



agriculture,  
forestry & fisheries

Department:  
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Media Statement**

**26 March 2020**

## **UPDATE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECTOR VALUE CHAIN - COVID-19**

The agriculture and food supply sector remains a vital cog during this period. In terms of the Amended Regulation No. 398 of the Disaster Management Act, 2002, the sector responsible for food security has been declared as essential. This includes the harvesting and storage of agricultural commodities. This Regulation re-emphasises that the entire food value chain, from farm-related operations, agro-processing and food manufacturing, logistics and related services, wholesale and retail services, and all support functions that ensure efficient delivery of the agro-food system have to be functional to ensure that there is access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food.

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Ms Thoko Didiza reiterates that there is no need for panic buying of food. This type of buying only serves to create distortions and artificial scarcities within the food supply sector.

The intervention measures that government and the agricultural food value chain have put in place are:

1. Monitor availability and stability of food supply – the monitoring is done via an End-to-End Agricultural value chain Tracker, which has a 24 to 48 hour reporting cycle. The Department will release status regular updates in relation to these monitoring activities. In case there are extreme cases where the security of supply of staple commodities is threatened, the Department will recommend to the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition to impose appropriate export restrictions.
2. Ensure that critical agricultural production activities such as harvesting continue uninterrupted – this is done under strict prescripts as provided for in Regulation No. 398 of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 and Department of Health COVID-19 hygiene protocol. The safety of our farmers and farmworkers on and off work is very important to us.

For all queries relating to matters relating to COVID-19 within the sector, kindly contact the Department at [COVID-19info@dalrrd.gov.za](mailto:COVID-19info@dalrrd.gov.za) or phone the following toll free number 086 024 6640.

For media inquiries please contact the Media Liaison Officer Mr Reggie Ngcobo on 0828832458

Issued by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

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