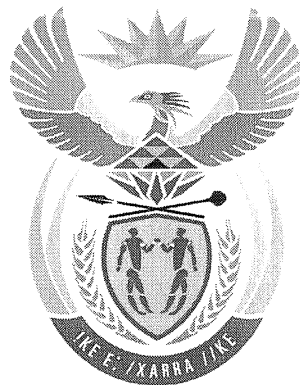


**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES
DEPARTEMENT VAN LANDBOU, BOSBOU EN VISSERYE**

No. 637

22 August 2014



**THE NATIONAL POLICY ON FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY FOR THE REPUBLIC
OF SOUTH AFRICA**

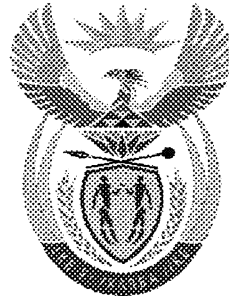
The right to have access to sufficient food is embedded in Section 26 and 27 of the South African Constitutional Law of 1996. The Bill of Rights enshrined in the Constitution states that “every citizen has a right to have access to sufficient food, water and social security” and that “the State must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the realisation of this right”. The Policy provides a broad framework for the fulfilment of this Constitutional imperative, and will serve as a guide to national, provincial and local government in pursuit of food and nutrition security at every level.

In South Africa, food security received much attention after 1994 when South Africa became a democratic country. The National Development Plan, Vision 2030, further entrenched the need for the country to continue addressing this challenge. The Policy will therefore be a key pillar in delivering the objectives of the National Development Plan. Cabinet approved the Policy in September 2013 and mandated the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Department of Social Development supported by other line function Ministries to lead the implementation of the Policy.

The lead Departments are at advanced stages of developing an implementation plan for the Policy which will be consulted widely upon finalisation.

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Annexure A



NATIONAL POLICY

on

FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

Department of Social Development

**Department of Agriculture, Forestry
and Fisheries**

August 2013

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A NATIONAL POLICY ON FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

FOR THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

In 2002, Cabinet approved the national Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS) in order to streamline, harmonize and integrate the diverse food security programmes. Some successes have been recorded in different priority areas of the Strategy, and South Africa is presently able to boast national food sufficiency through a combination of own production and food imports. The General Household Survey (GHS) has also indicated that the food access index has been improving, and the incidence of hunger declining.

However secure access to food by all is still not guaranteed. Household food security is threatened by globalisation, international trade regimes, climate change, and the poor storage and distribution of food. Without co-coordinated interventions, increasing numbers of the population may experience inadequate access to food and many more will fail to benefit from proper nutrition.

In addition, the global economic slowdown, increased food price volatility and the impact of climate change have compelled a review of the IFSS and the development of a comprehensive National Food and Nutrition Security Policy.

1.2 THE NEED FOR A FOOD SECURITY POLICY

These are three reasons why a Food and Nutrition Security Policy is urgently needed in South Africa.

First of these is the need for a common definition and measures on Food and Nutrition Security. There are a number of conceptual interpretations and definitions of Food Security which are used by key stakeholders, including government, the international community, research institutions and civil society. A Food and Nutrition Security Policy is therefore

needed to specify the key elements and scope of the concept, and to establish a common understanding which can be owned by all, in line with Vision 2030.

Second, Food and Nutrition Security is a complex issue characterised by inter-disciplinary approaches. This National Policy on Food Security and Nutrition seeks to provide an overarching guiding framework to maximise synergy between the different strategies and programmes of government and civil society.

Third, as a member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), South Africa contributes substantially to Regional Food and Nutrition Security, and needs to play a leadership role in this regard. This Policy thus will create a platform to understand the parameters and boundaries of our international obligations.

1.3 CHALLENGES

South Africa still faces serious food security challenges, which can be summarised as follows:

- There are inadequate safety nets and food emergency management systems to provide for all those who are unable to meet their immediate food needs or to mitigate the impact of natural and non-natural disasters on food security;
- Citizens have inadequate access to knowledge and resources to make optimal choices for nutritious and safe diets;
- In cases where productive land is available, it is not always optimally utilised for food production, often for want of inputs (including finance, equipment and water), or skills; at the same time, there is a need to ensure that over-production does not drive down prices to the point that farming becomes unprofitable.
- There is limited access to processing facilities or markets for small-scale primary producers, including farmers, fishers and foresters;
- Climate change and altered patterns of land use pose a threat to domestic production;
- There is not adequate, timely and relevant information on food security.

