

Confidential

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MEDIA STATEMENT - President Ramaphosa visits Land Bank-supported Redlands Dairy Farm, highlighting the impact of blended finance on inclusive agriculture

President Cyril Ramaphosa visited Redlands Dairy Farm in Stutterheim, Amahlathi Local Municipality, as part of an engagement focused on the role of blended finance in supporting inclusive agricultural development, job creation and rural economic growth.

Redlands Dairy Farm is a Black-owned and youth-owned commercial farming enterprise led by agricultural entrepreneur Mr Tshilidzi Matshidzula. The farm has benefited from funding through the Blended Finance Scheme (BFS), implemented by Land Bank in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture.

The visit provided the President with an opportunity to see first-hand how blended finance can support the development of commercially sustainable agricultural enterprises, while creating opportunities for greater participation in the commercial agricultural sector.

During the visit, President Ramaphosa engaged with Mr Matshidzula on the development of Redlands Dairy Farm, its operations and the opportunities and challenges associated with growing a Black-owned commercial agricultural enterprise.

Speaking during the visit, Mr Matshidzula said the support provided through blended finance had played an important role in enabling the continued development of Redlands Dairy Farm. "When nobody wanted to come close to us for financial assistance, the Land Bank did, and when the Blended Finance Scheme was launched a few years ago, it transformed our business. It changed our lives, and it continues to change our lives today. We humbly appeal that this scheme be supported and expanded, so that it can accelerate transformation and growth in agriculture. There are many more deserving farmers out there, young people, women and rural communities, who are ready and waiting for the same opportunity that we were given"

Redlands Farm spans approximately 357 hectares and focuses on commercial dairy farming, heifer and calf rearing and maize silage production. Mr Matshidzula has approximately 18 years of experience in the commercial dairy industry and has developed a broader agricultural portfolio comprising complementary dairy and farming interests in the Eastern Cape.

Land Bank Acting Chief Executive Officer Jabu Mphambo said Redlands Farm demonstrates the value of partnerships between government and development finance institutions in supporting farmers with viable commercial enterprises.

Directors: Directors: Mr M Skwatsha (Chairperson), Ms KV Rantao (Deputy Chair), Ms S Dlungwane, Ms S Ford, Prof J Kirsten, Ms PH Maseko, Ms TF Matlala, Mr MA Moloto, Ms E Pillay, Ms KH Mukhari (Chief Financial Officer), Mr J Mphambo (Acting Chief Executive Officer)

Ms R Swanepoel (Company Secretary)

The Blended Finance Scheme forms part of a suite of funding instruments administered by Land Bank in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture to support commercial and emerging farmers.

These instruments include the Blended Finance Scheme, Agri-BEE Fund and Agro-Energy Fund, which are designed to address different financing needs across the agricultural value chain..

The President's visit highlighted the importance of ensuring that funding mechanisms translate into productive investment, sustainable businesses and tangible economic opportunities in rural areas.

President Ramaphosa said, "Redlands is a powerful example of what agricultural transformation can look like when we bring together land, finance, entrepreneurship, skills and effective partnerships. Through the Blended Finance Scheme, we are seeing how government support, working with institutions such as the Land Bank and partners across the agricultural sector, can help emerging farmers build sustainable commercial enterprises. Land reform must go beyond simply providing access to land and create the conditions for developing farmers to become successful commercial farmers. We need many more Redlands across South Africa, and we must take what works and scale it."

The engagement at Redlands Farm forms part of the broader effort to advance an inclusive and sustainable agricultural sector, with a focus on expanding participation, improving productivity and supporting farmers to build commercially viable enterprises.

For Land Bank, the Redlands Farm investment demonstrates the role that appropriately structured development finance can play in supporting farmers through different stages of agricultural development and contributing to South Africa's transformation and food security objectives.

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