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PRESS RELEASE

(for immediate release)

NATIONAL STOCK THEFT PREVENTION FORUM

The National Stock Theft Prevention Forum (NSTPF) on 20 November 2018 had its meeting to discuss the challenges facing the criminal justice system and all role players regarding livestock theft in South Africa. The following information is of importance.

Nationally the number of animals stolen increased in all the provinces. The provinces with the highest increase are the Eastern Cape followed by KwaZulu-Natal and Free State. In Mpumalanga there is an increase in sheep theft and in North West a serious increase in the theft of goats. The SAPS National Stock Theft and Endangered Species Unit, identified 30 stations all over the country that need serious attention as they are regarded national "Hotspot" stations.

Province	Police Stations
North West	Ventersdorp/Mogwase
Mpumalanga	Amersfoort/Dirkiesdorp
Gauteng	Bronkhorstspuit/Fochville
Limpopo	Lebowagomo/Matalala/Dennilton
Free State	Harrysmith/Selosesha
KwaZulu Natal	Escourt/Dannhauser/Bergville//Amangwe/Ntabamhlophe Utrecht

Eastern Cape	Sulenkama/Bityi/Mtahata/Maluti /Mount Frere/Qumbu
Western Cape	Caledon/Beaufort West
Northern Cape	Hanover/Groblershoop

The NSTPF resolved that each province, with the assistance of the local farming communities and stock theft units of a particular area, establish a Stock Theft Information Centre (STIC) as a matter of urgency, to address the high prevalence of livestock theft in their respective areas. The meeting resolved that all provinces must report back at the next scheduled meeting to be held in May 2019, on the successful establishment of the STIC's and actions taken on local level to reduce livestock theft.

Other aspects discussed at the meeting that need serious attention are :-

- It was recommended that the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries should change the age that cattle/calves must be marked. No animal will be allowed to be sold if not marked - irrespective of age. This would result that no weaner calves can be sold to/bought by any person/organisation in the value chain without being tattooed - irrespective of age.
- The training of prosecutors in prosecuting livestock theft cases will receive the highest priority permitting the budget/personnel constraints within the National Prosecuting Authority.
- The NSTPF will seek an urgent appointment with DAFF and SAPS's legal advisors to seriously address the publications of the Animal and Produce Movement Act, as well as the Pounds Act.

With this information at hand and with the festive season and planting season ahead, the National Stock Theft Prevention Forum requests :-

- That all livestock owners register a **unique brand mark in their name and to apply it to all livestock in their possession** in the prescribed manner as described in the *Animal Identification Act 2002, Act 6 of 2002*;
- The completion and submission of the "**Document of Identification**" and "**Stock Removal Certificate**" with **all transactions**;
- That **all livestock buyers, auctioneers, feedlots and abattoirs confirm** livestock ownership and **refuse to take ownership of livestock that are not marked or where the necessary "Document of Identification" and "Stock Removal Certificate" are not supplied**;

- That all **"Documents of Identification"** be kept on record for 12 months;
- That farmers **count their livestock regularly and do not simply stop the practice during the planting season.** When livestock is only counted **after the planting period and losses discovered, it is simply too late.**
- From a criminological point of departure, producers are **advised to regularly change all routines on their farms.** Perpetrators access the routines on farms and, producers who do not change their routines are more prone to livestock theft than those who do not abide by a strict routine. Aspects that can be changed – do not count on the same time every day, do not visit cattle posts on the same time every day - change your routine.

The **National Stock Theft Prevention Forum** requests that **all role players in the red meat industry** urgently play an active role in stock theft prevention and urge the general public for their assistance.

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