

WHERE WE CAN BE FOUND

HEAD OFFICE

Building 6, Floor 1&2
No 7 Government Boulevard
Riverside Park
Nelspruit 1200
Republic of South Africa

Private Bag x 11219
Nelspruit 1200
Republic of South Africa
Tel: +27 (0)13 766 6082
6048/6020
Fax: +27 (0)13 766 8429

Email: info.dardla@mpg.gov.za
Website: <http://dardla.mpg.gov.za>

REGIONAL OFFICES

EHLANZENI NORTH DISTRICT OFFICE

101 Main Road
Thulamahashe
1365
Republic of South Africa

Private Bag x 1321
Thulamahashe 1365
Republic of South Africa
Tel: +27 (0)13 759 4000
Fax: +27 (0)13 759 4165

EHLANZENI SOUTH DISTRICT OFFICE

18 Jones Street
Nelspruit 1200
Republic of South Africa

P.O. Box 266
Nelspruit 1200
Republic of South Africa
Tel: 013 759 4039
Fax: 013 759 4165

NKANGALA DISTRICT OFFICE

Building 16
Government Complex
Kwamhlanga 1022
Republic of South Africa

Private Bag x 4017

Kwamhlanga 1022
Republic of South Africa
Tel: +27 (0)13 947 2551
Fax: +27 (0)13 947 2809

Thembisile Hani Municipality
Unit 421(Portion1)
Gemsbokfontein Farm 231 JR
Mkobola Magisterial District

GERT SIBANDE DISTRICT OFFICE

44 Church Street
Ermelo 2350
Republic of South Africa

Private Bag X 9071
Ermelo 2350
Republic of South Africa
Tel: +27(0)17 819 2076
Fax: +27(0)17 811 0774

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Tekulima

Nentuthuko

Agriculture and Development

Young Farmer Incubator
Programme Launched

Vaccinate...or Else!!!

Mpumalanga
shines at the 2015 DAFF
FEA Awards

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agriculture, rural development,
land & environmental affairs
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA





EDITORIAL TEAM

EDITOR

Zanele Shabangu

SUB- EDITOR

Bheki Nyathikazi

CONTRIBUTORS

Mbalenhle Zulu

Celani Ndude

Gugu Nkosi

Patrick Nyathi

Andile Shabangu

Zenzile Nhlanguwini

LAYOUT AND GRAPHIC DESIGN

Nonhlanhla Dooka

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A new Aquaculture Bill, currently a draft, will give some direction on current legislation, like NEMBA and its regulations and other conservation legislation in its present state.

If not addressed, the Aquaculture Industry will see unemployment figures in the province shooting up. The present illegal netting of the rivers and dams in Mpumalanga will surely escalate and will negatively impact fish population that holds no good for conservation efforts of natural resources.



Invasive Species In Mpumalanga Dams and Rivers



Invasive Species In Mpumalanga Dams and Rivers

Len Coetze

The foreign invasive fresh water crayfish species, the Australian *Cherax quadricarinatus*, is present in large quantities in the province's rivers and dams. South Africa is one of the top four crayfish providers in the world. An estimated 50 tonnes of its crayfish are poached from waters per annum. We have no indigenous fresh water crayfish, but the *Cherax quadricarinatus* has settled in nicely.

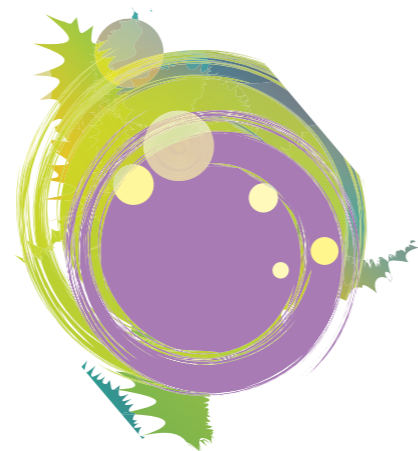
Aquaculture is aimed at improving livelihoods and further reduce 28.4% unemployment rate. The Economic clusters within the District Municipalities are currently being brought onboard and may play a major role in the aquaculture development and ensuring collaborative aquaculture concept write up for each municipality. Aquaculture being a dynamic science would probably not accommodate everybody but with the right training, opportunities could be made available where people could contribute to various segments of the aquaculture industry. So everybody does not need to cultivate fish but somebody can produce a food source (earth worms, plant material, collect mosquito larva), do maintenance or other actions associated with the industry. This might also address the current loss of employment experienced in the other sectors in Mpumalanga and stem the increase in the unemployed ratings for the province

