**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 499 / NW566E**

**MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES:**

**MS A STEYN (DA) ASKED TO THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES**

**QUESTION:**

 (1)  (a) What steps has (i) his department and (ii) the Chief Directorate: Animal and Health taken to improve the Residue Monitoring Plan (RMP) following the findings in the report by the European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety that was published on 30 May 2017 that there are serious deficiencies in the RMP of the country and (b) what has the budget allocation been for the testing of live animals and animal products over the past five years;

(2)        whether his department or the entities reporting to him test for mycotoxins; if so, (a) which products are tested, (b) how often are mycotoxins tested, (c) what national and international standards are used in this regard, (d) which laboratories or institutions in the country are currently tasked with the (i) testing of mycotoxins and (ii) implementation of the RMP and (e) what has the budget allocation been to each laboratory over the past five years?  **NW566E**

**(1)       (a) What steps has (i) his department and (ii) the Chief Directorate: Animal and Health taken to improve the Residue Monitoring Plan (RMP) following the findings in the report by the European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety that was published on 30 May 2017 that there are serious deficiencies in the RMP of the country and (b) what has the budget allocation been for the testing of live animals and animal products over the past five years;**

(1) (a) (ii) The following corrective actions were implemented by the Chief Directorate: Animal Production and Health to improve the Residue Monitoring Plan (RMP) following the findings in the report by the European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety that was published on 30 May 2017

* **Capacity in DAFF**

A dedicated state veterinarian has been appointed in the section dealing with the National Chemical Residue Control Programme (NCRCP) to work on risk assessments that will ensure that all relevant veterinary medicinal products, pesticides, heavy metals and prohibited substances are always included in the programme.

The industry has availed a technical specialist to assist DAFF with the risk analysis and development of the sampling plan.

* **Laboratory Capacity and Proficiency**

The Agricultural Research Council – Onderstepoort Veterinary Research (ARC-OVR) has been engaged on deficiencies identified in the Chemical Residues testing laboratory in the EU report and measures are being put in place to correct the non-compliances as identified. The OVR has, however, indicated that there is need to procure additional analytical equipment for effective and proficient sample analysis as they currently only have one machine which cannot cope with the load.

Private laboratories have been engaged to process samples whilst the ARC-OVR laboratory is currently working on improving their laboratory capacity and proficiency. The industry will pay for the analysis of the samples at these laboratories and are currently engaging the laboratories to enter into Service Level Agreements.

A dedicated Quality Officer was appointed at the OVR Laboratory. The Quality Officer together with the Laboratory Manager will ensure the participation of the laboratory in proficiency testing schemes.

* **Sampling Methodology**

The sampling plan has been revised in line with the recommendations of the EU. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for sample registration at the laboratory has been updated.

* **Reporting**

Monthly reconciliation of samples submitted/received at the ARC-OVR Reference Laboratory was implemented so that timely corrective actions could be implemented for non-compliances.

Monthly meetings between the DAFF Residues Control Programme co-ordinator and the ARC-OVR Residue Laboratory Manager have been agreed on and are being honoured.

The DAFF co-ordinator presents the sampling statistics to the provinces at the Veterinary Public Health Advisory Committee Meetings which report to the Mintech (Veterinary Working Group).

(b)    Below is the budget allocation for the testing of live animals and animal products over the past five years

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Financial Year** | **Allocation** |
| 2013/2014 | R9 126 754 |
| 2014/2015 | R9 674 561 |
| 2015/2016 | R9 674 561 |
| 2016/2017 | R10 656 140 |
| 2017/2018 | R11 295 508 |

**(2)        whether his department or the entities reporting to him test for mycotoxins; if so, (a) which products are tested, (b) how often are mycotoxins tested, (c) what national and international standards are used in this regard, (d) which laboratories or institutions in the country are currently tasked with the (i) testing of mycotoxins and (ii) implementation of the RMP and (e) what has the budget allocation been to each laboratory over the past five years?**

2(a)   The department conducts testing on Crocodile, Ostrich, Game, Poultry, Beef, Pork, Mutton/Lamb for mycotoxins

2(b)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Commodity** | **Percentage of annual meat production sampled** |
| Beef | 1% |
| Mutton/lamb | 1% |
| Pork | 1% |
| Poultry | 1% |
| Crocodile | 5% |
| Game | 5% |
| Ostrich | 5% |

(c) Sampling frequency in line with EU legislation Commission Decision 97/747/EC and Council Directive 96/23/EC.

Testing methods are High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC) and Liquid Chromatography Mass Spectophotometry (LC-MS/MS) accredited by SANAS under ISO 17025.

(d) (i)  Agricultural Research Council- Onderstepoort Veterinary Research Residue Laboratory

(d) (ii)  Agricultural Research Council- Onderstepoort Veterinary Research Residue Laboratory is the National Reference Laboratory for the National Residue Programmes under the Memorandum of Understanding between DAFF and ARC.

(e)  Budget allocation as indicated above under 1(b).