PARLIAMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF THE WESTERN CAPE

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QUESTION PAPER

WRITTEN REPLY

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Note: * Indicates translated version.

FRIDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2026

3. Mr N P Masipa to ask Dr I H Meyer, Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism:

1. (a) What is the total number of hectares of agricultural land in the province that have been reported as (i) damaged or (ii) burned during the 2025/26 fire season to date and (b) in which agricultural regions have these losses occurred

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM:
The table below summarises the recorded fire damage per region for the 2025/2026 fire season.

District	Area burned (ha)	Damages recorded
Overberg	81 869	A variety of orchards, vineyards, rooibos, proteas, pastures, and natural veld were damaged, as well as fencing & irrigation systems, and stock-watering pipelines.
West Coast	51 906	A variety of orchards, vineyards, rooibos, proteas, pastures, and natural veld were damaged, as well as fencing & irrigation systems, and stock-watering pipelines.
Cape Winelands	34 129	A variety of orchards, vineyards, rooibos, proteas, pastures, and natural veld were damaged, as well as fencing & irrigation systems, and stock-watering pipelines.
Garden Route	894	A variety of orchards, vineyards, rooibos, proteas, pastures, and natural veld were damaged, as well as fencing & irrigation systems, and stock-watering pipelines.
TOTAL HECTARES	**168798**	

(2) (a) what estimates, if any, has his department made of the economic damage to the agricultural sector arising from the fire season, including to (i) crops, (ii) livestock, (iii) infrastructure and (iv) production losses;

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM:

The department uses a dedicated Fire App to rapidly record damage as reported by farmers. The table below sets out the damages as reported on the app up to 15 February 2026:

Update	15-Feb-26		**Respondents per District**
Respondents	71		Cape Winelands (9)
Commodity	**Loss per Commodity**		Garden Route (2)
Livestock	R487 000,00		West Coast (1)
Crops	R29 819 000,00		Cape Metro (1)
Infrastructure	R26 626 950,00		Overberg (58)
Permanent Jobs	R7 131 000,00		
Seasonal Jobs	R736 000,00		
TOTAL	**R64 799 950,00**		

There are still unreported damages that must be incorporated onto the Fire App. The department will be conducting an onsite verification exercise between 23 February 2027 and 6 March 2027.

3. (a) what direct support has his Department provided to affected farmers and (b) how many producers have accessed such support;

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM:

(a) Upon completion of the verification exercise, the Department will have a clear determination of the number of farmers requiring assistance, the specific nature of the support needed, and the associated financial implications. This will enable the Department to assess options to secure the necessary financial support.

(b) To date 71 producers have indicated that they will require assistance. It is anticipated that this number will increase, and the final figure will be confirmed upon completion of the verification exercise.

(4) (a) what coordination has taken place between his Department, its entities, municipalities and national disaster authorities to assist farmers affected by fires and (b) what outcomes have resulted from this collaboration;

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM:

a. The department has ongoing engagements with Organised Agriculture (Agri Western Cape), the various Fire Protection Associations (FPA), impacted farmers and the applicable Municipal/Provincial Disaster Management Centres.

b. Outcome of this coordination:
   - This coordinated approach ensures that all affected stakeholders are duly considered and that no one is excluded from the assessment process. This allows the department to gather comprehensive information, detailing all affected stakeholders as well as the damages incurred, on a farm/district and provincial level.
   - Collaborating with these organisations ensures that the department effectively and efficiently implements its fire mitigation projects and programmes.

(5) (a) what proactive mitigation measures is his Department implementing to support farmers in fire-prone areas and (b) what resources are being provided to help agricultural communities reduce the impact of fires in the future?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM:

a. As part of the Department's ongoing Provincial Agricultural Disaster Risk Assessments, which takes place in each of the Districts, the Department, together with farmers identify fire mitigation projects. These area specific projects include applicable fire-training for farming communities, the identification and implementation of firebreaks and the eradication/clearing of Invasive Alien Species.

