

NW beneficiaries pledge to use land profitably

PRETORIA: The Barolong Boo Mariba Traditional Council says it will profitably use the six farms it has received as part of the land that was taken from them through the notorious 1913 Natives' Land Act.



Image courtesy of Keerati /
[FreeDigitalPhotos.net](https://www.freedigitalphotos.net)

The farms, valued at R60-million, were handed over to the community by North West Premier Thandi Modise at Dalyspan Farm near Mabule in Ratlou Local Municipality over the weekend.

Speaking on behalf of the traditional council, Kgosi Kopano Lekoko said he was thankful to the government for negotiating on behalf of them for the land.

"We are thankful to the ANC-led government that the land was being returned without bloodshed. There are many farms in the land that we have claimed. So far, only six farms have been returned.

"We owe it to the government to demonstrate to them that we will use it profitably to feed our people, the country and the international market. The work on the farm begins as soon as this celebration ends," said Kgosi Lekoko.

Community member Olebogeng More, 62, said it had been a long wait and the handover showed that patience is virtue. "We are going to safeguard the land of our forefathers.

"Our cattle will no longer starve. We are back on course after many years of oppression and land dispossession. Our dignity will be restored."

Tshenolo Tlhogi, 63, said: "We will now be able to sleep. To us, the land is an important asset but it is also more than just a commodity - it's about our identity."

Kobus Odendaal, 77, who bought the Dalyspan farm seven years ago from another farmer, said he and his wife Susan were very happy for the community, although they will always miss the good life they had at the farm. "It was a very good farm, very productive."

Modise urged the traditional council to use the land fruitfully and preserve it for future generations.

"Never ... again must this country experience some of the things that many of us are still reeling from. Hold on to the land we return to you today. Don't allow people to steal it. We must preserve our land for our children."

Modise, who also toured the farms to inspect facilities, said her administration was hard at work looking at various models to make life easy for farming communities and people in rural areas in general.

She said in addition to availing training opportunities through the Kgora Training Centre, which seeks to equip subsistence and aspirant farmers with farming skills, she planned to lead a delegation to Thailand, where they will investigate, among others, solar opportunities to make it easy for people in far-flung areas to have cheaper electricity.

1913 Natives' Land Act Exhibition

The national Department of Rural Development and Land Reform hosted the 1913 Natives' Land Act Exhibition, which was on display at the Nasrec Expo Centre near Soweto, from 26 July until 4 August.

The exhibition formed part of activities to mark 100 years since the promulgation of the 1913 Natives' Land Act by the apartheid government.

The exhibition told the story of the Natives' Land Act of 1913, its role in shaping the country's history of segregation and the measures being taken to reverse its unjust legacy in the present.

It covered the pre-colonial era, colonial encroachment and settlement, the colonial era, the Natives' Land Act, dispossession and displacement, apartheid and separate development, urban forced removals, segregated cities, the "homelands", reigniting the struggle, the transition to democracy and reversing the legacy of the Land Act.

The act formalised the land dispossessions that had been carried out since colonisation. It prohibited indigenous people from lawfully acquiring, owning or renting land across the country, with only seven percent reserved for the black majority.

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