In 2011, a Report by the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food identified numerous concerns and challenges, with recommendations on each, many of which are addressed in this Policy. These included:

- The need to streamline data collection and analysis;
- The need to strengthen existing strategies and policies related to food security;
- Steps to improve access to markets for smallholder farmers, and
- An emphasis on agro-ecological approaches to farming.

2. MANDATES

2.1 CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE

The Bill of Rights guarantees every citizen *“the right to have access to . . . sufficient food and water”* and that *“. . . the State must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of each of these rights.”* (Constitution, 1996: 12)

This Food and Nutrition Security Policy provides a broad framework for the fulfilment of this Constitutional imperative and should serve as a guide to national, provincial and local government in pursuing food security at every level.

2.2 STRATEGIC MANDATE

The 2013 State of the Nation Address (SONA) reaffirmed the National Development Plan: Vision 2030 as the development blueprint, and recognised the proposals for *“tackling the problems of poverty, inequality and unemployment. It is a roadmap to a South Africa where all will have water, electricity, sanitation, jobs, housing, public transport, adequate nutrition, education, social protection, quality healthcare, recreation and a clean environment.”*

The National Development Plan (NDP) sets out various methods and targets to eradicate poverty, reduce unemployment and eliminate inequality by 2030. It identifies Food and Nutrition Security as a key element of both poverty and inequality: it is both a consequence of poverty and inequality as well as a cause. As a result the NDP makes reference to a number of steps that will improve food security, including the expanded use of irrigation, security of land tenure, especially for women, and the promotion of nutrition education. This

Food and Nutrition Security Policy will therefore be a key pillar in achieving the objectives of the NDP.

3. STRATEGIC GOAL

The strategic goal of the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy is to ensure the availability, accessibility and affordability of safe and nutritious food at national and household levels.

South Africa has about 13.8 million individuals that experience inadequate access to food (STATS-SA, GHS 2011). The aim is to reduce this number and thereby contribute towards overall poverty eradication.

The essence of this Policy is to build on existing initiatives and systems, and to put in place mechanisms that ensure stricter alignment, better coordination, and stronger oversight. Moreover, the Policy seeks to ensure that our response to food and nutrition insecurity is ambitious, rigorous and dynamic.

The Policy therefore provides a platform for various strategies which will include:

- Increased and better targeted public spending in social programmes which impact on food security;
- Efforts to increase food production and distribution, including increased access to production inputs for the emerging agricultural sector;
- Leveraging Government food procurement to support community-based food production initiatives and smallholders; and
- The strategic use of market interventions and trade measures which will promote food security.

4. APPROACH

Food and nutrition security is a multifaceted and multidimensional issue which will not be attained through a single approach – be it in the form of social relief or agricultural production. Food and nutrition security requires well-managed inter-sectoral co-ordination, and the genuine integration of existing policies and programmes in health, education, and environmental protection, as well as in agrarian reform and agricultural development.

This can be attained through the implementation of the following five pillars, which constitute the foundations of the Food and Nutrition Security Policy, and which allow for multi-sectoral initiatives and programmes under each of the pillars:

- The availability of **improved nutritional safety nets**, including government run and supported nutrition and feeding programmes, emergency food relief, as well as private sector, CBO and NGO interventions.
- Improved **nutrition education**, including District level nutrition services to assist households and communities monitoring nutritional indices, providing consumer literacy and assisting with better food management and improved meal planning.
- The alignment of **investment in agriculture** towards local economic development, particularly in rural areas. This includes the provision or subsidisation of inputs and support services for increased food production, as well as more effective food storage and distribution networks, involving both government and private agencies, to eliminate waste and ensure better access to food for all.
- Improved **market participation** of the emerging agricultural sector through public-private partnerships, including off-take and other agreements, a government food purchase programme that supports smallholder farmers, as well as through the implementation of the Agri-BEE Charter, which requires agro-processing industries to broaden their supply bases to include the emerging agricultural sector.
- Food and Nutrition Security **Risk Management**, including increased investment in research and technology to respond to the production challenges currently facing the country, such as climate change and bio-energy. It would also include the protection of prime agricultural land, and limitations on its alienation for other activities, including mining, game farming, and property development. Improved food security information management systems would also be required, with periodic scientific reviews of the state of food security in the country.

