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Tsa Temo Freistata

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Rain in Free State: Farmers grateful, but floods cause damage

Most farmers in the Free State are rejoicing over the good rains that have occurred in the province recently, but along with the rains also come numerous challenges. Such as the condition of roads in rural areas and damage to crops.

According to a survey conducted by Free State Agriculture (FSA) among the organisation's regional representatives, most districts received above average rainfall. According to Koot Naude, regional representative in the Ngwathe district (which includes towns such as Heilbron, Edenville and Parys) there is currently no flood damage in the area although some fields have been badly washed away. Naude says that in some parts sunflower plantings still need to be done, but that the wet conditions do not allow it now. A major concern, however, is the condition of roads in the district. "The condition of roads has deteriorated even more and in some parts roads are completely impassable." says Naude.

The Nketoana district, with towns such as Reitz and Lindley, has already received 100mm over the weekend alone. According to Nollie Steyn, FSA regional representative for the district, there are still quite a few farmers who have to harvest wheat. Also in this district the condition of roads is now a big problem.

Meanwhile, certain farmers in the Hoopstad and Bultfontein districts are in despair due to severe flood damage to not only fields but also to houses. In addition to the fact that these farmers have damage to infrastructure, there is also the possibility that they could lose their plantings.

Free State Agriculture (FSA) is already in talks with the head of Cogta in the Free State, but will also look within its own ranks where need can be alleviated.

Free State Agriculture has a Disaster Fund to assist farmers. Members of the public or organizations who want to make a contribution can SMS their name to 37846 (SMS costs R1, B's and V's). Free State Agriculture will then contact you.

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