

**2009 2010 Budget vote speech 2009/10 by Mrs MG Qabathe, MEC  
responsible for the Department of Agriculture, Free State province**

21 July 2009

*Ke lebisa ditumediso tsa ka ho speaker se hlomphehang hammoho le motlatsa speaker  
Ditho tse hlomphehang tsa lekgotla la ketso ya melao Free State  
Premier le ditho tsa lekgotla la phethahatso ke dumedise le ntlo ya borena porofensing ya Free State  
Baemedi ba Mmuso wa Selehae Mekgatlo ya demokerasi, ya Ntshetsopele le ya kgwebo e teng  
kwano Borapolasi le basebetsi ba mapolasing  
Baqolotsi ba ditaba Bahlanka ba mmuso Le setjhaba ka kakaretso re ya le dumedisa mosebetsing  
ona o moholo wa kajeno. Ka ditekanyetso tse re phatlalatsa boitlamo ba rona ho tshole tseo re  
ikemisiditseng ho di phethisa selemong se setjha sa dijhelete.*

Speaker, we owe a permanent debt to all those who have fought to the end so that we today are able to savour the fruits of a free and democratic South Africa. Thanks to their selfless sacrifice; we are able to stand today in this honourable house to steer the democratic development of our people and lead them to the ultimate destiny of a better life. One wishes to congratulate and thank all those who contributed positively on 18 July 2009, during the Nelson Mandela

Day celebrations, the Free State department also did its share. Honourable Speaker, the inspiration to work towards an economy in which all people take part freely, is fanned by the commitment of ordinary people in our province and the country, who stand up every day to fight relentlessly against poverty. This many do by fully embracing the visionary national call to improve their lot.

The Freedom Charter serves as a loadstar in guiding our thoughts in economic policy formulation and implementation as it provides guidelines into broad perspective of establishment of social democracy in which people participate equally and actively in matters of governance. So the people shall continue to govern and nobody will stop us from ensuring that the people share in the country's wealth. Therefore Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) is a deliberate act; of our long held view; of democratic principles that we uphold, a system that bears the hallmark of equality in sharing the wealth of the country.

*Ke tsamaiso ya kopanelo e dipakeng tsa mmuso le batho e re dumelang hore ka yona re tla atleha ho fihlela sepheo sa rona sa ho theha lefapha le tlang ho ba matla ho tsa temo, mme le na le tshwaetso e ntle maphelong a batho le moruong wa porofensi ka kakaretso. Sena se tiisa le ho netefatsa ponelopele ya lengolo le phatlalatsang. Ditokelo tsa Tokoloho, le radilweng ke setjhaba boetapeleng ba lekgotla la ANC Kliptown ka 1955, ha e re, "batho batla busa," hobane ke lona lekgotla lena le betlileng tsela eo re e tsamayang kajeno ya ho tsamaisa Lefapha le ho etella pele mosebetsi o moholo wa ho lwantsha bofuma le ho theha mosebetsi le kgwebo e kopaneng ka hara porofensi, esita le ho tshhetsa bohle ba ratang ho kena temong. Sena re se etsa ka kopanelo le setjhaba le bohle ba amehang temong.*

Because it is within this great organisation that the thought of a shared destiny between black and white farmers emanates, we continue to meet with both commercial and emerging farmers with a view of inculcating a culture of co-operation, partnership and consultation thus bringing them together to share ideas on how the agricultural sector should be developed. This is influenced by our belief that together we can do more.

In his State of the Province Address, our Premier, Honourable Comrade Ace Magashule, indicated that we are not going to work in silos but in cluster in the Free State province in order to advance the agenda of the Free State province for the Free State people. *Ke ka hoo, re le Mafapha a fapaneng, re*

*qadileng ho buisana le ho thusana ka tlhahiso ya dijo. Motho e mong o hloka dijo ho jara bophelo le ho aha boshahli ba mmele. Batho ba bang bona ba dipetlele eseng hobane ba kula; empa e le ka lebaka la tlala. So; we will work together as the affected departments.*

The Department of Agriculture, Public Works and Rural Development, Social Development, Education and Department of Human Settlement will work together for the better advancement of food security projects and food for our people. The Free State Department of Agriculture will further work with the Department of Education to develop food gardens in school yards. We are also going to partner with the Department of Co-operative Governance, Traditional Affairs and Human Settlement to ensure the establishment of Agri-villages. We will further work closely with the Department of Social Development in giving support to food gardens, bakery and chicken projects.