The demand for aquaculture products are currently outstripping the supply and that is why the natural resources are being poached on daily bases. Finding a balance between the impact on Nature Conservation and Agriculture is a concern, but the belief is that people are fed, while the pressure on natural resources is also managed to some extent. It is also the believed that if a resource has proven that it has a demand, its farming should be done on a safe and manageable level.



Concerns about freshwater crayfish (listed as alien-invasive species in the NEMBA regulation) is in large quantities in river systems and dams in Mpumalanga Province. The invasion also extends to other provinces such as KZN and Limpopo. Countries such as Japan invested R60 million into training of Indonesian farmers for production of the species as the demand is slowly outstripping supply. (Lobster is poached at a 50 ton rate/year in South Africa.)

RESEARCH CORNER



Editorial

“I've come to believe that each of us has a personal calling that's as unique as a fingerprint – and that the best way to succeed is to discover what you love and then find a way to offer it to others in the form of service, working hard, and also allowing the energy of the universe to lead you”. Oprah Winfrey

The quote best suites a young lady from a small rural village called eMbangwane in the Nkomazi Local Municipality, Ms Julia Shungube, the reigning DAFF Female Entrepreneur Awards Overall winner. She won the national award after winning at a provincial level under the Processing category. We pride ourselves as a province to scoop the national Female Entrepreneur Awards, held in Durban where all nine provinces participated.

Ms Shungube is one woman who values and optimally uses all her gifts. A Security Guard at night, she produces Umhlafusha Oil, mostly used for dry skin and as a hair product. Speak of Indigenous Knowledge System; Julia took over from her late grandmother who used to produce the same oil using the Mhlafusha tree, which at the time was used mainly as a product for baby skin.

More good stories and insightful information is covered in this newsletter; so sit back, relax and enjoy it.

Kubhunya Lutfuli, Kusephuka Tidzindzi, Siyalima eMpumalanga!

Zanele Shabangu



Message from the MEC

In pursuit of fulfilling its mandate, the Department is working tirelessly to enhance and ensure that the province is food secured by encouraging people to till the land. The agricultural sector is one of the key strategic stakeholders for contributing towards vibrant, equitable, sustainable rural communities and contributing towards food security for all. Most people depend on it for their livelihood, therefore it plays a significant role in job creation, hence we continue with our call for every available piece of land to be utilized optimally by every household.

The current land reform initiatives, including the Land and Agricultural Reform programme, are being strengthened and expanded to create sustainable livelihoods on a massive scale, as such food security and sustainable livelihoods remain at the centre of the Department's priorities. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that we continue distributing land, while we provide strategies that deal with other factors affecting production in land reform farms.

Getting closer to the people is one aspect that warrants our Department to become aware of our people's needs, and this has assisted us in enhancing the cooperation between the Department and its people. Most importantly, it places open communication at the heart of what we do, and it establishes platforms through which communities can interact with the Department.

It is without a doubt that we have made enormous progress in agricultural development. Investing in agricultural infrastructure has seen smallholder and emerging commercial farmers' projects becoming sustainable. We are embarking on a number of projects that we believe will make an impact, and of course we continue to assess whether our services have value to our people.

Among the many public participation activities conducted, the Department also prides itself in having hosted a successful Waste Summit. Waste is one aspect of our society, often neglected by many without realising that it is an integral part of our daily lives. We continue with the implementation of our key programmes, Masibuyele Emasimini (ME) and Masibuyele Esibayeni (MESP), to increase production levels and ensure food security. Our gratitude goes to the farmers, various stakeholders in agriculture and rural communities who are playing their part in rural development, and in ensuring food security. Ours is to continue improving the lives of our citizens.

