Comprehensive Producer Support policy heads to Nedlac

The draft National Policy on Comprehensive Producer Support published by DAFF on the 3rd of August 2018 has now been referred to Nedlac where Organised Business, Labour and Government can engage on its contents. Agbiz forms a central part of the Business delegation. The policy seeks to coordinate the producer support initiatives undertaken by Government with that of the private sector to ensure that the greatest impact is achieved. As a general point of departure, Business welcomed the initiative by Government and placed special emphasis on the cooperative nature in which DAFF seeks to drive producer support going forward.

Whilst the Nedlac process is yet to properly get underway, Agbiz made a number of recommendations in its written submission with a view to improving the policy. The salient points raised related to the classification of beneficiaries, which speaks directly to the level of own-contribution expected vis-à-vis that of the state. The draft policy classifies beneficiaries according to turn-over whilst many agribusinesses and commodity organisations have already compiled registers of producers they support, using commodity-specific indicators such as tonnage, cartons or herd size as a measure of the producer's progress. It is vital that the draft policy complements this existing data and does not attempt to duplicate it.

Further inputs related to the division of responsibilities between municipalities, Provincial Departments of Agriculture and DAFF in the assessment of applications and provision of support, the role of private sector as well as the need to firm up in-principle agreements on blended finance models.

The policy will be discussed in detail at Nedlac, following which it could be sent to Cabinet for final approval.