Honourable Speaker, the Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation knows that we need healthy bodies and healthy minds. They know the role of food in our bodies. This is why we will be planting together whilst ensuring that our farming communities are not left behind in participating in sport. Hopefully treasury will provide us with additional funding.

To date the department supported in excess of 194 projects which benefited approximately 7 828 beneficiaries across the province. This in turn had a direct impact on 4 217 women in the province particularly those at the low end of our economy.

*Re le tsholong la ho ruta batho ba ha borona ho iphatela ka bo bona. Sena se ka thusa ho fokoletsa Lefapha la ntshetsopele ya setjhaba morwalo wa batho ba phelang ka dithuso tsa Mmuso, ha feela ba ikemiseditse.*

With reference to the creation of decent jobs and sustainable livelihoods, the Department Of Agriculture will continue with its programmes in such a way that there is improved livelihoods and decent work for the people of the Free State through intervention programmes such as CASP, land care and the Ilima/Letsema. These are seen as the key programmes and strategies that will help to rid the high levels of poverty that our communities find themselves trapped in.

*Re ile ra tsebisa kgale hore ntja-pedi ha e hlolwe ke sebata. Ke kahoo re tlo sebedisanang mmoho le bohle ba atlehileng temong ; ba basweu le ba batsho; hore ba tataise ba fihlang ka hara kwebo ya temo.*

Our intent is to halt poverty and replace it with resourcefulness that will see many making a decent living out of a sector such as agriculture. We therefore believe that a joint effort by both experienced farmers and successful entrant farmers will serve as an effective buffer against poverty, and that their enterprises will form a launching pad for skills development and job creation, especially for rural people in the province.

*Ho ntlafatso ya dihlahiswa (Agro-Processing) Premier le ditho tse hlomphehang tsa lekgotla la ketsa melao, re ntse re thusa polasi ya Anon, seterekeng sa Motheo ho ba fumanela mebaraka le ho rekisa dihlahiswa tsa bona. Re bile re qeta ho rekala beng ba polasi ya Wilhemina, setekeng sa Thabo Mofutsanyana, disebediswa hore ba kgone ho ntlafatso dihlahiswa tsa bona e leng diperekisi le di-cherry. Ka hoo, Speaker, re se re nkile mehato e mebedi ho ya pele. Komoti ya Tlhokomelo le Hlahlobo (Monitoring and Evaluation Committee) e tlo tlala matsoho ke mosebetsi.*

Structural revitalisation

In order to attain its strategic fit and to address the new challenges as stated in the State of the Nation and the State of the Province Addresses, the department in conjunction with the Office of the Premier

is in the process of aligning its structure in order to achieve the goals as set out in the new mandate of government. This process will also run parallel with the skill audit and proper placement of personnel for optimal skills utilisation.

The department has therefore re-prioritised its budget to address the strategic thrust espoused by the national and provincial programmes of action. It therefore became imperative to align the organisational structure of the department; the ANC manifesto; the core of the issues raised during our door to door and the budget accordingly.

Speaker, the department has developed a service delivery value chain that says that the core business should be guided by three key pillars:

- \* agribusiness
- \* economic development planning
- \* agricultural development support and district services.

The agribusiness and economic development planning is aimed at providing the vital external linkages with departmental external stakeholders while the district services and the agricultural development support service will be responsible for service delivery at district level. This structural revitalisation is meant to improve service delivery and to graduate black farmers to commercial farming.

Skills development is vital in order to increase the pool of employable graduates. In the department we have appointed 30 interns and 80 percent of them are having agricultural tertiary qualifications. The department in conjunction with national Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery has enrolled all extension officers who had three years qualifications with tertiary institutions to upgrade their qualifications to a four year degree.

We have also equipped our field staff with the necessary tools in order to enable them to function while at the same time improving service delivery. Speaker; it is worth mentioning that the recruitment funds under extension recovery plan are allocated over the MTEF period and as a result; there is a need for the Department to sustain these appointments in the outer years. For the abovementioned service delivery value chain to be successful, we need to invest more in capacity building and thus a need for additional funds for technical staff recruitment will be required.

Our wellness programme is well underway and we have raised awareness with regard to HIV and AIDS both internally and in the farming community. This programme further assists employees with emotional well-being. We will continue to ensure that ours is a caring department, with a sense of belonging.

#### Programme 1: Administration

The Department of Agriculture under this programme is committed to ensuring that transformation within the workplace through the formulation of policies and programmes that observe the broader agenda of our province and government are observed. Under this programme, the department has therefore set aside an amount of R116,934 million for this financial year, which is intended to cover areas such as finance, personnel, information technology and communication (ICT), logistics, procurement and office leases to all programmes.

