

Stakeholders call for further development OF THE CASSAVA VALUE CHAIN IN SOUTH AFRICA.

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The National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC), in partnership with —FABCO Primary Cooperative Limited (FABCO), Agricultural Research Council (ARC), and Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies (TIPS), convened a stakeholder engagement workshop on 20 June 2023 in Tzaneen (Limpopo Province) to disseminate information regarding further development of the cassava value chain.

Specific objectives of the engagement were to foster collaboration and networking among stakeholders, share research insights on the ongoing cassava value chain study, and seek stakeholder feedback and suggestions on improving the performance of cassava production practices, market access issues, and agro-process aspects. In addition, the workshop served as a platform through which opportunities and challenges were identified along the cassava value chain.

This event was a turning point for the various players in the cassava value chain and brought together various Stakeholders such as Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) which is responsible for funding the initiative, Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC), the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, academia, Small and Micro Enterprises (SMEs) representatives, among others



Critical discussions focussed on recognising the commercial potential of cassava, addressing the need for farmer support and training, enhancing better market access for the producers, and the importance of working together as value chain actors. Participants actively shared their views and experiences throughout the event, laying the groundwork for future advances in the cassava value chain. Throughout the discussions, expanding demand in the market for cassava-based products, and economic potential of the cassava, were emphasised. However, certified planting material, market access, limited awareness, and logistical difficulties were noted as essential impediments to further develop the cassava value chain.

In response to the challenges, action plan was determined to serve as a roadmap for subsequent efforts. These include the development of a comprehensive cassava production manual which will provide farmers with essential guidance, advocacy for infrastructure improvements to enhance market access, more stakeholder engagements to create the need for awareness about the crop and its benefits, as well as conducting further research on post-harvest processing and market development, among other aspects.

In conclusion, stakeholders want to unlock the full potential of the cassava value chain by working together and tackling the identified challenges. These interventions will be beneficial to farmers, processors, and the agricultural sector in South Africa.



Watch here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_p2iOoTX50