**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 335**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER [No 2-2022 SIXTH PARLIAMENT]
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**335. Mr N P Masipa (DA) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:**

1. What (a) is the status of the vaccines that are being produced and sold at Onderspoort Biological Products and (b) are the details of vaccines that are being imported from other countries and sold in the Republic and (c) are the details of their effectiveness in the treatment of animal diseases;

(2) what (a) vaccines are in short supply and (b) actions have been taken to address the shortage of the specified vaccines? **NW346E**

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

(1)(a) The Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP) continues to produce key vaccines, and some have recently been distributed across the country including Bluetongue vaccine and African horse-sickness vaccine. Most vaccines will be released soon in the coming months as per our sales forecast and production plan.

1. There is a large number of animal vaccines imported into the country and are sold by OBP’s competitors. The OBP only imports Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccine, which in turn it provides to the Department for use to control FMD.
2. During registration of vaccines by the Registrar of Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Seeds and Remedies Act 36 of 1947, all claims for effectiveness are evaluated by the registrar. The Vaccines will therefore not be registered unless they are proven to be effective. At production before bottling in particular, tests are conducted for efficacy. If there are any doubts on the efficacy, the vaccine is not passed. Efficacy test results are kept at the production facility for record purposes should there be failures in the field.

(2)(a) There have been concerns from industry on a shortage of vaccines for vector borne diseases. These vaccines included African horse sickness, Blue tongue and Rift valley fever, mainly raised by observations that rainfall for this year has been above normal. OBP has been releasing vaccine batches as soon as they are available to the outlets but because of overconsumption in the market, an apparent shortage has resulted.

(b) OBP has short and long-term production and preventative maintenance plans which are yielding positive outcomes. This is to ensure that scheduled production of vaccines is not interrupted.