We have appointed a Head of Department, Dr Limakatso Moorosi, who will strategically lead the department. We have also appointed the general manager for corporate services to give the necessary support to our core business. The department wish to thank our previous Head of

Department, Mr Tshepiso Ramakarane, for an excellent work done and wish him well in his new area of work.

#### Programme 2: Sustainable resources management

For this financial year the national Department of Agriculture made available an amount of R4,113 million for land care projects. Furthermore the provincial Department of Agriculture will contribute R1 million again from the equitable share. In total an amount of R5,113 million will be invested in land care for this financial year; in turn having a direct benefit on 22 projects in the whole province. The total number of beneficiaries to benefit from this programme is 537.

It must also be reiterated that our junior land care programme in the department also seeks to create awareness on natural resource management in particular, targeting our youth across the province. This year a total of 1 000 learners are targeted again.

About 1 400 ha of invader species will in this financial year be eradicated and about 50 temporary job opportunities will be created. This programme, speaker, is very important especially considering the time in which we are living. The country and the world at large are engaged in finding solutions in responding to the global crisis of climate change; which this programme is directly there to address or create awareness in better managing and utilizing our natural resources.

The department has completed a study on the development of an implementation strategy for the 3000ha surplus water in the Orange River system allocated to the Free State province.

More than 100 people will benefit from the rolling out of the 3 000 Ha of surplus water rights in Xhariep, Motheo and Thabo Mofutsanyana district areas along the Caledon River. We have set aside R2,0 million from the CASP allocation to purchase central pivot system for Mahau Trust (eight beneficiaries) irrigation project to effectively utilize the 3 000 Ha of water rights and revitalise irrigation schemes. We will launch this project in this financial year together with the official launch of Provincial Irrigation Expansion (PIE) strategy for the utilisation of water rights in the province.

#### Programme 3: Farmer support and development

The province has received a total allocation of R65 659 000 from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery. Of this amount R15 169 000 is allocated to extension recovery plan, R6 563 000 is allocated for training and R43 927 000 is for on and off farm/projects infrastructure development. Speaker, under this programme the department will support 126 projects with on and off farm infrastructure development reduced from a previous 193 projects. The reduction was done to avoid establishing a lot of projects but with only a handful of them making the required impact. This will have a direct impact on 1 506 beneficiaries. Of this number 616 are females; 891 males; two people with disabilities and 291 youth. About 776 permanent jobs will be created.

We will continue to strengthen extension services with the current allocation and we will appoint an additional 20 extension staff in this financial year (5 EOs and 15 agricultural interns). From the Extension Recovery Plan (ERP) allocation the department has set aside R4,8 million for the implementation of the extension suit online in the Free State. Extension suit online is an internet based information support system in an effort to provide a mechanism to transfer information between research, extensions and farmers (Agricultural decision support system). We will also implement the Farmer Website to enable farmers to communicate amongst themselves and market their produce at ease.

Through these funds we have also supplied our extension officers with ICT infrastructure (Laptops, 3Gs, data projectors). From the 2008/09 CASP, extension recovery plan of R9 177 000 the department has managed to appoint 30 new extension officers to strengthen the extension services at grass root level and bring the total number of extension officers to 98 EOs in the province.

Speaker, we are working with the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs and other countries such as the Republic of China as key strategic partners when approaching economic growth in the province. The department will continue to work and strengthen partnerships with key role players. Fish farmers in the province will benefit from the commitment made by The Peoples Republic of China to invest more than 30 million RMB, which is R 40- 45 million towards the development of the aquaculture training centre in the Xhariep district area, Gariiep dam. The Chinese government has committed to provide technical and scientific expertise for a period of three years. The project will not only benefit the Free State province but other provinces in the country as well as Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries. Our aim is to start with the construction in this financial year 2009/10 (October 2009).

The Department of Agriculture, Free State had entered into a strategic partnership (by signing a Memorandum of Understanding) with the OVK, VKB and the Grain-SA to support 22 farmers to plant wheat with, fertiliser, seeds, herbicides, pesticides, mentorship/training, mechanisation etc. the partners will invest more than R8 million. In 2007 we have entered into a strategic partnership with OVK to support six farmers over a period of three years and positive results are beginning to show and these farmers are running commercially as we speak. We have also entered into a partnership with Potatoes South Africa (PSA) in some of our projects.

*Re ile ra kopana le Potato-SA ho ka seka seka maano ao re ka thusang dihawai tsa rona ka ona ekasitana le barutwana ba ikemiseditseng ho ka ntshetsa dithuto tsa bona pele. Ke ka hoo tsatsing la kajeno ba na ba PotatoSA ba leng teng ho ka bapatsa tshebetso ya bona ekasitana le ho bontsha tlhahiso eo barutwana ba rona mane Glen College ba e ntshang. Re dumellane le bona hore re tla sebetsa mmoho ho rupella dihawai tsa rona e kasitana le bana ba dikolo ka melemo le bohlokwa ba ditapole ka hara naha.*

The Department of Agriculture has partnered with the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) the University of Free State and the Central University of Technology in re-introducing the resilient Nguni Cattle Breed, which is an indigenous African breed into the province targeting emerging farmers, to enhance beef quality and output.

The scheme is aimed at supporting about 40 livestock farmers in the province. IDC has set aside R2,5 million for the Nguni Cattle Development and the Department has topped up with R1,0 million to bring the total figure to R3,5 million. We will be launching this initiative this week at Fezile Dabi district area by allocating 84 Nguni cattle to the first seven farmers; from Xhariep two, Lejweleputswa one, Fezile Dabi two and Thabo Mofutsanyana two.

We have also received R10,0 million for livestock improvement in the Xhariep district. With allocation from Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery we will implement about 11 projects (fodder flow and animal production as well as value adding) benefiting about 85 farmers. The Department of Agriculture, at national level, had made additional R26 million (for veld fire relief scheme) available to the Free State province to support the victims of veld fires that occurred during September 2008. In the financial year 2008/09 we have spent R15,0 million to support 861 farmers and about 13 932 cattle were fed.

A further R11,0 million will be spent during this current financial year. The scheme will benefit 2861 farmers when it ends in 2009/10 financial year. The good thing is that we are beginning to act pro-

actively to fight veld fires. To this end, speaker, we have pro-actively donated 40 slip on units to the Thabo Mofutsanyana District Municipality to enable the district to better support local municipalities in fire fighting. Each local municipality has received eight slip on units.

The department is proud to announce the following achievements: In celebration of the 16 days of Activism of No Violence Against Women seven women veterans in Winburg were supplied with garden implements and inputs. In celebrating 28 anniversary of the World Food Day, we were at Tikoe Irrigation and Relekile Secondary School in Hoopstad.

The Department of Agriculture will continue to support food security programme and lead the integrated food security and nutrition task team in the province. The department has set aside R3,0 million for food security purposes in this financial year 2009/10. For the 2009/10, the department has received approval from the National Treasury to spend R6 500 000 for the Letsema/Ilima "war on poverty". The budget will be spend for winter and summer cropping (R2,5 million), livestock improvement (R1,0 million), vegetable tunnels (R1,0 million), as well as other initiatives (R2,0 million).

I believe as a country we are on track towards achieving the medium-term goal of halving poverty and unemployment by 2014. Government set target to redistribute 30 percent of white owned agricultural land by 2014. By the financial year 2008/09 the Provincial Rural Development and Land Reform Office (RD and LR) has successfully managed to acquire 54040,4449 hectares of land. Under the Pro-active Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS), a total of 1162,7576 hectares was acquired, for the development and expansion of townships, while 1474,4813 hectares was acquired through the commonage programme and 7564,5967 hectares through the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD), thus bringing the total hectares of land acquired through the redistribution programme to 64 242,2800 hectares of land in the Free State province. The programme has thus far benefited 144 beneficiaries.

Since the inception of the programme (1995) 297 267,2224 hectares have been acquired to the total budget of R681,780,162, benefiting 7 680 black farmers.

Speaker, the challenge of the Department of Agriculture remains matching the roll out of such a distribution of land to giving tools and implements because of limited resources. Honourable members, the Free State department recently managed to intervene successfully, with the assistance of the national Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery and Rural Development, to avert the repossession of 52 farms by the Land Bank.

#### Programme 4: Veterinary services

In accordance with the Animal Disease Act, the quest to prevent the transmission of animal diseases to humans continues to be a focus of making a meaningful impact in as far as zoonotic disease threats are concerned. Our routine vaccination campaigns for Rabies, has ensured that the human Rabies cases reported in the province are brought to an absolute minimum. A total of 108 557 animals were vaccinated to prevent the spread of this killer disease from the wild animal population to our dogs and cats population in our province.