*Kubhunya Lutfuli, Kusephuka
Tidzindzi,
Siyalima eMpumalanga!*

MEC MA Gamede



Exhibition Stands at the Environmental Summit.

MEC UNEARTH'S SERIOUS CHALLENGES IN CPAs

The DARDLEA MEC Mr MA Gamede held a series of meetings with representatives of Communal Property Associations (CPA) in all three Districts, with an aim to unpack current challenges facing the CPAs. Those issues are blamed for rendering the majority of CPAs throughout the province dysfunctional. They range from infightings, camps or cliques, fight for positions, lack of transparency and those who do not want to relinquish power. These were but some of the challenges facing CPA's, thereby rendering them dysfunctional.

It emerged during the marathon meetings held in Steve Tshwete, Mbombela and Mkhondo that the majority of CPAs have serious problems, such that emotions ran high at several occasions during the meetings. CPAs were pointing fingers at government, for their failure to sustain production in the Land Reform farms. MEC Gamede reminded them about the importance of bringing those farms back to production, since government spent over R4.4 billion on Land Restitution since 1994. In the main, the MEC called on transparent re-election of CPA committee members, stating that those that have overstayed in the committees must make way for fresh blood.



MEC Gamede meeting CPAs from Gert Sibande in Mkhondo, with Mr Job Mthombeni.



Emotions heating up at a CPA meeting in Nkangala.

AIR QUALITY ISSUES DOMINATE THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMIT

A provincial Environmental Summit - aimed at providing a networking platform and to initiate dialogue between government departments and the plantation forestry, industry and mining – was held on 21 August in White River. The Summit gave participating organisations and opportunity to pave a way for an environmentally sustainable, climate change resilient and low-carbon Mpumalanga.

You must share and showcase your best practices and innovative approaches to development imperatives and sustainable utilization. Focus aggressively on addressing issues of Land Degradation, Waste Management and Air Quality Initiatives. These are issues that I am passionate about”, said MEC MA Gamede during his official address to delegates at the summit.

Mpumalanga is a province characterised by diverse and spectacular scenic beauty, rich biodiversity and mineral wealth. This same biodiversity and mineral wealth provides the natural resources and ecological infrastructure that supports some of our county's important economic activities, such as tourism, agriculture, forestry and mining.

But the province faces ever growing pressure on the environment; and if the current challenges are not effectively addressed, they will exacerbate the rate of environmental degradation.



Above and below: Exhibition Stands during Environmental Summit.



Message from the HOD

The Department provides a significant platform to pull women away from the margins of the agricultural economic activities and place them at the heart of the industry. This is further so because women are the front echelons in the fight against poverty and underdevelopment.

Empowering women in the agricultural sector is one of government's main priorities and as such several measures such as the DAFF Female Entrepreneur Awards (FEA) programme have been put in place. Through the programme, women are assisted by providing a wide range of support services for them to become successful entrepreneurs. We are proud as a Department, and as a province, to have produced a national winner in what was obviously a tough competition among Ms Julia Shungube's peers. We therefore call upon all our foot-soldiers, our Extension Officers, to remain close with our farmers, to incubate them, and continue to produce more Julia Shungubes.

It cannot be further emphasized the need to ensure that the agricultural sector is kept alive for our future generations. This has been necessitated after realizing that this sector is dwindling; and knowing that it is one of the strong anchors in the province, the department had to play its part. It is on these grounds that a youth incubator programme was initiated. This project ensures that youth are capacitated in both formal and informal training on all aspects of agriculture; crop and animal production, aquaculture etc. This is indeed ground-breaking because the youth are given an opportunity to be future farmers that will be able to sustain themselves through agriculture, also play a role in ensuring food security. Most importantly, it elevates agriculture to the youth to make them understand that the sector is an economic vehicle.

