

# A gateway to investment opportunities in African agriculture

The African Agri Investment Indaba 2017 kicks off today, 20 November 2017, providing a gateway to investment opportunities in Africa's agriculture sector.



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Taking place at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), the indaba will see 600 leaders in the agricultural economy from around the world and some 40 expert speakers in attendance, some 30 countries represented, a 100 key investors from over 70 firms, and over 200 pre-scheduled meetings.

The indaba will include a keynote address from Premier of the Western Cape, Helen Zille. Other speakers include Nhlanhla Nene, former Minister of Finance, and Resident Advisor at Thebe Investment Corporation; Honourable Willy Bett, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Kenya; Minister Alan Winde, Western Cape Minister of Economic Opportunities; Atsuko Toda, Director: Agricultural Finance and Rural Development: African Development Bank, Cote d'Ivoire; and Stuart Bradley, Co-founder and Joint Managing Partner at Phatisa South Africa.

## A much-needed boost in face of the drought

With the drought providing numerous challenges in this critical sector in the Cape, this Indaba will provide a much-needed boost, highlighting the myriad of opportunities that continue to present itself in the province, South Africa and the rest of the continent. Indeed Wesgro and the Western Cape Government, as two lead sponsors of this event, take agriculture extremely seriously because it is critical for job creation and economic growth in the province.

Between April and June 2017, the agricultural sector in the Cape supported 180,000 jobs. The Western Cape, as per the recent stats from Statistics SA, is the largest employer among all provinces in the agricultural sector, accounting for 19.63% of the sector. All in all, the Western Cape's agricultural sector is valued at R11.3bn in 2016, with the province's food sector valued at R10.6bn.

## Agri-processing a key strategic priority

Wesgro CEO, Tim Harris, said: "Agri-processing is a key strategic priority of the Western Cape Government's Project Khulisa, and Wesgro houses the Agribusiness Investment Unit, supported by the Western Cape Department of Agriculture.

Our trade team also works hard to assist exporters in the agricultural sector access international markets.”

“In the 2016/17 financial year, Wesgro’s AgriBusiness Investment Unit helped facilitate over R700m of investment in the sector. I am proud to say that we have already helped secure committed investments amounting to R566m in the current financial year, in challenging economic conditions.”

## **Strengthening the agriculture sector, identifying investment and growth opportunities**

Western Cape Minister of Economic Opportunities, Alan Winde said: “The African Agri Investment Indaba seeks to strengthen the continent’s agriculture sector and identify investment and growth opportunities. Africa is poised to play a significant role in ensuring global food security and we know we must embrace innovation and sustainable agriculture practices. Agriculture and agri-processing are key focus sectors in our Project Khulisa growth strategy. We will also discuss investment into Africa’s Halal manufacturing industry, another key focus of Project Khulisa. I am confident the indaba will be a platform to further establish partnerships with investors and the public sector.”

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