Each of the above pillars will be pursued in line with appropriate Strategy documents, outlining the programmes and activities which will contribute to the attainment of food security. A Household Food and Nutrition Strategy has been developed, and is part of this document, and a Food Production Intervention is similarly included. Further Strategy documents on the other pillars may be developed by relevant Departments.

5. DEFINING FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

A widely accepted definition of Food Security is provided by FAO as being “*access by all people, at all times, to the food required for a healthy life*”. In an expanded form, the World Bank defines food security as “the physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food by all, at all times, to meet their dietary and food preferences”.

The World Food Programme [WFP], when measuring food security levels in time of emergency, “explores what is justifiable and feasible” to calculate food insecurity conditions and to determine the humanitarian needs. Oxfam defines food security as being a state “when everyone has at all times access to and control *over sufficient quantities of good quality food for an active healthy life*”, and they use this definition to determine whether people are able to meet their immediate food needs and also to define the vulnerability and risks faced by different groups in relation to the availability of food.

The 1996 World Food Summit concluded that “Food security exists when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”

These definitions all incorporate four specific dimensions, which can be used as a platform for the structuring of a National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security:

- Adequate availability of food
- Accessibility [physical, social and economic means] of food,
- Utilisation, quality and safety of food, and
- Stability of food supply.

People are considered to be vulnerable to food insecurity or food insecure if any one of these conditions is not fulfilled.

This Policy defines Food and Nutrition Security as:

“Access to and control over the physical, social and economic means to ensure sufficient, safe and nutritious food at all times, for all South Africans, in order to meet the dietary requirements for a healthy life”.

6. INDICATORS OF FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

Food and Nutrition Security can and should be measured at both an individual or household level, as well as at a national level.

6.1 MEASURING HOUSEHOLD NUTRITION

At the individual or household level, two measures can be used: the “hunger index” as well as various anthropometric measures.

HUNGER INDEX

The Hunger Index developed from the National Food Consumption Survey of 2005 shows that at the national level over 50% of households reported that they experienced hunger; 28.2% of households were described as being at risk of hunger, and 20.2% appeared to be food secure. In rural areas 58% of households experienced hunger, compared to 46% in urban areas.

At the provincial level, prevalence of households experiencing hunger was highest in the Eastern Cape (66.7%), Northern Cape (65.3%) and Limpopo (63.2%), with the Western Cape having the lowest prevalence (29.3%). Child hunger remains high, ranging from 9% in the Western Cape to 43% in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo.

ANTHROPOMETRIC MEASUREMENT

The existence and extent of malnutrition is an important proxy indicator of access to food. Chronic dietary inadequacy is manifested through stunting and the National Food Consumption survey of 2005 indicated that about 18% of children were stunted in South Africa. Stunting is highest in rural areas (24.5%) and urban informal areas (18.5%), and decreases with age from 23.4% of 1 to 3 year olds to 12% among 7 to 9 year olds.

“Wasting” (from poor nutrition rather than insufficient food) affects 4.5% of South African children. 9.3% of children are underweight, while 4.8% are overweight. Predictably, evidence of poor nutrition is highest (at 5.5%) in urban formal areas. The highest prevalence was recorded in Gauteng (6.4%) and Kwa-Zulu Natal (6.3%). It is also reported that overweight and obesity combined occur in 51.5% of women.

Nutrition levels can be used as an indicator of the state of food security. The World Health Organisation recommends the “adequate daily energy intake” of people with different nutritional needs as follows:

	INFANT	CHILD	YOUTH / ADULT
ENERGY REQUIREMENTS	3 121kJ	5 693kJ	11 113kJ

This Policy requires the Department of Health to determine an acceptable minimum adult daily energy intake level, below which an individual would be considered as being under-nourished.

