

CRACKING DOWN ON AGRICULTURAL CRIME

THE FIGHT AGAINST AGRICULTURAL CRIME AND GRANTING LEGAL IMMUNITY TO FARMERS AND ORDINARY CITIZENS WHO ACT IN SELF-DEFENSE TO PROTECT THEMSELVES OR THEIR PROPERTY.

Agricultural crime is a pervasive problem with dreadful implications for agriculture and continued ownership of the land of Israel. For years, Israeli law enforcement authorities - beginning with the police department, continuing with the State Attorney (the legal body that presents the state in the courtroom), and culminating with the courts themselves - have demonstrated infuriating indifference toward this phenomenon, and have effectively abandoned farmers and the entire agricultural sector.

For the most part, agricultural crime is nationalistically motivated; agricultural 'terror' aimed at intimidating Jewish farmers and livestock owners into submission. It is a serious problem, and it must be dealt with efficiently and effectively.

Agriculture is Zionism in the fullest sense of the word. It is the epitome of being connected to the land and maintaining ownership of the land, in addition to ensuring food security and sustainability. All of this is threatened by agricultural crime, and it is untenable for us to simply accept this distressing phenomenon and allow it to endure.

In an effort to support farmers and guarantee that agricultural crime does not pay off, we will advance legislation in conjunction with our '100 Day Plan' that will grant extensive legal immunity to farmers who act in self-defense to protect themselves and their property and make it impossible to press charges against them.

WHAT WILL WE DO IN THE UPCOMING KNESSET TO CRACK DOWN ON AGRICULTURAL CRIME?

OUR WORK WILL FOCUS ON FOUR DIFFERENT FRONTS:

THE FARMERS:

- We will address the issue of insuring agricultural equipment. We will focus on the need for this type of insurance and address the current insurance market failure to provide for damages caused to agricultural equipment.
- We will advocate for government subsidies to defray the cost of anti-theft measures to prevent the theft of sheep and cattle, and reintroduce the issue of compensation for damages caused by agricultural crime.
- We will advance criminal law legislation that extends full legal immunity to farmers and ordinary citizens who act in self-defense to protect themselves or their property, and make it impossible to press charges against them.

THE POLICE DEPARTMENT:

- We will advance a government motion that will establish that curbing agricultural crime is a priority for law enforcement agencies over the next five years.
- We will work on delineating a systematic evaluation plan that will present guidelines for addressing agricultural crime.

THE STATE ATTORNEY:

- In each district, a designated attorney will be assigned to deal with agricultural crime.
- The State Attorney will be instructed to avoid making plea deals, to the extent possible, in cases involving agricultural crime and to insist on maximum sentences in these cases.
- The State Attorney will be instructed to appeal 'soft' sentences in cases involving agricultural crime, and thus make it clear that the state is not willing to tolerate this phenomenon and will exact justice from perpetrators.
- We will advance legislation that establishes minimum mandatory sentencing for agricultural crime.

THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE – THE COURTS ADMINISTRATION AUTHORITY:

- We will set up a continuing education system to teach the judges who hear these cases about stricter sentencing policies for economic crime.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FORUM OF DIRECTOR GENERALS TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES AND COORDINATE RESPONSES:

- A Forum of Director Generals under the direction of the Director General of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development will be set up. The Forum of Director Generals will include the Director Generals of the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Public Security, and the Ministry of Finance, who will work together to effectively implement a plan to address agricultural crime.
- The Forum of Director Generals will compile a 'National Plan to Improve the Handling of Agricultural Crime' which will ensure that all elements

of this proposal are implemented and place an emphasis on restoring the farmers' faith in law enforcement agencies, while removing the legal and administrative impediments that make it difficult to crack down on agricultural crime.

“WHEREVER THE JEWISH PLOW PLOWS ITS LAST FURROW IS WHERE OUR BORDER WILL GO” – TRUMPELDOR