

# Namibia reap benefit from China South-South Cooperation

29th February 2016



## > **Lahja Nashuuta**

Windhoek – Namibia is about to boost rice production at Kalimbeza Rice Project in the Zambezi region and conduct an assessment of horticultural crops suitable for the country, thanks to the assistance from the 2014 tripartite agreement with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and China on the implementation of the China South-South Cooperation programme in Namibia in June 2014. Through this agreement, Namibian government also seeks to improve understanding and mutual exchange on veterinary policies regulations and standards.

Last year, China pledge 2 billion U.S. dollars to support the South-South Cooperation and assist developing countries implementing their post-2015 development agenda.

And the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry role was to identify certain projects that need to be further developed and funded.

Briefing parliament on the progress made, Agriculture, Water and Forestry Minister John Mutorwa said an assessment of the problems related to rice production at Kalimbeza was successfully conducted and acquisition of suitable five rice cultivators from established research institution in China was done, which will be validated to suit local condition.

Mutorwa said the soil samples were also collected from Bunya, Kapako, Mupini, Selem, Maashare at MADI College and Shighuru Rice Project and were sent to China for testing.

“While the soil analysis is ongoing, improved compost making technique has been undertaken at Etunda, Rundu Katima Mulilo and Kalimbeza,” he said.

In addition, Mutorwa said new and affordable rice seed treatment technology was introduced which involves the soaking of rice seed in chlorine in order to minimize seedling disease by the experts at Kalimbeza

“New rice cultivation practices were demonstrated and adapted at Kalimbeza rice production, of which the rice seedling mechanical transplanting method is yielding good result,” he said.

In terms of horticultural crops, various cultivation methods for horticultural crops including citrus are currently being assessed in both green schemes projects and selected farmers field.

He said several assessments of horticultural production methods have been undertaken including water melon and onion production, fertilizer application in circus orchards as well as water runoff management practices.

In addition to the assessments, a number of demonstrations have been undertaken

such as grafting, transplanting of seedling, pest control as well as compost making at Etunda , Rundu, and Katima Mulilo selected demonstration sites.

“Also under rice production, rice seedling mechanical transplanting technology was introduced at Kalimbeza which resulted in increased productivity,” he said.

With regards to the progress made to improved understanding and mutual exchange benefits on veterinary policies, regulations and standards, the agriculture minister said five Chinese laboratories analytical methods have been obtained and translated in English.

Those include the two methods used to test for Anthelmintic Drugs that is responsible for growth hormones.

He said the ministry has also order various analytical standards, reagents and other laboratory materials from local supplier and once received the Chinese analytical methods would then be tested at the Ministry’s central Veterinary Laboratory in Windhoek for full adaptation.

Apart from that Mutorwa also said Chinese food safety standard requirements for chemical residue control in meat have also been obtained and translated into English for local implantation in order to fulfil the Chinese import requirements.

“So far a total of six Namibia laboratory technicians and scientists are being capacitated to be able to carry out the analyses for the purpose of meat exportation to China” he said.

Mutorwa further said a total of 28 officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and AgriBusDev are also being capacitated in rice and horticulture production techniques as well as laboratory procedures applied in the detection of residues of Anthelmintics, Steroids and Thyrostats in meat.