**PRESS STATEMENT**

**SUNDAYS VALLEY CITRUS WORKERS’**

**MINIMUM WAGE NEGOTIATIONS**

This morning (June 7th, 2018) at 11 am, the Sunday's River Valley Citrus Producers Forum (SRVCPF) resolved the minimum wage discussions for citrus workers in Sundays River Valley, with producers agreeing to pay a minimum wage of R20 per hour.

The new minimum wage will stand for two years, effective June 7th, 2018. The resolution follows mediation sessions held by the Provincial MEC of Agriculture with SRVCPF.

Hannes de Waal, SRVCPF chairman comments on the resolution saying: “The SRVCPF is an association that addresses all citrus issues and service delivery, and it’s important to note that the recent actions were directed towards the citrus industry in the Valley as a whole.

“It is regretful to have seen such violence and damage within the Valley, but we want to press on positively and look forward to welcoming all our workers back to the farms tomorrow [Friday, June 8th, 2018]."

**Background**

Citrus workers demanded the national minimum hourly wage of R20 that was recently passed by parliament but is not yet legally enforceable. Once gazetted the minimum wage for farm workers will be R18 per hour, to be reviewed annually.

The original intention was to make the new minimum wage for farm and domestic workers, valid from 1 May 2018; but the legislative processes missed the deadline, and there are still specific administrative steps to go through before becoming law. The legal effective date is still unknown and is yet to be published in the Government Gazette.

**South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO)**

SANCO was not recognised by SRVCPF as a negotiating partner on behalf of the employees given the existence of trade unions and workplace forums established by employers and their employees in the valley.

Therefore the Provincial MEC of Agriculture, Hon. X. Nqata, worked with SANCO and SRVCPF to achieve a resolution and will encourage and support compliance of the agreed resolution.

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