Expenditure on food can also be used as an indicator, and a per capita ‘food-poverty’ value could be determined. Households would be regarded as being in a situation of food poverty when their monthly spending on food, plus the value of food aid received, together with own-produced food, is less than the combined food poverty value of the individuals living in that household.

6.2 MEASURING FOOD SECURITY

At a national level, food security is primarily reflected in food price levels, food inflation indices, and by measures of local production. All of these are collated on a regular basis, and will be reported on as part of the monitoring of the policy.

Other indicators are available, including an economic review of food security, which takes a global view of resource inputs, marketing and logistics, and other factors like climate change, which impact on national food security. Such modelling may be considered in implementing this aspect of the policy.

7. COUNTRY ASSESSMENT

A recent assessment of Food Security in South Africa showed that in relation to the affordability, availability and quality of food, the country ranked 40th out of 105 countries, with an aggregate score of 61%. Nutritional standards in South Africa and food safety standards

were highly rated, as was the tariff regime, while scoring lower on support to farmers, volatility of production and diversity of diets and micro-nutrient intakes.

This assessment, together with the Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food in 2011, suggests that South Africa faces the following over-arching challenges in attaining national food security:

- At a national level, the country is able to produce or procure sufficient food, but distribution inequalities threaten household level food security, with up to 9 million tons of food wasted each year;
- There is an inadequate knowledge and information, as well as the financial resources, to enable citizens to make optimal choices for the consumption of safe and nutritious food;
- Food safety nets and food emergency management systems are not always in place to assist people who are unable to meet their food needs or to mitigate the impact of natural and human disasters;
- Rising input costs, especially electricity and fuel, as well as labour costs, which undermine the ability to sustain production;
- Climate change and poor land management (over grazing and other practices), together with the use of land for mining and urban development, pose a threat to domestic food production;
- There are limited opportunities and platforms for smallholder farmers to gain access to markets and hence participate in economically productive activities;
- There is a need to improve the availability of adequate, timely and relevant information for analysis, monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the state of food security;
- These challenges can best be considered through the lenses provided by the four dimensions of food security identified above – availability, accessibility, utilisation, and stability of food supply.

8. FACTORS AFFECTING FOOD SECURITY

The FAO uses four measures to assess Food and Nutrition Security: availability and accessibility of food, food utilisation, and stability of supply.

8.1 AVAILABILITY OF FOOD

Food availability relies primarily on the overall performance of the agricultural sector, but is also dependent on the country's ability to import, store, process and distribute food. Domestic production is supplemented by food import options and food consumption patterns prescribe the production and distribution of certain food products. The South African food situation has been and is still characterized by an overall state of sufficiency for the nation, as measured in terms of demand and supply indicators.

South Africa has always relied on imports to meet its wheat and meat requirements but is currently importing significantly more agricultural products than it did just five years ago. Currently the country is importing sufficient wheat to satisfy domestic demand but projections are that the demand will grow by almost 90% by 2020. This can be compared to modest growth in demand for chicken, beef and milk products. Figure 1 illustrates the domestic supply and demand for various products, in the form of a self-sufficiency index.