Protection of our environment is also paramount in our programmes. We are engaging on a provincial awareness programme that will alert our communities on the role they can play in protecting and greening our areas. This support will further be cascaded to all the schools through the engagement in our environmental centres to ensure proper understanding of the effects our actions have on the environment.

The wellbeing of animals is also at the heart of our Department. That is why we took our provincial Rabies Vaccination Campaign to another level, as we continue the fight against the fatal Rabies disease. World Rabies Day is celebrated internationally on the 28th of September annually. Thousands of dogs and cats in Mpumalanga were vaccinated, and others castrated. We appreciate the teams from our Veterinary Services Directorate, for braving the heat while dealing with the patients, but most importantly we appreciate the response by communities who responded positively to our call for them to have their pets vaccinated.

Dogs are vaccinated every year, but humans are vaccinated when they get bitten by a rabies-infected dog. This can be prevented: Let us vaccinate our pets.

Ngiyabonga.



Ms Sindisiwe Xulu



Kubhunya Lutfuli, Kusephuka
Tidzindzi, Siyalima eMpumalanga!

MPUMALANGA

contributes
towards COP-21 in
Paris

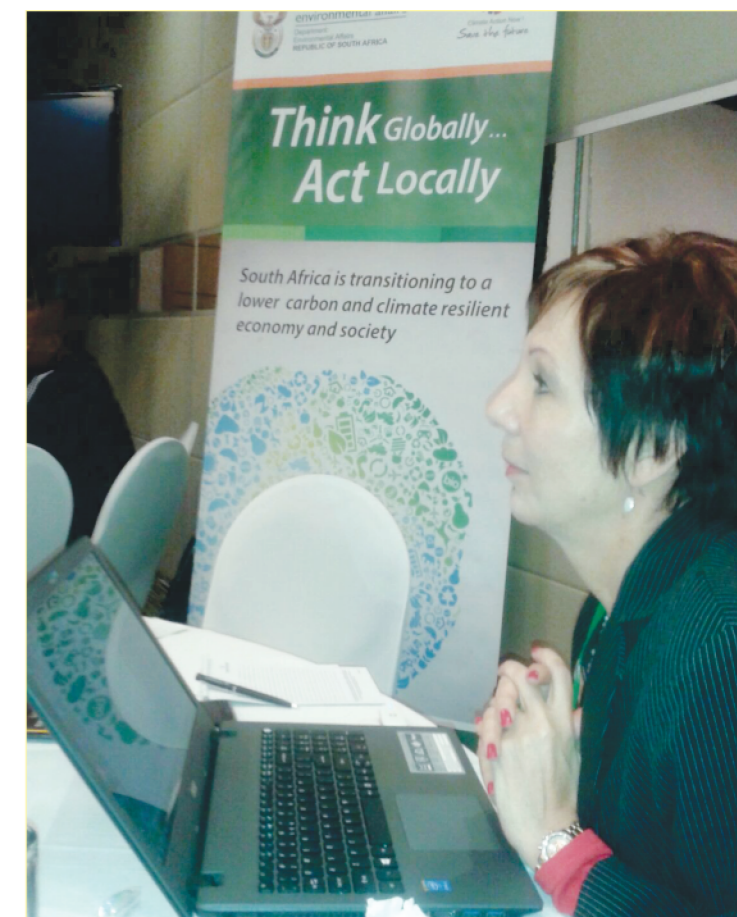
The Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land & Environmental Affairs in collaboration with the national Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), hosted a successful provincial Climate Change Stakeholder Engagement Conference on the 24 August 2015 in Nelspruit. The stakeholder engagement served as a build-up towards the COP-21 conference in Paris in December.

The provincial gathering came after a four-day National Climate Change Response Dialogue and Conference hosted by DEA in collaboration with the Inter-Governmental Committee on Climate Change (IGCCC) in November 2014, where initial engagements on South Africa's position in the international arena were carried out.

"This provincial engagement must also provide an opportunity to raise awareness, around Climate Change issues and response effort at all levels", said MEC Gamede.