We have managed to prevent the outbreak of Anthrax in the Kingdom of Lesotho by vaccinating a total number of 22 570 animals along a 30km radius from the border. In order to comply with the requirements of our trade partners, surveillance campaigns were conducted for World Health Organisation for animal health listed diseases to prove our status as a province. By so doing a total of 149 650 samples were collected from our five districts to test the animal population for controlled diseases, whilst another 11 697 samples were collected for non-controlled diseases. Also, 559 513

animals were inspected for disease control purposes, with a total of 131 852 treated for various disease conditions.

In order to comply with the requirements of the Animal Identification Act, 1037 livestock animal owners were registered and 16 183 animals were branded/tattooed. Speaker, the Free State province during the 2008/09 financial year was listed as the third largest supplier of game meat to the European Union. Through this service, R233,000,000 was brought into the province, thus making a meaningful contribution to the economic growth of the country at large. A total of 99 abattoir plans were evaluated to ensure compliance with the regulations; and a total of 564 red meat and poultry abattoirs were inspected by our team of dedicated and committed personnel to ensure food safety and maintaining provincial export status.

The two laboratories continue to render a reliable and reputable diagnostic service through the performance of routine diagnostic tests whereby 660 dead animals were presented for post mortems, of which 9 811 bacteriological tests were performed, 175 306 serological samples were taken, 7 107 internal/external parasite samples and 5 967 reproduction samples were tested. Speaker, the veterinary technologists for the laboratory services still remains a national scarce skill and this hampers retention of this important skill within the department.

#### Programme 5: Technology, research and development services

Technology, research and development remain a key to the success of our farming communities. We currently have 17 research projects on various production related challenges running. We will be implementing another three research projects in this financial year. Our research projects are centred on water harvesting and conservation technologies for crop and rangeland production and livestock and plant production, i.e. the soya beans cultivar trial and the indigenous crops (Amaranthus and Cowpeas) trial. The information has been disseminated to about 391 farming communities through seven farmer information days held at various places.

#### Programme 6: Agricultural economics

The development of the agro-processing and value-adding strategy is seen as crucial as it will provide accurate prioritisation of effort and resource allocation by the department in particular in its endeavours to deliver on its mandate to promote the economic development of the Free State. The department has supported two projects namely Anona Agricultural Enterprise (six beneficiaries) project with R1,2 million for hydroponics, food processing plant and mechanization for vegetable production and packaging and Wilhemina farm (peach and cherries) by purchasing agro-processing/value adding equipments to the 21 beneficiaries of the project at Ficksburg to the total budget of R800 000 for production, value-adding and packaging.

I am glad to announce that we have completed a study on agro-processing and value adding in our province to enable us to implement agro-processing and value-adding initiatives. We have set aside R2,2 million for agro-processing and Value adding projects in this financial year. Marketing remains a challenge to our farmers hence we have developed an agricultural marketing strategy and implementation plan (2009/10-2013/14) for the province.

The department has also completed a provincial renewable energy audit study to explore opportunities on alternative energy sources in the province in an attempt to support local municipalities in reducing the energy challenges. The outcome of the study will be work-shopped with all local municipalities in the province in order to exploit possible economic opportunities.

#### Programme 7: Centre of excellence

Speaker, the aim of the department is to turn Glen Agricultural Institute into a Centre of Excellence. We have already discussed this issue with the Free State MEC for Education, Honourable Mr P H I Makgoe. The Free State Department of Agriculture in conjunction with the national Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, has partnered with the University of Free State to implement the centre of excellence concept. For our projects, in order to support this initiative, the department is in the process of upgrading Glen Agricultural Institute into a Centre of Excellence where farmers training will be conducted in order to improve the skills of our farming community.

The department will spend R15 million in this financial year towards the infrastructure enhancement of the institute. The ultimate aim is to move the Head Quarters to Glen Agricultural Institute. This will help the department to make a saving on the high rental costs that we have been incurring.

*Qetello*

Speaker, we are gladdened and encouraged that the rewards of our hard work will be a good harvest for our posterity. We commit to expend the funds allocated to us effectively in the financial cycle so that our spending patterns allow and give justification to an increased allocation in future.

*Re boela re etsa boipiletso ho setjhaba ka kakaretso ho sebedisa diofisi tsa Lefapha la rona diterekeng tsohle tsa porofensi ho iphumanela tlhahiso leseding e tlang ho ba thusa ka ditaba tse amanang lew temo le ntshetsopele ya kgwebo temong.*

*Kgotso Pula Nala*

*Ke a leboha*