

Agri pact to open S American market for SA

PRETORIA: Government has deepened its mission of opening markets in countries that are not its traditional trading partners through the signing of an agriculture agreement with Argentina.



Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Tina Joemat-Pettersson signed a statement of intent with her Argentine counterpart, Norberto Yauhar, in Pretoria on Thursday, 6 June 2013.

"For South Africa, the signing of the agreement in agriculture is in line with our mission to open markets in countries that are not our traditional trading partners.

"Opening markets exposes our families to international markets and is an invaluable way of adding to job creation and skills exchanges to our citizens," said Joemat-Pettersson.

Speaking through a translator, Yauhar said the agreement will enhance South-South cooperation at all levels, in particular in the field of improving agricultural production efficiencies, sharing of technologies, and the promotion and facilitation of trade in agricultural products.

The primary aim of the agreement is to strengthen agricultural development and cooperation between the countries and to promote cooperation at a technical, operational and policy level in a number of fields.

South Africa and Argentina have an extensive relationship in the field of agriculture. To date, Argentina has signed numerous agreements with South Africa.

The second largest country in both South America and Latin America shares South Africa's interest of developing small scale farmers, as well as in bolstering "no till" technologies and biosafety.

Argentina has been participating in many sector events in South Africa, where the country has showcased Argentine agricultural capital goods that are produced by medium size companies.

That country's goods have been exhibited at Nampo Harvest Day every year since 2008, and there has been comprehensive bilateral collaboration in the experimental field of "no till" technologies since 2007.

Joemat-Pettersson expressed South Africa's appreciation for the assistance and collaboration from Argentina in preparation for the Food and Agriculture Organisation's 14th World Forestry Congress in 2015, to be hosted by South Africa in Durban.

Yauhar also used the platform to extend an invitation to Joemat-Pettersson to visit his country to study the country's agricultural models.

"This will also strengthen agricultural development and cooperation between our countries through shared programmes and projects both at the technical, operational and policy level," he said.

The two ministers held cordial deliberations on issues related to current agricultural and trade policies and world food security.

The discussions also touched on the third meeting of the South Africa/Argentina Bi-national Commission in November 2012, which discussed matters related to strengthening ties in agriculture.

The meeting also culminated in the signing of a bilateral agreement in the field of agriculture cooperation, which the ministers recognised as a framework to continue to implement substantive exchanges of experts, missions, activities and direct contact with applied research institutions.

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