   The WCDoA implements an extensive Invasive Alien Species (IAS) eradication/clearing programme. These invasive alien species pose a substantial risk as it provides an enormous additional amount of highly combustible fuel to any fire, increasing both the risk of a fire breaking out and increasing the scope and intensity of any such fires.

   Additionally, working with Fire Protection Associations, allows the department to identify, maintain and implement firebreaks.

b. In the current financial year, the department is spending R51.785 million on its alien clearing projects throughout the province. This work is done in collaboration with Fire Protection Associations, Water User Associations and Irrigation Boards, who also contribute to the work. This creates buy-in and long-term commitment to maintain the work. It must be noted that this work not only reduces fire risks but also saves an enormous amount of water used by invasive vegetation.

No 1 - 2026] dERDE SESSIE, SEWENDE PARLEMENT

PARLEMENT VAN DIE

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VRAELYS

SKRIFTELIKE BEANTWOORDING

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Note: * Dui vertaalde weergawe aan.

VRYDAG, 6 FEBRUARIE 2026

3. Mnr N P Masipa vra dr I H Meyer, Minister van Landbou, Ekonomiese Ontwikkeling en Toerisme:

(1) (a) Wat die totale getal hektaar landbougrond in die provinsie is wat aangemeld is as (i) beskadig of (ii) gebrand gedurende die 2025/26-brandseisoen tot op hede, en (b) in watter landboustreke hierdie verliese voorgekom het;

DIE MINISTER VAN LANDBOU, EKONOMIESE ONTWIKKELING EN TOERISME: :

Die tabel hieronder som die aangetekende brandskade per streek vir die 2025/2026-brandseisoen op

Distrik	Gebrande oppervlakte (ha	Skade aangeteken
Overberg	81 869	’n Verskeidenheid boorde, wingerde, rooibos, proteas, weidings en natuurlike veld is beskadig, asook heinings en besproeiingstelsels, en vee-waterpypleidings.
Weskus	51 906	’n Verskeidenheid boorde, wingerde, rooibos, proteas, weidings en natuurlike veld is beskadig, asook heinings en besproeiingstelsels, en vee-waterpypleidings.
Kaapse Wynlande	34 129	’n Verskeidenheid boorde, wingerde, rooibos, proteas, weidings en natuurlike veld is beskadig, asook heinings en besproeiingstelsels, en vee-waterpypleidings.
Tuinroete	894	’n Verskeidenheid boorde, wingerde, rooibos, proteas, weidings en natuurlike veld is beskadig, asook heinings en besproeiingstelsels, en vee-waterpypleidings.
TOTAL HEKTARE	**168 798 (ha)**	

(2) (a) watter beramings, indien enige, sy departement gemaak het oor die ekonomiese skade aan die landbousektor wat uit die brandseisoen spuit, insluitende aan (i) gewas-se, (ii) vee, (iii) infrastruktuur en (iv) produksieverliese

DIE MINISTER VAN LANDBOU, EKONOMIESE ONTWIKKELING EN TOERISME:
Die departement gebruik ’n toegewyde Brandtoepassing (Fire App) om skade, soos deur boere gerapporteer, vinnig aan te teken. Die tabel hieronder dui die skade aan soos gerapporteer op die app tot en met 15 Februarie 2026.

Opdatering	15 Feb 2026		**Respondente per distrik**
Respondente	71		Kaapse Wynland (9)
Kommoditeit	**Verlies per produk**		Tuinroete (2)
Vee	R487 000,00		Weskus (1)
Gewasse	R29 819 000,00		Kaap Metro (1)
Infrastruktuur	R26 626 950,00		Overberg (58)
Permanente Poste	R7 131 000,00		
Seasonal Seisonale poste	R736 000,00		
TOTAL	**R64 799 950,00**		

Daar is steeds skade wat nog nie gerapporteer is nie en wat op die “fire app” ingesluit moet word. Die departement sal ’n terrein-verifikasie-oefening uitvoer tussen 23 Februarie 2027 en 6 Maart 2027.