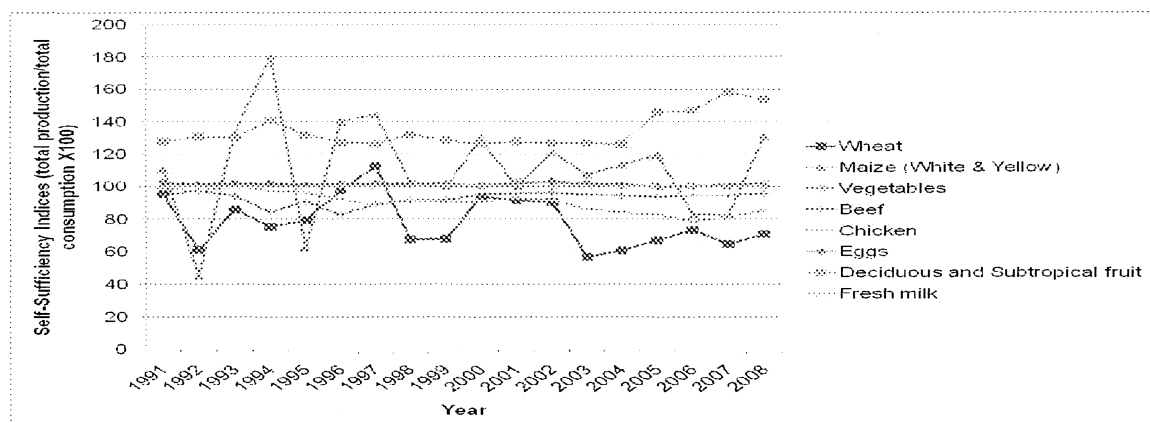


Figure 1: Self-sufficiency indices of selected agricultural commodities (DAFF, 2009)

The pattern of increasing food demand necessitates that the agriculture sector should become more efficient to supply sufficient food now and in the future. Currently about 20.7% of households are involved in agriculture production, but over 65% of these households are only producing for their own consumption. Without addressing the following challenges production levels will not match the projected food demands of the country.

LAND UTILISATION

Currently there are about 40 000 farming units in the country [DAFF, 2009]. There has been an overall loss of high agricultural potential land to non-agricultural activities such as mining

and housing developments, and in the period between 1994 and 2009 the overall area under food production declined by 30%.

FOOD STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION NETWORKS

Food storage facilities are essential for food security, particularly in addressing fluctuations in production such as seasonal supply variations and harvest failures, which result in unpredictable price hikes and drops. Poor storage and distribution also results in some 9 million tons of food being wasted each year.

The need for government-led food storage facilities, especially in remote areas where there is no proper road or market infrastructure, becomes an urgent policy intervention. Attention must also be given to household food storage to reduce wastage and promote healthier eating.

REFORM OF DOMESTIC MARKETS

Since 1996 agricultural markets have been actively deregulated. By early 1998, all Control Boards had ceased operations, and their assets were transferred to industry trusts, which are expected to provide services such as market information, export advice, and product development. The Marketing of Agricultural Products Act (1996) does provides for limited government interventions such as registration, regulation and information collection, but food price controls were removed and single-channel markets disappeared with the abolition of these Control Boards. As a result, many new farmers entered the domestic and export markets, which offered good prospects for future job creation and marketing services to new farmers.

This deregulation had its benefits, in particular the introduction of a futures and options market, which improved transparency in the marketing of agricultural products and enhanced productivity in the agricultural sector. However it has not always served to enhance the economic viability of the emerging agricultural sector, and the small-scale farming sector remains characterised by low productivity, lack of access to markets, and insufficient market information, as well as poor capacity and lack of production and marketing infrastructure. This sector urgently requires assistance in the market in order to develop, and support in terms of access to finance, to skills, and to markets.

8.2 ACCESSIBILITY OF FOOD

Despite adequate food supply and distribution on a national level, the determinant of food security is accessibility and affordability of food by individual households. Poverty and unemployment cause 20% of households to be food insecure.

The costs of food production have increased during the last decade. South Africa imports many of its production inputs, especially fuels and fertilisers, and the price of these affect the costs of food.

In turn, food prices are one of the major contributors to consumer price inflation, particularly for poor households who spend a disproportionate amount of their income on food. The Quarterly Food Price Monitoring report produced by the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) indicates strong rural and urban food prices disparities; consumers in rural areas pay more than consumers in urban areas to buy the same basket of selected food products.

8.3 UTILISATION OF FOOD

It is essential that people make the best use of available food resources for their nutritional wellbeing. Food must be prepared and consumed in a proper way to ensure maximum nutrition.

8.3.1 DIETARY DIVERSITY

The diversity of diet is pivotal to the attainment of food and nutrition security, since diverse diets tend to be richer in micro and macro nutrients. However most diets are dominated by staple foods that contain mostly macro nutrients, resulting in low dietary diversity. The consequences are high levels of micro-nutrient deficiency induced diseases in South Africa, arising from insufficient Vitamin A and Zinc, and manifesting as anaemia.

