



We develop the South African Agriculture Industry.
Ons ontwikkel die Suid-Afrikaanse Landbou Industrie.

7 March 2019

Letter to Members

Dear member,

Agri SA wants to clarify its views on important topical issues.

For the past three years the ongoing drought and uncertainty about expropriation without compensation has put enormous pressure on farmers. Most farmers have had to make difficult decisions every day about where and how to save money.

In the midst of the pressure on us as farmers, it is easy to get angry, criticise and threaten. However, the solution to agriculture's challenges is sober thinking. A diplomatic approach works better than making threats over and over, knowing that tougher sanctions such as constitutional litigation are always in the back pocket.

In addition, the politics around expropriation is making the most optimistic farmer heavy-hearted.

The allegation that I will sacrifice the 80% of farmers for expropriation is a lie. Nor is it Agri SA's view. My own farm and legacy fall within the so-called 80% of farms, which is now clouded in controversy. In fact, most of Agri SA's farmers fall within the 80% of small and medium-sized farmers.

The website *The Rational Standard* wrongly and out of context quoted me on 13 February 2019 and 4 March 2019, creating the impression that I am in favour of radical land reform and the sacrificing of smaller commercial farmers. The relevant quotes come from sessions that I had to present with, among others, Professor Mohammed Karaan. We had to summarise all the possibilities and options of various role players and co-members of the President's land reform panel. We had to make a presentation on everything that was discussed and put all suggestions and options on the table for the public to comment on.

I emphasise again - I do not agree with the proposal that 20% of large-scale commercial farmers should be left alone, while the remaining "smaller" 80% can be expropriated. All farmers, irrespective of size, are important to Agri SA and the agricultural value chain.

Agri SA's views in the aforementioned articles was distorted and I was wrongly quoted. It creates unnecessary division when we, as farmers, must stand together.

Agri SA has already taken the government to court and won cases. We'll do that again. I would like to share some good news with you: Melmoth's farmers, with Agri SA's financial assistance, won their case against the Valuer-General and Minister of Rural Development with costs. The farmers were offered less than half of the compensation they had previously agreed on with the state. This is just another example of how Agri SA is prioritising and fighting for farmers' land rights.

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Agri SA is an independent body funded by farmers, industry organisations and businesses whose existence depend on farmers. We are independent and do not take orders from organisations that have no interest in agriculture. Our mandates come from you, our members. We presented the mandates on land at the 2018 congress and provided opportunity for amendment. Congress reaffirmed the existing mandates with only one exception (in respect of a right of first refusal).

Over the past month, a new grouping has been created within agriculture. We welcome any organisation that wants to support farmers as long as it is done responsibly. Agri SA and its members advocate unity within agriculture and will work with all relevant organisations to achieve unity.

I will make Agri SA's views very clear:

- Agri SA has always fought for market value-based compensation and will continue to do so;
- Agri SA will fight for the rule of law in the highest court, and internationally if necessary;
- Agri SA sees the 80% of small and medium farmers as the core of agriculture. It is these farmers who keep the rural areas viable, create jobs, provide volumes for the value chain and also form the core of Agri SA's membership base. At the same time, commercial farmers who are large-scale farmers and corporate members are important and play an essential role in the agricultural value chain. Agri SA supports all farmers and agricultural stakeholders who share our vision.
- Agri SA sits on the President's advisory panel on land and other advisory forums to pro-actively influence policies in the favour of farmers - this is a difficult environment to work in, but we get much more done this way rather than just criticising from the outside;
- Agri SA takes its lead through a proper mandating structure that comes from ground level;
- Agri SA leaders are accountable to their members.

We are happy to work with all organisations to strengthen the interests of farmers but require an honest discussion. Agri SA's vision is unity about agriculture.

Regards,



Dan Kriek

