

ROOM FOR EMERGING FARMERS TO EXPORT

By: Staff Member

On 28 September, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) in partnership with the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) hosted a trade webinar on wool, mohair and cotton exports.

“We called upon this webinar, to raise potential partnerships with the industries and government agencies” - Winston Makabanyane

Industry represented included Cotton South Africa, Cape Wool South Africa and Mohair South Africa. From the government, the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (Dtic) and Small Enterprises Development Agency (SEDA) were at hand to explain its trade export support for farmers.

“We called upon this webinar, to raise potential partnerships with the industries and government agencies” said DALRRD’s Acting Chief Director on International Relations and Trade, Winston Makabanyane.

Interesting aspect borne from the webinar, was the plenty of opportunities agriculture and farmers were missing out on. At the prime escalation, was miscommunication between provincial departments of agriculture and funding institutions.

Deputy Director of Export Marketing and Investment Assistance (EMIA) from Dtic, Nxalati Mashele, concurred with the notion, and said multiple requests to include agricultural departments and farmers for trade missions are often ignored.

“EMIA offers group participation were farmers/agro-processors can be invited to be part of the national exhibitions. We usually issue calls on a bi-annual basis” she said.

EMIA is an incentive offered by the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition to partially compensate exporters for costs incurred in respect of identifying new and developing existing export markets for SA Products and Services and recruiting Foreign Direct Investment into the country.

SEDA, represented by Liya Cherian, Programme Implementation Specialist for Export Development said her institution offered SEDA Export Development Programme.

“The programme offers information, training, development and market access to all participants. Importantly, it is to ensure that those who are part of the programme are export ready. A mentor is provided” she said.

SEDA had close to 80 Branches and Co-Locations. Cherian extended a partnership hand with the mohair, wool and cotton industries.

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Regarding exports in the three industries, the webinar heard on first account that enterprise development programme was provided.

In 2021, the South African Mohair contributed 51% to the global mohair production. While, the industry was predominantly in commercial farmer hands, Mohair SA's development Mohair Empowerment Trust was on the voyage to develop emerging farmers to commercial level.

"We provide angora goats via Free Interest Loan for a period of 5 years. We also provide training and support to ensure there is successful large scale mohair producers" said managing director of Mohair Empowerment Trust, Beauty Mokgwamme.

Cotton SA was on the drive to partake in exports. For its development programme, they currently had 1 175 emerging cotton farmers under their wing.

Compared to other countries, wool production in South Africa stood at 3% annual production. China imported a lot of raw wool and there was potential for South Africa to increase its wool production. Currently, wool is sold mainly through the auction system said Cape Wool SA CEO Dean Saayman.

"Off the 45 000 communal farmers, we provided training and mentorship through our Communal Sheep Enterprise. We are confident that the programme is yielding results, with the quality of wool being produced, it could only boost our export production" he said.

DALRRD plant health also advised for the industries to work with them especially on agricultural products allowed or prohibited for imports and exports.

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