Food security programmes should also concentrate on the production and consumption of foods which are aimed at improving the identified deficient micro-nutrient at the household level. The WHO recommends a daily intake of up to 500 grams of fresh fruit and vegetables (including berries, green leafy and other vegetables and legumes) to reduce nutrient induced

illnesses. The inclusion of micro-nutrients in all state-supported food aid schemes must be attended to. These are low cost, and produce high gains.

The neglect of indigenous foods also exacerbates micro nutrient deficiencies. Indigenous crops like "Amaranth" (*amaranthus hypochondriacus*) and "Spider plant" (*cleome gynandra*) contain more micro nutrients than exotic vegetables such as cabbage and lettuce. The promotion of indigenous crops such as bambara ground nuts (*vigna subterranae*), amadumbe (*colocasia esculenta*) and cowpeas (*vigna inguiculata*) is integral to ensuring that households consume more diverse diets. Increased consumption will also induce their production and assist in the creation of markets for these commodities, which will in turn enhance rural economies.

8.3.2 FOOD PRESERVATION AND UTILISATION

Health risk factors such as obesity, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol are strongly associated with dietary intake. Five of the leading causes of death– heart disease, stroke, atherosclerosis, some cancers and diabetes – are linked to nutrition, and learning about better choices for healthy eating is integral to sustaining a healthy society.

Storage conditions, temperature and exposure to light are some of the factors that modify the nutritional value of foods. Nutrients may be lost prior to consumption – for example nutrients such as vitamin C are lost when food is bruised. Processing techniques can enhance or interfere with the nutritive values of foods; dehydration, canning, and freezing yield foods of high nutritive value, but each process modifies the nutrient contribution of a given food product. In preparing food, the amount of peelings removed, the size of pieces exposed to the air, and the length of time food is held before it is served for example are some of the potential methods on how nutrients loss from food can be realized. In addition, overcooking of certain food products, which is common, can reduce the amount of nutrients consumed.

The provision of nutrition education is therefore crucial to the efficient use of food resources. Nutrition education should assist individuals to improve their meal planning, interpretation of product nutritional indices and correct preparation methodologies to prevent food nutrient loss before consumption.

8.4 STABILITY OF FOOD SUPPLY

Although the South African food situation is characterized by a state of sufficiency, factors with the potential to compromise the stability of food supply need urgent attention. As part of the global community, South Africa's food supply is affected by natural, market, political and economic forces, and by international agreements. The following are some of the challenges that require attention.

8.4.1 CLIMATE CHANGE

Since 1906 temperatures have increased by 0.74% and the years 1995-2006 ranked amongst the warmest years on record. Despite international concern, greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere are set to increase, and due to its low adaptive capacity, the African continent is one of the most vulnerable to climate variability and to "extreme events" such as flooding or droughts.

8.4.2 REVITALISING THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

A food production and marketing strategy that clearly outlines state support to farmers and the agricultural industry is a prerequisite for food security. International comparisons show massive state support to farmers by developed and developing, mostly in the form of subsidies and tariffs, and South Africa needs to consider such measures in order to protect and promote agricultural production.

9. FOOD SECURITY RESPONSE MECHANISMS

The following systems are required, with appropriate institutional support.

9.1 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Timeous, accurate and relevant information about food is pivotal to the policy goal of eradicating hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity.

A comprehensive Food and Nutrition Security and Vulnerability analysis will require data to monitor each of the four dimensions (availability, access, utilisation, stability), and regular scientific reviews should identify risk factors. This should serve as a national data set on food availability (production, imports), access (income, markets), utilization (health, nutrition & sanitation) and stability of supply (climate change), and ensure that the food needs of the country are protected against shocks and disasters.

9.2 A CENTRALIZED FOOD SAFETY CONTROL SYSTEM

The current food safety and quality control systems in South Africa are fragmented, with different agencies administering the implementation of various regulations determined by different pieces of legislation. Custodians include:

- The Department of Health (Food Inspection Services)
- The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (Perishable Products Export Control Board); and,
- The Department of Trade and Industry (South African Bureau of Standards).

The Policy therefore proposes the formation of a centralised food safety and quality controlling system for South Africa, and the creation of a body that will amalgamate the different entities responsible for implementing food safety regulations.