Speaking at the start of the stakeholder engagement at Emnotweni Casino, MEC MA Gamede called on delegates to use the opportunity to discuss Mpumalanga's position, fill gaps and build a common understanding and approach towards Paris, and also develop a common provincial position on the framing of the nationally determined contribution. "This provincial engagement must also provide an opportunity to raise awareness, mobilise, inform and engage with key stakeholder groups and general public around Climate Change issues and response effort at all levels", said MEC Gamede.

About 250 delegates from all Districts in the province attended the provincial stakeholder engagement, aimed at contributing to South Africa's position for the climate negotiations towards COP-21 in Paris. Their contributions will showcase Mpumalanga's climate change response efforts at local and provincial levels, and build on the outcomes of the 2014 National Climate Change Response Dialogue.



Dr Almarie De Lange at the Workshop.



MEC MA Gamede addressing the COP -21 Stakeholder Engagement Workshop in Mbombela.



MPUMALANGA YOUNG FARMERS INCUBATOR PROGRAMME



The Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs has a mandate of transforming rural economic situation and expand agricultural production in the Province. As a Department we are excited to have officially launched the first-ever Mpumalanga Fortune-40 Young Farmers Incubator Programme in Kwaggafontein at Thembisile Hani Local Municipality. The launch followed a pronouncement made by the Honourable Premier Mr DD Mabuza during his State of the Province in February 2015, in which he called for the establishment of a youth incubator programme.

With R80-million set aside for the programme, the Fortune-40 Incubator is comprised of 20 youth-owned cooperatives, focusing on developing them to focus on dry and land crop production, livestock production and poultry development.

Objectives of the programme

The objectives of the Fortune 40 is to integrate the Youth back into the Agricultural Sector

- To breach the age gap in the farming sector and make Agriculture to be more attractive to young people
- To create economic opportunities for young unemployed people who are currently economically inactive
- To provide technical agricultural and business management training opportunities to the youth
- To prepare young people to benefit meaningfully as part of the Land Reform turnaround strategy

Throughout the Province, 20 farms have been selected whereby 10 youth will be placed per farm, which will eventually make a total of 200 youth. For each farm there will be a full time extension advisor allocated to oversee running of the project. Furthermore one incubator will be placed per farm to mentor the youth throughout the production cycles. Youth will be subjected to technical agricultural skills and farm business management skills also incorporating life skills

It is estimated that the project will create economic opportunities with an extra indirect jobs. Commodities to be produced will be linked to the school nutrition programme and hospital-feeding programme.



HOD SP Xulu at one of the exhibition stands.



Acting CFO Ms FA Ngobeni dancing with Gospel Singer Donny.

Young Farmer Incubator Programme Launched

The Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs has a mandate of transforming the rural economic situation and expand agricultural production in the Province. As a result, MEC MA Gamede officially launched the first-ever Mpumalanga Fortune-40 Young Farmers Incubator Programme in Kwaggafontein in the Thembisile Hani Local Municipality, on 12 September 2015. The launch followed a pronouncement made by Premier Mr DD Mabuza during his State of the Province address in February 2015, when he called for the establishment of a young farmer incubator programme.

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"As a Department, we are proud of and appreciate the continued support and oversight role by the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, which at all times, puts us on our toes to make sure that we deliver according to our set targets and plans. Through this support, we are confident that this programme will be a success", said MEC Gamede.



MEC MA Gamede, HOD SP Xulu and Thembisile Hani Local Municipality Mayor, Cllr Ndameni Mahlangu.

Trees Planted At Arbor Day Commemoration

The Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs commemorated the provincial Arbor Day at Masibekela in the Nkomazi Local Municipality on the 4th September 2015. This year's event was celebrated under the theme "Forests and People: Investing in a Sustainable Future". The theme had been adopted from the XIV World Forestry Congress, hosted in South Africa for the first time from 7-11 September in Durban. This year's Arbor Week campaign was also aimed at promoting the congress which will highlight the value and importance of forests.

