

Agri EC plots a way forward for leading sustainable land transformation

Farmers were too often seen as standing in opposition to the National Development Plan (NDP) and transformation in post-apartheid South Africa, according to Agri Eastern Cape (Agri EC) President Ernest Pringle, who chaired its management committee meeting earlier this month.



[© 123RF.com](https://www.123RF.com)

Pringle, who also heads up Agri EC's transformation committee, said the organisation was committed to the effective, healthy and monitored transformation of land ownership in South Africa.

"We are not only ready to implement land transformation but need to lead the process."

As the elected representative body for commercial agriculture in the province, Pringle said Agri EC had already plotted a way forward for implementing sustainable transformation.

He said the plan had been developed in consultation with various stakeholders and commodity partners in the agricultural value chain and was based on the NDP.

"The district land committees, as visualised in the NDP, can be used to identify, mentor and produce successful emerging farmers."

Pringle said these emerging farmers needed to take ownership of the land, as the process of leasing ground owned by the State was not workable.

He said various models to allow participation by all commercial farmers, regardless of size and industry sector, had been developed.

To be adopted by all stakeholders

"It must be stressed however that the reformation of the land issue is not just the responsibility of commercial farmers. If this revolutionary turnaround is to be achieved, it must be adopted by all stakeholders."

Pringle said government, and commercial and land banks, would play a critical role in the process.

"This will require the trust of all parties and demands a willingness to embrace change on all sides."

Pieter Prinsloo, Regional Chairman of the Red Meat Producers' Organisation, echoed Pringle's sentiments, saying transformation should not take place at the expense of productivity in the sector.

"Ownership of agricultural land has to be transferred from white to black hands, while ensuring food security and maintaining production levels," said Prinsloo.

Amadlelo Agricultural Consulting Chief Executive Jeff Every endorsed the RPO's emphasis on commercial viability in ensuring sustainable success.

"The commercial checks and balances must apply when transforming land ownership to black farmers and must not be swayed by ideological considerations."

To read Agri EC's proposal for the land reform and its guiding principles, visit www.agriec.co.za. And for more information, contact Natasja at Agri EC in Port Elizabeth on 041 363 1890.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>