

Agri SA proposes socio-economic development strategy focused on growth

At the centre of a socio-economic development strategy and accord that Agri SA is proposing for the total sector, is growth on different levels. The four pillars of the strategy are growth with regard to business development, people development, food security and ownership security.



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One of the important outcomes of the strategy will be the settlement of profitable new entrants to agriculture. Too many new farmers cannot produce sustainably. They form an important part of the future of the sector and the country. Thus, they need more assistance.

The international competitiveness of commercial farmers must also stand at the centre of the strategy, as these farmers is an important source that should be protected. Agri SA is not planning to re-invent the wheel with regards to such a strategy. Many workshops are planned to include the organisation's several affiliates in the strategy, and to also heighten interest in it.

Another important aspect of the strategy will be to measure progress. Results and progress will be communicated widely. "We will have to take hands to change perceptions, and we will have to do it ourselves. No one else will do it for us," says Christo van der Rheede, deputy chief executive officer of Agri SA.

The strategy and accord proposes different codes that farmers and role players in the sector have to adhere to. According to Neil Hamman, deputy chairperson of Agri SA's Labour and Social Policy Committee, consolidation of codes will be very important. The codes will have to match each other because on many farms more than one commodity is produced.

"The success of the strategy will depend on the ability of Agri SA to form partnerships with all role players in the value chain. The impact of the many projects already underway can be increased on multiple levels with better coordination. Agri SA will establish themselves as coordinator to reach this goal," says Van der Rheede.

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