

225 farms to be returned to government

According to Executive Mayor of Mangaung Metro Cllr. Olly Mlamleli, a total of 225 farms are to be taken back from aspiring black farmers in the Free State because they are not being used. The Mayor appealed to those who are requesting farms to at least have a plan about what they are going to do with those farms.

According to a report that was released at a meeting in Ficksburg attended by, amongst

others, Mangaung's Executive Mayor Cllr. Olly Mlamleli, the Free State Premier Hon. Sefaro Ntombela and the Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform Maite Nkoa-na Mashabane on 6 September, there are 25 farms that were given to black farmers for farming purposes that are to be seized, because they are not being used for their original application.

"Let me share with you what I heard yes-

terday at the meeting. There are 25 farms that the government gave to those black owners. As we speak they have been given letters demanding that they vacate those farms. They are not using them, they are leasing them out to rich people but not using them to farm. There are also 200 farms that Public Works gave to the Department of Agriculture. The Department in turn gave them to the people, they are also full of problems. On one farm

there are too many people leasing it. People cannot grow in such cases, those farms are going to be seized from those people," said Mlamleli.

Mlamleli urged people to be wise in the use of land. According to the Mayor, the Metro has a programme that helps emerging farmers. This includes some farmers from the Trusts in Thaba Nchu who received R2 million to buy farming implements.

"One other thing that we need to explain to our people is how these things work. When we give them livestock, we are going to assess them to see who qualifies. When we give out tractors, it is impossible that we can give each person a tractor. We need to explain how they should work together," said Mlamleli.

The Executive Mayor further explained that some land that the people are asking for belongs to the Municipality, some belong to the Chief while some belongs to the government. "People need to understand that where the land belongs to the Chief, there is no title deed because we have no rights there, only on land belonging to the municipality can they get a title deed. However we are still in negotiations with the Chieftaincy that they should at least give some documentation to the farmer to show that the person owns that piece of land," she continued.

In photo: A total of 225 farms to be returned to the government.

By Johnson Qobo

