

Press release: Minister Van Rensburg reacts on new Land Reform deal

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Body: "All South African farmers should grab this opportunity to assist in restoring failed land reform farms back to its former productive state", Gerrit van Rensburg, Western Cape Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development said.

Van Rensburg responded to the recent admission from National Minister of Land Reform and Rural Development, Gugile Nkwinti, that agricultural land reform is a failure, and up to 90% of all projects undertaken so far are failures, with dismal or no production activities.

Nkwinti also said that the Government's target of redistributing 30% of agricultural land by 2014 has been shelved, and that it will instead focus on getting redistributed land back into production. Nkwinti said that partnerships with commercial farmers will be forged to help struggling land reform farms.

Van Rensburg said that although money is needed to address the problem, money alone will not be sufficient. "Agricultural expertise; commitment, and hard work is now needed to address the challenges of restoring farms to productive enterprises".

Van Rensburg said that the restoration of infrastructure will in many cases be more expensive than what the farms cost initially. But in other instances the illegal influx of squatters and rampant theft are making it impossible to turn these farms around. He urged National government to also assist farmers in this regard.

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