



Government proposal to encourage black farmers

A GOVERNMENT appointed committee to evaluate agricultural policy recommended that the agricultural sector be deregulated to encourage black farmers but still adhere to GATT guidelines.

The committee said there should be one marketing policy to cater for the needs of commercial and developing agriculture. They also proposed that there be minimum government intervention. The national marketing council should be restructured to include representatives from consumers, developing agriculture, commerce and industry, producers and the state. Although subsistence and marginal farmers accounted for only 10% of marketable products, they created considerable levels of employment and non-marketable produce. Imbalances between commercial and developing farming should be rectified through development support and using the infrastructure and know-how available to commercial farming to support developing farmers. *(Business Day: January 25 1994)*

Election attitudes

RURAL people in Natal are considerably more fearful of violence during the election, than their urban counterparts, according to a Human Sciences Research Council survey conducted towards the end of 1993. More than 50% of the rural respondents said that their chief would influence their vote. *(Natal Mercury: January 11 1994)*

UK gives R6,5 million for rural health

THE British government has granted R6,5 million to the Rural Foundation for basic primary health care and training projects in the rural areas of Natal and the eastern and northern Cape. The health programmes would be implemented over four years and would help to meet the basic needs of about 31 000 farmworkers and their families on 400 farms. The Rural Foundation said it expected to help about 350 000 individuals. *(Natal Mercury: December 1 1993)*

Farm prices may drop

RURAL land prices could decrease over the next 12 months, predicted the former president of the SA Institute of Valuers. Farmers could expect large scale affirmative action in rural areas in the short term, he said. Such affirmative action would include areas being specifically set aside for small scale farming, financial, training and support programmes. "Such a programme would probably see a marked expansion of tenant farming practices, with special

legislation guarding the rights of tenant farmers," he said. Some farmers in areas which underwent major changes would probably want to relocate and would be prepared to sell at depressed prices. He said that the real average national selling price of agricultural land had dropped in 1991, if compared with 1981 prices. The 1991 average price was three times that of 1981, whereas a real price increase would have meant the 1991 average price should have been about four times the 1981 level. *(Business Day: February 2 1994)*

Cato Manor residents land claim opposed

MORE than 100 land claims from former Cato Manor residents, evicted from the area in terms of the Group Areas Act about 30 years ago, were turned down because the area was being developed. The claims were lodged with the Commission on Land Allocation, but a House of Delegates housing spokesman said the land fell outside the Commission's brief. He said the House of Delegates was developing part of Cato Manor and another part was taken over by the Cato Manor Development Association for a R200 million development project. A possibility for former residents with land claims was to give them alternate sites or monetary compensation, the spokesman said. *(Daily News: January 26 1994)*