
STATEMENT ON THE PASSING AWAY OF REVERED PROF MOHAMMAD KARAAN

14 January 2020

The National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) joins the agricultural community in mourning the untimely death of Professor Mohammad Karaan.

A former Chairperson of the NAMC, Prof Karaan was instrumental in shaping the path of the Council, to lead in the science of agricultural economics and bridging the gap between government and agribusiness in the deregulated agricultural marketing era.

“For him an advisory body to the Minister needed to have a very strong research capacity to offer scientifically rigorous advice. It was during his time that the NAMC’s economic research unit was established”, said Acting Chairperson of Council Mr Harry Prinsloo.

Over the course of his Council’s chairmanship, Prof Karaan positioned the NAMC as a breeding pot of agricultural economists and an engine of policy advisory services for policymakers and the agricultural business community.

“He inspired the Council to form partnerships with Cornell University through the Making Markets Matter (MMM) initiative, an agricultural marketing training programme which supported over 2000 agribusinesses throughout the African continent. Prof Karaan was also the president of the Agricultural Economics Association of Southern Africa (AEASA), an organization where the NAMC still supports to date” said Chief Executive Officer Dr Simphiwe Ngqangweni.

Under his leadership, the Council played a pivotal role to support the work of agricultural commodity organizations and he set the tone of what the NAMC and agricultural commodity organizations are today.

The history books will place his name among the best and most independent thinkers in South Africa’s agricultural space. He is one of the few economists to have consistently argued that markets at times and under certain circumstances do not exist and/or are

imperfect and that the role of government is to set up appropriate institutional mechanisms to counteract market imperfections.

Prof Karaan's intellectual and other contributions to the South African agricultural sector speak for themselves. The country has indeed suffered an irreplaceable loss which will take time to recover from.

The NAMC expresses its condolences to the Karaan family, the University of Stellenbosch and the agricultural community at large and wishes that the peace and comfort of our Creator may be with them at such a difficult time.

From NAMC Council, Management and Staff

Mr Harry Prinsloo.
Acting Council Chairperson