1 NOVEMBER 2007

TOESPRAAK DEUR COBUS DOWRY, MINISTER VAN LANDBOU IN DIE WES-KAAP *
BEKENDSTELLING VAN DIE SAGTE VRUGTE ONTWIKKELINGS KAMER,

Die meeste van u wat vandag hier teenwoordig is weet dat daar sekere uitdagings is waarmee ons binne die landbousektor moet deel indien ons wil verseker dat daar volgehoue groei binne die sektor is en terselfdertyd ook gehoor gee aan die regering se opdrag ten opsigte van die transformasie doelwitte. Van hierdie uitdagings is dan ook:

a) Grondhervorming en Swart ekonomiese bemagting in Landbou (AgriBEE);
b) Die vervaardiging van genoegsame veilige, gesonde sowel as omgewings- en sosiaal vriendelike landbou produkte;
c) Die hantering van uitdagings deur kompetisie van sommige van ons mededingers as gevolg van subsidies en tarief plafonne en die beskerming van bestaande buitelandse markte.
d) Daar is toenemende nasionale en internasionale sensitiwiteit oor die veiligheid van voedsel van dier- en plant oorsprong.
e) Konstruktiewe bydrae tot die ontwikkeling van Afrika deur NEPAD.

Grondhervorming en die bemagtiging van nuwe boere moet daarop ingestel wees om volhoubaarheid te verseker en nie net om groot getalle mense op grond neer te sit en dan na een of twee jaar weer te vind dat hierdie sogenaamde bemagtigdes die grond terugverkoop aan kommersiële boere nie.

In ons geveg teen armoede het ons nou die fase bereik waar dienslewering op alle vlakke daarop ingestel moet wees om die ekonomie te laat groei sodat ons nuwe werksgeleenthede kan skep wat die katalisator moet wees om die grense van armoede te verskuif en daarom is dit nodig dat ons voortdurend daarna sal streef dat die landbousektor * konstante groei sal toon.

U weet dat die Landbousektor geïdentifiseer word as een van die sektore wat * beduidende rol moet speel in die bereiking van die regering se doelwit om die ekonomie met 6% te laat groei deur middel van die Versnelde Groei en Ontwikkeling Strategie (ASGISA).

Binne die Departement van Landbou in die Wes-Kaap is daar verskeie programme wat deur hulle bydraes die klimaat help skep om die grondslag

vir sukses te lê. Die sukses van ASGISA gaan afhang van die mate waarin ons in staat is om innoverend te dink sodat ons die kettings kan breek wat groei belemmer.
Toenemende landbouproduksie sal beide indiensneming- en inkomste dwarsdeur die ekonomie genereer, wat weer op sy beurt aangewend kan word in werkverskaffingstrategiëe in industrieë en besighede.

Your Industry plays a vital role in this, because of the income generated through exports to foreign markets. It is estimated that an increase of only 5% in the export of certain agricultural products would add 22 900-job opportunities to the economy of the Western Cape. More importantly, only 9 500 (41%) of these employment opportunities would be in the primary agricultural sector while the balance would be in the up and down stream of the economic activities.

Ek wil graag weer terugkom na Grondhervorming toe aangesien Grondhervorming en Swart Ekonomiese bemagtiging tans die prioriteit van die regering op Landbou gebied is, veral met die oog op maatskaplike, politieke en ekonomiese stabiliteit. Die pas van grondhervorming was tot nou toe baie stadig. In die Wes-Kaap is daar in die eerste 12 jaar slegs 83 000 hektaar grond aan voorheen benadeelde persone oorgedra. Met ons verskerpte poging het ons egter verlede jaar 125 000 oorgedra. Dit is egter nog ver van die 383 000 hektaar wat ons jaarliks tot 2014 sal moet oordra indien ons die 30% doelwit wil bereik. Ons moet bou op die suksesverhale en die groter klem lê op Mentorskap as ons daarin wil slaag om nuwe boere volhoubaar te vestig.

The extremely high level of domestic and export support that farmers in developed countries receive, is putting South-African farmers at a total disadvantage on an exceptional unequal playing field. In some countries, notably Japan, Norway, Switzerland and South Korea, more than two thir
ds of farmer*s income is in some way or another derived from government support. The quasi-competitiveness created in this way is a clear threat to local farmers, both resource poor and commercial. However, good arguments exist to maintain that these levels of support will not necessarily disappear, but will most probably just be continued in another guise. This is an issue that I believe should receive more attention if we went to keep especially our farmers on the land.

Die veranderende omstandighede in die aanvraag na landbouprodukte beteken dat die prys van produkte onbepaald onder druk gaan verkeer. Die veranderende wisselkoers maak dit onmoontlik vir produsente om behoorlik te beplan, terwyl die penetrasie van tradisionele markte deur

ander mededingers daagliks *n faktor is waarmee rekening gehou moet word.

Although the food safety was in South Africa traditionally subservient to the availability of food, it is becoming increasingly clear that food safety issues should receive mounting priority. This is not only the case for export markets (where non-compliance with standards such as HACCP and Eurogap may close existing and potential markets) but also on the domestic market.

Given South Africa*s unique conditions and challenges we have to have a clear vision of the road we want to travel. Therefore it is important that a clear distinction is made between the social support functions and the economic development functions of all the role players. Due to political necessities this distinction is often muddled, with the result that focus is lost and the trust in the government is eroded. I am a firm believer in partnerships and as partners we should embark on the road to a better life for all our people by building onto a framework that should consist of six fundamental elements namely:

a) To create success stories through active involvement (and market them).
b) To invest in efficient human capital development.
c) To create an environment conducive for business.
d) To go out and actively source investment for development programmes
e) Create an appropriate research and technology base.
f) Actively develop products, stimulate new markets and facilitate market entry.

Vir die Departement Landbou in die Wes-Kaap is die beginsel van vennootskappe een van die fondamentstene in die bereiking van ons doelwitte om opkomende boere so te vestig dat hulle volhoubaar kan boer.

Ek wil die Sagte Vrugte Produsente Trust bedank vir sy visie en toewyding om seker te maak dat die Sagte vrugte bedryf * voorbeeld stel wanneer dit kom by bemagtiging.

As you well know, there are a number of challenges facing emerging farmers in South Africa. These among other include access to markets, finance, infrastructural support, access to information, limited institutional capacity, poor networking, to name but a few.

On the other hand, the current institutional set-up, both public and private, lacks the capacity of effectively represent the interests of the growers and particularly those of the emerging farmers. A key element in the capitation of emerging farmers is the integrating of them into existing growers associations.

To enable effective service delivery to these farmers, they need to be organized into commodity groups and you have realised that and decided to address these challenges in a concrete way.

It is most commendable that the Deciduous Fruit Producers Trust has decided to follow a cluster-based approach to address the two above-mentioned challenges that are need to integrate emerging farmers successfully into established structures of the DFPT.

I want to congratulate you with your vision and trust that you will reap the benefits not only as an Industry, but also as our partner in our effort to establish a new generation of farmers who never had the opportunity to become established contributors to the economy of the country.

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