

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: STOCK THEFT CONVICTION

Mzwandile Hlwili (39), Zwelakhe Nokwabuza (33), Mabhekela Nojaja (52) and Solethu Nokwabuza (24) were sentenced for stock theft in the Kokstad Regional Court on Wednesday.

The accused were arrested after police pulled over their overloaded bakkie. On inspection, the police discovered 30 sheep, 24 of which were already dead due to suffocation. One of the four accused told the police that the sheep were stolen from a farm in Cedarville.

All the accused had pleaded not guilty during the trial and in their defence they implicated each other. However, during cross examination by regional court prosecutor, Smangele Mdunjana it became evident that the accused had acted together and had planned to steal the sheep.

In aggravation of sentence, Mdunjana told the court that the 24 sheep that died had resulted in a loss of approximately R48000.00 for the owner. Further, she mentioned that the crime of stock theft was prevalent in the area. The fact that accused 1 and accused 4 had previous convictions for theft was an added aggravating factor.

Accused 1 was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment while accused 2 and accused 3 were sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. Accused 4 was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment. Half of these sentences were suspended for a period of 5 years.

This case was reported to the Asset Forfeiture Unit and the bakkie is being kept by the police until the outcome of asset forfeiture order.

The National Prosecuting Authority welcomes these sentences and we hope that they will serve as a deterrent to those who envisage committing similar offences.

Kind Regards,

Natasha Kara
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