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18 May 2020

Dear MEC Sithole-Moloi and HOD Sibande

I hope that this letter finds you well.

At a meeting of the Agricultural portfolio committee last week the Department presented its Covid-19 response. I was taken aback by the fact that after more than 50 days of lockdown there seems to be very little that has been done to assist the agricultural sector directly or indirectly. Most of the departments efforts have been focused on assisting other departments or has been a response to a national directive.

This is more concerning given that the President called for a lockdown to give the country time to prepare for the inevitable rise in cases and the affects that would have on individuals and the economy.

It is imperative that we urgently put in place measures to ensure food security in KZN as well as to anticipate and plan for as many eventualities as possible. To this effect and in the spirit of cooperation I would like to put for these suggestions:

- The mass roll-out of masks and sanitisers for emerging and commercial farmers
- The subsidisation and implementation of a routine sanitisation plan for food production facilities throughout KZN
- A widespread education drive to farmers and farm workers and;
- The sanitisation of farms and workers' dwellings.

Considering that the Department has underspent nearly R100 million it would not be impossible to reprioritise funds and implement some of these suggestions relatively quickly.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Christopher Pappas MPL
B. Town and Regional Planning
Member of the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee