, Tzaneen and Polokwane areas as follows:
2. Commodity: Vegetables; and
3. Farmer category: Small scale farmers who sell to retailers and fresh produce market.

The PPECB will however engage the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development about the training needs for the Tshakhuma Region.