

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: FARMER GETS 21 YEARS FOR FRAUD, FORGERY AND MONEY LAUNDERING

Last week, the Cradock Regional Court sentenced Jacques De Bruin (47) to 21 years imprisonment for eight counts of fraud, four counts of forgery and four counts of money laundering.

From September 2013 to April 2015, De Bruin, who is a Queenstown farmer had a credit facility at an agricultural enterprise known as Oos Vrystaat Kaap Bedryf Beperk (OVK). As part of the terms of conditions, the OVK permitted De Bruin to buy feed on credit from an eternal supplier in the event that OVK was out of stock. As a client, he was then required to submit the supplier's invoice to OVK. OVK would in turn pay the supplier directly and debit the amount off De Bruin's account.

On four occasions between February 2014 and August 2014, De Bruin deceived OVK through the submission of false and forged invoices which misled the institution to believe that he bought from two suppliers a total of 828 tons of feed valued at just over R1.05m. OVK made the payments to the bank accounts on the invoices and consequently lost this amount.

From 2007 to 2013, De Bruin also entered into lease agreements with four farmers in the Queenstown area to lease from them ewes, rams and dairy cows. The agreement was that he would lease a total of 418 cows, 249 mutton merino ewes and 15 mutton merino rams and had to pay for the lease. At the end of the lease agreement he had to return the original livestock in the same state he was given. De Bruin could keep the milk and the offspring with one exception of one lease agreement where he also had to return 20 two-year-old heifers.

He sold some livestock which was against the terms of the agreement and claimed that some got lost. In the process, the farmers were defrauded R2.5m.

He was sentenced to seven years for each offence which collectively amounts to 21 years. The court ordered that these run concurrently meaning that De Bruin will serve seven years direct imprisonment.

The Senior State Advocate, Lise Keech successfully prosecuted this case.

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