# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WRITTEN REPLY

**QUESTION 2745**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER [No 31-2021 SIXTH PARLIAMENT] DATE OF PUBLICATION: 03 DECEMBER 2021**

**2745. Inkosi R N Cebekhulu (IFP) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:**

In light of the reported growth by 15% in the agricultural sector during the hard lockdown to curb the spread of COVID-19, what plans does her department have to mitigate the potential damage due to (a) logistics and (b) erratic weather to ensure that these factors do not interfere with the increased export opportunities? **NW3260E**

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

1. The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) and PPECB have sufficient capacity to handle all anticipated volumes and will remain operational even during lockdown level 5. This available capacity has freed the citrus season that is winding down to allow focus on the apples and table grapes seasons that are picking up. DALRRD has overtime approvals in place to be tapped into should a need arise owing to unprecedented port congestions. – can we write this paragraph in a past tense
2. (DALRRD) facilitates the implementation of disaster risk reduction measures in the sector including those caused by erratic weather. The National Agrometeorological Committee (NAC) chaired by DALRRD consists of DALRRD Technical Directorates, South African Weather Service (SAWS), Agricultural Research Council (ARC), provincial departments as well as research and academic institutions. NAC amongst other factors discusses projected rainfall and temperatures as well as their potential impacts for mitigation of extreme weather events and maximisation of production for both crops and livestock. The information discussed in the NAC meetings also includes best veld management practices to counter impacts of impending hazards for continuous production and best quality produce to satisfy various markets.

DALRRD monitors production in the sector as well as all important aspects such as weather and climate conditions to ensure preparedness and lead-time response towards impacts of extreme weather events. The advisories issued on monthly basis by DALRRD that are accessible to the stakeholders through Provincial Departments, Organised Agriculture and websites ensures effective planning and execution of farming activities. DALRRD further issues daily extreme weather warnings which also assist farmers in the short-term planning such as harvesting and transportation to intended markets for mitigation of erratic weather. The managed crops and livestock commodities in the sector are in line with their market demand, as well as seasonal climate watch issued by SAWS amongst other factors.

The DALRRD is implementing the sector initiatives of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP). Progress reports are submitted to the National Economic Recovery Council that is chaired by his Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa at intervals. Related to this the department visited the areas that were affected by the riots in Kwazulu-Natal and Gauteng to assess the damage, the impact on logistics, access to markets and food security. After that the two affected provinces developed and implemented the provincial sector recovery plans.