(3) (a) watter direkte ondersteuning sy departement aan boere verskaf het wat geraak is, en (b) hoeveel produsente van sodanige ondersteuning gebruik gemaak het;

DIE MINISTER VAN LANDBOU, EKONOMIESE ONTWIKKELING EN TOERISME:

(a) By voltooiing van die verifikasie-oefening sal die departement 'n duidelike bepaling hê van die aantal boere wat hulp benodig, die spesifieke aard van die vereiste ondersteuning, en die daaraan verbonde finansiële implikasies. Dit sal die departement in staat stel om opsies te evalueer om die nodige finansiële ondersteuning te verseker.

(b) Tot dusver het 71 produsente aangedui dat hulle bystand benodig. Daar word verwag dat hierdie aantal sal toeneem, en die finale syfer sal bevestig word na voltooiing van die verifikasi-oefening.

(4) (a) watter samewerking tussen sy departement, sy entiteite, munisipaliteite en nasio-nale rampowerhede plaasgevind het om boere te help wat deur brande geraak is, en (b) watter uitkomste uit hierdie samewerking gespruit het;

DIE MINISTER VAN LANDBOU, EKONOMIESE ONTWIKKELING EN TOERISME:

(a) Die departement het deurlopende betrokkenheid met Georganiseerde Landbou (Agri Wes-Kaap), die verskeie Brandbeskermingsverenigings (FPA), die getroffene boere en die toepaslike Munisipale/Provinsiale Rampbestuursentrums.

(b) Uitkoms van hierdie koördinering:

- Hierdie gekoördineerde benadering verseker dat alle getroffene en belanghebbendes behoorlik in ag geneem word en dat niemand van die assesseringsproses uitgesluit word nie. Dit stel die departement in staat om omvattende inligting in te samel, wat al die getroffene sowel as die skade wat aangerig is, op plaas-, distrik- en provinsiale vlak detailleer.
- Samewerking met hierdie organisasies verseker dat die departement sy brandvoorkomingsprojekte en -programme effektief en doeltreffend kan uitvoer.

(5) (a) watter proaktiewe versagtingsmaatreëls sy departement instel om boere in gebie-de waar brande geneig is om voor te kom, te ondersteun en (b) watter hulpbronne voorsien word om landbougemeenskappe te help om die uitwerking van brande in die toekoms te verminder?

DIE MINISTER VAN LANDBOU, EKONOMIESE ONTWIKKELING EN TOERISME:

a) As deel van die Departement se deurlopende Provinsiale Landbou-Ramprisiko Assesserings, wat in elke distrik plaasvind, identifiseer die Departement, saam met boere, brandvoorkomingsprojekte. Hierdie streekspesifieke projekte sluit toepaslike brandopleiding vir landbougemeenskappe, die identifisering en implementering van brandlyne, en die uitwissing/verwydering van indringende vreemde spesies (Invasive Alien Species) in.

Die WCDoA voer 'n uitgebreide program vir die uitwissing/verwydering van indringende vreemde spesies (IAS) uit. Hierdie indringende spesies vorm 'n aansienlike risiko aangesien hulle 'n groot bykomende hoeveelheid hoogs brandbare brandstof aan enige brand verskaf, wat beide die risiko van 'n brand verhoog en die omvang en intensiteit van sodanige brande vergroot.

Verder stel samewerking met Brandbeskermingsverenigings die departement in staat om brandlyne te identifiseer, te instand hou en te implementeer.

b) In die huidige finansiële jaar spandeer die departement R51,785 miljoen op sy projekte vir die verwydering van indringende spesies regdeur die provinsie. Hierdie werk word in samewerking met Brandbeskermingsverenigings, Watergebruikersverenigings en Besproeiingsrade uitgevoer, wat ook bydra tot die werk. Dit skep betrokkenheid en langtermynverbintenis om die werk in stand te hou. Daar moet op gelet word dat hierdie werk nie net die brandrisiko verminder nie, maar ook 'n groot hoeveelheid water bespaar wat andersins deur indringende plantegroei gebruik sou word.