

# Land claims update

CAMDEN Farm and Compensation are two of 25 state-owned farms in the Impendle District. These farms are currently the subject of ACLA consideration.

## Camden Farm

In a letter written to ACLA, Robert Madlala on behalf of 23 families who are laying claim to Camden Farm, explained the community's concerns.

"I was born on Camden Farm 72 years ago. My father was born there as well. I believe our people were on Camden Farm long before any white people arrived.

"I went to school for one year only, then I started work on Camden Farm. Later I got married and raised a family.

"We did not get much money for working on Camden Farm. In 1988 I was earning R12 a month and some food. The main reason for our working on Camden Farm was so that we would be able to continue living on the land and practising agriculture. This carried on for many generations. We were part of Camden Farm.

"We were not rich but we were happy working on the farm. The owners were friendly and helpful. We ploughed, planted and had cattle on the farm. This is why I say we were on good terms with the Camden Farm owners. We were saddened and hurt when the last owner was brutally murdered, we think in 1986 or 1987. We still mourn his



Representatives from Compensation and Camden Farm at the national community meeting in November 1992. Back row, left to right: Mr R Mkhabela, Mr Madlala (Jnr), Mr Mhlophe. Front row, left to right: Mr T Mncwabe, Mr R Madlala

death. His death brought us sorrow and a lot of suffering.

"We do not know to whom the farm has belonged since his death. There were people leasing the farm and they enforced difficult conditions on us.

"The worst happened in June and July 1991, when we were attacked by people from across the river, from the neighbouring KwaZulu area. The identities of these people are known to us. After escaping from our attackers, they burnt our houses and most of our belongings were lost. The main person responsible for our attack is now in jail awaiting trial for murder and other cases and he has been refused bail.

"We are now scattered, although most of us are

living as refugees in Pietermaritzburg. We want to go back to Camden as soon as possible. We want to lead a normal life again.

"We appeal to the Commission to allocate the farm Camden to us because we regard it as our only home. We want to live on this farm under the government of South Africa. We cannot live there under KwaZulu."

## Compensation

Compensation is home to about 3 000 people who were

removed from "black spots" by the DDA. The people were removed from Himeville (Underberg District), Ladysmith, Weenen and other places in the Underberg District.

When the people were removed from these areas, the DDA allocated them plots at Compensation and also told them that they would get additional land from a state owned farm called Hilder Farm. This was to compensate for their loss of access to land for farming and firewood. However, when they were removed to Compensation, the tenant at Hilder Farm denied them access to the farm. Hilder Farm is now vacant. The people are now demanding that Hilder Farm come to them as promised and that they get security of tenure and tenure upgrading at Compensation. The area is currently divided into a freehold area and a closer settlement area.

The people want to decide who should administer the area themselves.