# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WRITTEN REPLY

**QUESTION 2766**

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**2766. Mr M K Montwedi (EFF) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:**

How has her department contributed to organic farming in the past three financial years?

# NW3281E

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

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) provides technical support and advice to the organic farming sector. This include cultivation practices, pests and disease control and post-harvest handling practices. Provincial departments of agriculture provide financial support to farmers through the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) and Ilima/ Letsema conditional grants.

Organic farming has great potential in terms of economic growth and job creation. This is due to the fact that organic farming is highly labour intensive. There is a bigger scope for increasing the size of the industry in terms of hectares and farmers because organically produced products fetch premium prices on both local and export markets.

DALRRD had also collaborating with the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition regarding linking smallholder organic farmers to retail outlets, including the big supermarket chains. The biggest efforts were directed at helping farmers to comply with market requirements of these retail outlets. This was in line with recommendations from the Fund for Research into Industrial Development, Growth and Equity (FRIDGE) study on organic farming carried out through National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC).

DALLRD is also responsible for regulating the organically produced products through the Agricultural Products Standards Act (Act 119 of 1990). This is done to ensure that good agricultural products are used when products are produced as well as the post-production handling procedures to ensure the quality and safety of products destined for local as well as export markets. Inspection services of the DALRRD ensures that all farmers and other stakeholders in the food value chain comply with the prescribed requirements.