

## News release by Agricultural Writers SA North

Grain SA talks to Agricultural Writers SA

With the worldwide food and financial crisis in mind, it is time that people in South Africa start treasuring our local farmers. Speaking at a media briefing in Pretoria, Dr Kobus Laubscher, CEO of Grain South Africa, said that although the world is suffering due to food shortages, farmers in South Africa still have the ability as well as the capacity to produce food.

He said that this, in the face of the fact that the farmers receive no subsidies, shows what can be achieved. But, he also added that a better understanding of farming was needed.

“Grain SA is acting on behalf of grain farmers in the country and therefore engage in talks with government, political parties and other stakeholders on various topics, not only related to agriculture, but also those impacting on farmers such as transport. We talk to Government on improving conditions for agriculture to enable farmers to have profitable businesses. We stress that we have to collectively made agriculture better.”

Dr Laubscher said that agriculture and related sectors should consolidate their actions especially those focusing on communication. “We should all propagate the correct and positive news and the media should also focus on good news stories. Emergent farmers should read about success stories so that have something to aspire to. They should be empowered with correct information.”

Touching on land reform he said that South Africa cannot contribute towards food shortages and therefore land reform should be successful. “There is a lot of goodwill in the commercial farming sector, more that what traditional white farmers is credited for. All that they are looking for is stability – the knowledge that their neighbour will be able to stay on the land and farm profitable.” He added that measurable deliverables were needed for the agricultural sector plan, rural development and land reform to succeed.

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Enquiries on Grain SA can be directed to Mariëtta Wessels at 082 789 2315 or [Marietta@act.co.za](mailto:Marietta@act.co.za)

Magda du Toit, Chairman Agricultural Writers SA North  
Mobile: 27 82 388 0187  
Tel: 27 11 790 8254  
Personal fax: 27 11 790 8431