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## Expropriation Bill ‘a threat to SA’s food security’

In a recent submission to the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), Agri SA has reiterated that the adoption of the Expropriation Bill (B23-2020) would have a devastating impact on South Africa.

This came after the Select Committee on Transport, Public Service and Administration, Public Works and Infrastructure called for comments on the bill to be submitted to the NCOP.

According to an Agri SA statement, previous submissions regarding the bill had been sent not to the NCOP but to the National Assembly. All previous comments therefore needed to be resubmitted for consideration by the NCOP.

Christo van der Rheede, CEO of Agri SA, said in the statement that the watering down of property rights held dire consequences, as had been graphically illustrated in the destruction of the Zimbabwean and Venezuelan economies after the expropriation of land in those countries.

Willem De Chavonnes Vrugt, chairperson of Agri SA’s Centre

of Excellence: Land, told *Farmers’ Weekly* that the proposed bill not only affected current landowners, but put the very future of sustainable and profitable agriculture at risk.

“This bill will, without a doubt, deter future investment in the sector. Why would potential new entrants consider investing in agriculture without surety of the ownership of land? The mere fact that government is considering the bill is enough to prevent further investment and expansion.

“The proposed bill is bound to affect every South African in one way or another. Our submission clearly states the potentially catastrophic impact of the bill on the agriculture sector and the country’s food security if passed by Parliament.

“Agri SA will use every tool at its disposal to ensure continued protection of property rights as provided for by the Constitution of South Africa,” De Chavonnes Vrugt said. Should the bill be approved by the NCOP, it would be sent to the President Cyril Ramaphosa for



According to Agri SA, the economic consequences of the proposed bill would extend beyond the agriculture sector, raising the spectre of food insecurity. It could also force the country to import food at exorbitant cost. *ANNELIE COLEMAN*

assent, whereafter it would become law in South Africa, according to Agri SA.

Van der Rheede added that fewer emerging farmers would be able to access the capital needed to build sustainable farming operations without constitutionally protected property rights. – *Annelie Coleman*