The mandate of this body will be to develop a food safety policy for South Africa to regulate domestic and international food safety standards obligations, to develop and/or review the current legislation regulating food safety, integrate the enforcement of regulations industry, and harmonise the domestic food safety standards with international standards.

9.3 FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY RISK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The attainment of food sufficiency within the SADC Region will assist in promoting economic stability. Government will support the development of the region by encouraging investment in agricultural production and processing infrastructure (including roads, ports & rail transport), and leading the processes of institutional reform, human resource development and other development initiatives including capital investment projects. Consideration could also be given to the development of Regional Food Reserves, although these could be costly. An analysis conducted previously is attached, for information purposes.

9.4 AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

In the decades ahead, the challenge of ensuring food security for our rapidly expanding population calls for profound improvements in agricultural knowledge systems. Environmental degradation like soil erosion, deforestation, pollution and loss of plant and animal genetic diversity will limit our country's ability to produce food now and for the future.

Our food needs will exceed resource limits if investment on research and technology development is not prioritized. Climate change, production input costs, development of crop varieties adapted to adverse conditions, biological pest and disease control methods, biogas digesters and improved irrigation management and farming systems that blend traditional knowledge with innovative research are some of the matters to be researched.

10. POLICY LEADERSHIP

The Food Security Policy will be led in a manner which entrenches public, private and civil society partnerships.

Overall leadership will be provided by government, advised by a National Food and Nutrition Advisory Committee, comprised of recognised experts from organized agriculture, food security and consumer bodies, as well as climate change and environmental practitioners and representatives of organised communities. The Committee would be chaired by the Deputy President.

Similar structures could be established at provincial and local levels, and should be supported by relevant government Departments.

11. LEGISLATION

In line with its international obligations, South Africa has to consider the recommendation of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) that Member States should consider the enactment of legislation on the right to access to food. The approval of this National Food and Nutrition Security policy could be an initial step towards a Food and Nutrition Security Act for South Africa, which would give statutory force to such structures. A Green and White Paper process is envisaged to prepare for this.

12. BUILDING THE PILLARS OF FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

The pillars of food and nutrition security are identified as the following:

- Effective **food assistance** networks, involving both government and non-governmental agencies, to ensure better access to food for all, through the availability of improved nutritional safety nets. These could include an expanded and improved school nutrition programme, fortification of foods, and the use of foodbanks and food kitchens.
- Improved **nutrition education**, including District level nutrition services to assist households and communities monitoring nutritional indices, providing consumer literacy, and assisting with better food management and improved meal planning. Programmes are available, and could be made available on a mass scale.
- Alignment of investments in agriculture towards **local economic development**. This will focus on the revitalisation of irrigation schemes, and the development of production, storage and distribution of food.
- Improved **market participation** of the emerging agricultural sector through public-private partnerships, including off-take and other agreements, a government food purchase programme that supports smallholder farmers, as well as through the implementation of the Agri-BEE Charter, which requires agro-processing industries to broaden their supply bases to include the emerging agricultural sector.
- Food and Nutrition Security **Risk Management**, including increased investment in research and technology to respond to the production opportunities and challenges inherent to climate change, bio-energy, green technologies and the like. It would also include the protection of prime agricultural land, and limitations on its alienation for other activities, including mining, game farming, and property development. Improved food security information management systems would also be required, with periodic scientific reviews of the state of food security in the country. This information could be used to ensure that informed decisions were made in regard to the management of food supplies.

Giving effect to each of these pillars involves a wide range of activities, and requires the participation of numerous government departments. Contributions will range from economic transformation initiatives, to social development programmes such as nutrition education and the establishment of home and community gardens, as well as assistance programmes for the poor. Each of these would contribute to one of the four identified dimensions of food security:

- Adequate availability of food
- Physical, social and economic accessibility of food,
- Utilisation, quality and safety of food, and
- Stability of food supply.

The supporting strategies are related to these four dimensions and focused on one of the following aspects:

- The utilisation of existing food supplies at a household level, with a view to addressing the short-term concerns of hunger and malnutrition (as proposed in the Household Food and Nutrition Strategy), or
- Increasing the overall supply of food through improved production, as well as various market interventions, with a view to ensuring a sufficient and sustainable supply of food for the country as a whole.