The DARDLEA MEC MA Gamede with the different stakeholders attending the event planted 10 trees at the Masibekela Recreational Park. MEC Gamede further handed over 100 indigenous and fruit trees to local schools, clinics and 25 households for planting to alleviate poverty and contribute to food security. Gamede had called on stakeholders to ensure that the partnership and the commitment of government, the private sector and civil society must be sustained in the implementation and management of greening programmes. The National Arbor Week Campaign is celebrated annually from 1 to 7 September.



A demonstration to the MEC and the Mayor on how best a tree can be planted while saving water.



More than a hundred trees were donated to locals to encourage the planting trees.

VACCINATE...OR ELSE!!!mmm

The MEC for the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs, Mr MA Gamede led the provincial World Rabies Day commemoration at Saselani Village near Bushbuckridge on 29th September 2015. The day saw the MEC, Vets and Animal Health Practitioners conducting Diptank visit for rabies vaccinations, and a school visit to create awareness about this deadly disease in the village.

Mpumalanga is one of the provinces that are affected by rabies, whilst Ehlanzeni District is the most affected. The disease used to be endemic in Nkomazi and Nsikazi, but in 2008 it was transmitted to the densely-populated Bushbuckridge area.

However, intense vaccinations yielded good results as rabies cases were eliminated in Nkomazi, and drastically decreased in Bushbuckridge.

MEC Gamede was part of the vaccinations and sterilization of cats and dogs on the day. The local people in Saselani also braved the scorching heat of the sun which was hovering around 38 degrees Celsius, and brought their pets for vaccination and sterilization. Thousands of cats and dogs got vaccinated throughout the province since the beginning of September as a build-up towards commemorating World Rabies Day. The vaccinations continued into the month of October. The World Animal Health Organisation (OIE) had set World Rabies Day for countries internationally to commemorate the control of rabies.

Twin Treasures Shines At Greening The Future Awards

Mpumalanga's Twin Treasures became the 1st runner up at the Mail & Guardian's Biodiversity Stewardship Award during the 2015 Greening the Future awards ceremony held on 23rd July 2015, at Rosebank. In fact, the Twin Treasures received a Special Commendation from the judging panel.

The province's Twin Treasures came about after a decision was taken to combine and celebrate the Grasslands Week and National Wetlands Day, both celebrated in the same week from 12-14 February annually. Mpumalanga is the only province in the world to have ever formally honoured and acknowledged grasslands and wetlands as two of its greatest assets, thereby branding them as Mpumalanga's Twin Treasures.

Mpumalanga was shining at the Award ceremony; the Mpumalanga Preschool Water Programme won in the NGO Water Efficiency category. The water programme starts at pre-school learners in rural arrears. It comes in a form of a teaching pack that is provided to teachers or environmental eco teachers.

The Cape Critical Rivers won in the Biodiversity Stewardship Category, while Mountain Zebra Cambedoo Corridor was the 2nd runner up. Other categories in the competition included Green Technology Innovation, Green Economy Model, Rhino Conservation, Biodiversity Stewardship, Energy Efficiency, Corporate Water Efficiency, Community Conservation, Communities for Climate Change and Youth Leadership categories.



MEC HONOURS WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION IN AGRICULTURE

The MEC for the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs, Mr MA Gamede honoured Mpumalanga women's contribution in Agriculture at a gala dinner at Graceland Casino in Secunda, on Thursday 06 August 2015. The Female Entrepreneur Awards are a Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries initiative, hosted annually in recognition of women's role and participation in the fight against poverty, through agriculture.

This year marks the 15th anniversary of the FEAAwards, and they were held under the theme "Uniting to empower women to achieve economic freedom through agriculture, forestry and fisheries".

During his speech, MEC Gamede highlighted that women play a significant role in economic subsistence of their families, providing them with shelter, producing food, and acting as primary caregivers, walking long distances in the quest to prepare meals for their families.

The DAFF FEA is a joint venture between DAFF, provinces and key stakeholders in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors commencing at a provincial level and culminating in the main event at national level.



