

SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA, DURING THE
COMMISSIONING OF THE GA-MASHASHANE HATCHERY AND
LEBOWAKGOMO CHICKEN ABATTOIR, LEBOWAKGOMO

14 April 2025

Programme Director,

MEC for Economic Development and Tourism MEC, Mr Tshitereke Matibe,

MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Ms Nakedi Kekana

Capricon District Executive Mayor, Cllr Mamedupi Tefo,

Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality Mayor Cllr Merriam Molala,

Councillors,

Traditional leaders,

Our partners from Montana Agriculture and Mining SA (Pty) Ltd,

Officials from LDARD, LEDET, LEDA, and Land Bank,

Esteemed members of the farming community,

Distinguished guests,

Media present

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thobela, Avuxeni, Ndi Masiari, Good morning, Goie more.

Today marks a significant milestone not only for the communities of
Lebowakgomo and Ga-Mashashane, but for the entire province of
Limpopo. It is with great pride and a deep sense of fulfilment that we gather

here to commission two strategic agricultural projects: the Ga-Mashashane Hatchery and the Lebowakgomo Chicken Abattoir.

These are not just brick-and-mortar facilities; they are symbols of what we can achieve when we work together with commitment, urgency, and a shared vision. They represent the power of partnership, the triumph of perseverance, and the unyielding dedication of our government to transform agriculture into a powerful engine of economic growth.

Program Director, during the 2024 State of the Province Address, I made a clear call to action. I directed the MECs of Economic Development and Agriculture to work tirelessly and revive these long-standing projects back to life. And today, we are witnessing the fruits of that directive.

We sincerely thank MEC Tshitereke Mathibe and MEC Nakedi Kekana for rising to the occasion. Your unwavering leadership, together with the dedicated officials under your departments, has been instrumental in achieving this moment.

This journey was not without challenges. Since the completion of the abattoir's refurbishment in 2012, multiple attempts were made to secure a suitable operator, but each one fell short due to various reasons. Yet we never gave up. Instead, we doubled down on our efforts, and in 2024, we found a partner in Montana Agriculture and Mining SA, who took over both the hatchery and the abattoir, breathing new life into these facilities.

Programme Director, this investment is already bearing fruit. On 3 February this year, the hatchery successfully produced 5,300-day-old chicks, which were handed to local farmers for rearing.

On 30 March, another 10,000 eggs were hatched and distributed. As we speak, 15,000 more are in the process of incubation.

Today, we stand at the threshold of a new era as we commission the abattoir with the slaughter of up to 5,000 chickens per day.

Programme Director, this is not just about agriculture, but it is about changing lives. We are talking about the creation of over 1,500 direct and indirect jobs across the poultry value chain. From farmers to transporters, feed suppliers to packaging professionals, this project opens the doors of opportunity for many Limpopo residents, particularly our youth and women.

We are also thrilled that the investor will implement the Aggregation Model. This progressive approach will allow smaller-scale farmers with capacities as low as 5,000 broilers to also participate in the supply chain.

Unlike traditional models that only favor those with massive capacity, this inclusive system will enable more farmers to supply chickens to the abattoir, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Programme Director, we must appreciate the infrastructural improvements: vandalised cables were repaired, boreholes drilled, Jojo tanks installed, and a new standby generator ensuring uninterrupted operations at the hatchery. These investments are part of the holistic approach we have adopted to ensure sustainability and efficiency.

Ladies and gentlemen, this project is more than just a win for the poultry industry, and it is a bold step toward achieving food security for Limpopo and beyond. With a capacity to slaughter 20,000 chickens per shift, the

abattoir is positioned to feed communities across the province and even outside our borders.

No longer will our people need to source chicken from distant suppliers because our farmers will produce, process, and distribute right here at home.

What we are witnessing today is a powerful example of how agriculture can be a game-changer in growing our provincial economy. We are turning rural areas into hubs of productivity and prosperity. We are transforming subsistence farmers into commercial producers. We are creating a value chain that uplifts everyone from egg to shelf.

Programme Director, as we commission these two facilities, we do so with a heart full of hope and eyes firmly set on the future. We must continue working together, government, private sector, and communities to support these projects and expand their reach.

Let us unlock even more opportunities in agro-processing, export markets, and skills development. Let us continue to invest in the future of our young people by providing training, mentorship, and access to capital.

To our emerging farmers, we say: This is your moment. The time is now to seize the opportunities before you. You are no longer spectators on the sidelines, but you are the driving force of Limpopo's agricultural revolution.

To the people of Limpopo, these facilities belong to you. Protect them, support them, and benefit from them. Let us ensure they remain operational for generations to come.

As the provincial government, we want to affirm our commitment. We will continue to walk with you, support you, and champion every initiative that uplifts our people. Together, we are building a capable, self-reliant, and food-secure Limpopo.

Let us keep rising. Let us keep growing. Let us keep feeding the province with chicken and with hope. Let the sky be our limit.

I thank you.