



SAFDA's response to the National lockdown announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa on COVID-19

This morning we woke to a new reality. South Africa has been directly impacted by the spread of the corona virus. The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in South Africa has gone up to 554 and it appears to be increasing rapidly.

The President has called for a National Lockdown starting from Thursday, the 26th of March 2020 at 12am to 16 April 2020 Midnight. President Ramaphosa was very clear in his message that our fundamental task as a country is to contain the spread of the disease. He said "we had learnt from the actions of other countries and we have therefore decided to act swiftly and dramatically". The decision to enforce a nationwide lockdown for 21 days is a decisive action to save millions of South Africans from infection and save the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

As SAFEDA it is our highest priority to maintain the protection and wellbeing of EVERYONE. Therefore, we attentively observe all the latest developments and adjust ourselves according to the recommendations of the authorities and health organisations.

The SAFEDA Executive Committee has decided to implement the following measures in order to contain people and minimize contact whilst ensuring that we provide our services:

1. All SAFEDA communication platforms shall be treated as official platform for provision of important business information and service support to our farmers during the lockdown period. The platforms mentioned above include the following WhatsApp groups:
 - SAFEDA Business Group
 - SAFEDA Mpumalanga Business Group
 - SAFEDA CEC Group
 - SAFEDA Council Group
2. No meetings or visits from our staff will be done.
3. Staff will remain responsive to any communication with our staff (via WhatsApp and email and telephone)
4. Growers must be prepared for to receive telephonic advice as opposed to face to face contact.
5. We will provide contact details of all our field support teams.
6. We discourage our members from holding meetings in your local areas during the lockdown period. Please rather make good use of technology like WhatsApp, Zoom, Skype, calls etc.
7. SAFEDA assets will not be available during this time. Farmers will be expected to carry out all farming activities with minimal support from our staff.
8. We will continue to share industry and sector information with you as and when it becomes available. .
9. Information will be made available regarding benefits or incentives available to farmers and SMME's as announced by government.
10. We have contacted all the Mills to provide us with their plan during the National Lockdown period and below is the information they have provided to us so far we will be communicating with you as soon as we receive response from other Mills:



Mill/ Miller	Update
UCL	<p>UCL will be continuing with its cane processing operations as normal during the lockdown as Sugar falls under the exempt Food and Agricultural production categories.</p> <p>A host of interventions have of course been introduced to minimise the risk of spread. These include temperature monitoring of drivers, sanitisation stations, regular deep cleans, separation of staff, isolated accommodation etc.</p> <p>Even though we do not expect any interruptions to farmers' operations we have made production loans available to those who may need it. We have also made our Health and Safety staff available for consultation on how to implement best practices in relation to hygiene and to minimise the risk of spreading the virus.</p>
RCL FOODS	We are continuing with our sugar operations for now as an essential food producer and agricultural operation
USM	In terms of the State President's announcement last night, sugarcane agriculture and sugar milling are essential services related to food supply and business continuity of this value chain is in the best interests of South Africa providing that every effort is made in terms of best practice to mitigate the spread of Covid-19 and that employees and their families abide by the lockdown when not conducting essential services. In this regard, USM will continue to open its crushing season on Wed 25 March.
ILLOVO	<p>Operations will continue as per normal with added hygiene and social distancing protocols as instructed for containment of COVID spread. This means all activities the enable us to maintain production and supply chain of sugar will remain active.</p> <p>For further queries, please assure the growers that their usual contact points at the mills will remain unchanged and to use them for all queries.</p>

South African Farmers Development Association
 Registration number 163-564 NPO

KwaShukela, 170 Flanders Drive
 Mt Edgecombe, KwaZulu-Natal
 P.O. Box 1769
 Mt Edgecombe Country Club, 4301

031 508 7283
 info@sa-fda.org.za
 www.sa-fda.org.za



GLEDHOW	Due to the fact that sugar has been declared as an essential food item, we will remain open and crushing throughout the lock-down period. We have implemented a number of mitigating steps, one being that we are not allowing any visitors onto site unless for very critical reasons and this has to be approved in writing by an HOD.
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Please find the updated contacts for our Farmer Development Advisors below:

Farmer Development Advisors			
Area	Name	Email	
Amatikulu	Nondumiso Gumede	nondumisog@sa-fda.org.za	073 794 3667
Darnell/Maidstone	Bulisa Gcumisa	bgcumisa@sa-fda.org.za	073 793 9984
Darnell/Maidstone	Khetha Seme	kseme@sa-fda.org.za	073 447 8849
Eston/Noordsberg	Noxolo Molefe	nmolefe@sa-fda.org.za	061 827 6865
Felixton	Duduzile Sithole	dsithole@sa-fda.org.za	073 794 2352
Sezela	Tholakele Gina	tgina@sa-fda.org.za	083 288 6471
Malelane	Dumisile Mthembu	dsithole@sa-fda.org.za	082 224 7460
Pongola/ Makhathini	Nosipho Qwabe	nqwabe@sa-fda.org.za	073 794 1445
Umfoloji	Nomkhosi Dlodlo	ndlodlo@sa-fda.org.za	063 247 0067
Felixton/NorthCoast	Nhlakanipho Khumalo	nkhumalo@sa-fda.org.za	064 653 5602
Komati	Nkosinathi Phakathi	nphakathi@sa-fda.org.za	067 062 5719
Noordsberg/Eston	Mqhele Mpanza	mmpaza@sa-fda.org.za	060 569 3866
Mzimkhulu	Ntathu Tlale	ntlale@sa-fda.org.za	063 491 1538
Pongola - Admin	Nomayise Phakathi - Zama	ntphakathi@sa-fda.org.za	081 069 2024
Mpumalanga FDA	Nomfundo Mbatsane	nmbatsane@sa-fda.org.za	

Our business is centred around our members and we appreciate your loyalty. We trust that you will be safe during these trying times that our country is facing. We thank you for your ongoing efforts and can assure you that you will be supported through this crisis.

Yours sincerely,

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DR SIYABONGA MADLALA

Executive Chairman | South African Farmers Development Association

smadlala@sa-fda.org.za | 071 216 7974 | 031 508 7283

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