

Press release: Drought aid in Eden

Date: 15 June 2010

Illustration: Photo by Wouter Kriel

W-Langkloof1: "Commercial Farmer Weeber Truter from Herold receives 30 bags of maize from Gerrit van Rensburg".

W-Langkloof2: "Gert MeCleun, Chair person of the Harlem Farmers Union, receives two bags of maize and two bags hey from Gerrit van Rensburg".

Body: The Western Cape Department of Agriculture yesterday distributed animal feed to five commercial and 60 small farmers in the Langkloof, Southern Cape. The Department worked together with Agri Klein Karoo in coordinating this relief programme, which is part of the R26.9 million Eden drought aid scheme launched at the beginning of this year.

"We have reserved R1 million from the R26.6 million for transporting, distribution and processing feed that is donated from elsewhere in the country", Gerrit van Rensburg, Western Cape Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development said yesterday. Van Rensburg attended the handing out of 40 tons of maize and hay to farmers in the Langkloof.

"Many Southern Cape farmers, who did not qualify for the initial aid efforts, are also in dire need due to the ongoing drought. We decided to assist these farmers through donations", Van Rensburg said. He said that although he realizes the aid is not nearly enough, at least it is something, and hopefully good winter rains will soon fall.

The commercial farmers each received 30 bags of maize. The small farmers each received 2 bags of maize as well as two bags of hay. Agri Klein Karoo made a hammer mill available in Harlem, enabling the small farmers to make silage for their animals.

Van Rensburg thanked the donors, and said that South African farmers have a proud history of helping one another in times of need. Donations received up to date include 32 tons of maize and 12 tons of hay from donors in Delmas and Bloemfontein. This will enable follow up handouts to be made to the affected farmers.

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