Ms SB Sambo won the in the MEC's Special Awards for Youth. With her are MEC Gamede, Ms. Ndlovu, Ms Mpangane and Dr Kgaphola.



Dardlea colleagues from Nkangala District couldnt contain themselves after the FEA Overall winner was announced.

The initiative is aimed at rewarding the efforts and contribution of women, youth and people with disabilities in matters of food security, job creation, economic growth and poverty alleviation.

The award ceremony has the overall winner and the following nine category winners, namely; best female worker, best subsistence producer, top entrepreneur: smallholder, top entrepreneur: processing, top entrepreneur: commercial, top entrepreneur: export markets and two ministerial awards for young and disabled female entrepreneurs in the sectors.



RABIES: VACCINATE OR ELSE...



World Rabies Day is commemorated annually on September 28 to raise awareness surrounding the disease, how to prevent it, and what to



RABIES THE FACTS

do once exposed. We encourage all people around the province to be more aware of rabies and their effects on our communities. By being aware of the disease, vaccinating your dogs and cats and by preventing dog bites, we will be able to eliminate rabies.

How does rabies spread?

The rabies virus is transmitted in the saliva of an infected animal. People usually become infected with the virus by being bitten. The rabies virus affects the central nervous system including the brain and spinal cord of humans and animals. Once the symptoms of rabies start, the disease is nearly universally fatal.

Is your pet acting suspiciously lately? Look out for these symptoms:

- Eating everything
- Dilated pupils
- Restlessness
- Constant growling / barking
- Seizures
- Trembling and muscle incoordination



Have you been bitten or scratched by an animal and feel like any of the following?

- Irritable
- Headaches
- Pain
- Muscles Spasms
- Itching / Twitching
- High fever
- Difficulty breathing
- Difficulty swallowing
- Unable to close jaws
- Drool / foam at the mouth

If YES, seek medical attention IMMEDIATELY!



MPUMALANGA SHINES AT THE 2015 DAFF FEA AWARDS



2015 DAFF FEA Overall Winner Ms Julia Shungube from Mpumalanga.

The 2015/16 DAFF Female Entrepreneur Award Overall Winner is Julia Shungube from Mpumalanga. Ms Shungube is from the impoverished Mbangwane Village near the border with Swaziland and Mozambique. She was announced the Overall Winner during the national DAFF FEA Awards held at the Durban Botanical Gardens on 27 August 2015.

She will be in this position up until August 2016. Few minutes before being announced as the Overall Winner, Julia had won in her Category of Top Entrepreneur: Processing. The MEC for Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs Mr MA Gamede congratulated Ms Shungube, for putting the province and its people, especially women in agriculture, on the map

The national awards categories and winners are as follows:

- Best Female Worker in the Sector: Kelebogile Reah Mampe
- Best Subsistence Producer in the Sector: Tenjiwe Christina Kaba
- Top Entrepreneur in the Sector: Smallholder: Nompumelelo Mdlalose
- Top Entrepreneur Processing in the Sector: Julia Shungube
- Top Female Entrepreneur in the Sector: Commercial: Hlengiwe Hlophe
- Top Entrepreneur in the Sector: Export Markets: Buyiswa Marrie Ndyenga

There was also Minister's Special Award for Disabled Entrepreneur, and the Minister's Special Award for Youth, which recognises emerging young farmer entrepreneurs.



MEC Gamede with Mr Dagada, Ms Masoka, Mr Silinda and provincial FEA Coordinator, Ms Mapholi at the Durban Botanical Gardens.

FEA *as it unfolds*



2015 FEA verification and adjudication team on the field.



The adjudicating team physically visiting farms nominated for the 2015 FEA.



Ms H. Mapholi & Mr M. Dagada on the field during the FEA verification.



The four main sponsors of the 2015 Provincial FEA were acknowledged.



MEC Gamede during an interview with the SABC's Mveli Masilela and other journalists on FEA.



FEA winners representing Mpumalanga in Durban.