

South Africa: Western Cape Agriculture commits to developing black smallholder farmers

The private sector has shown its commitment to developing black smallholder farmers in the province, with all eleven of the agricultural commodity groups who have been part of the Western Cape Department of Agriculture's commodity approach to land reform, signing new MOUs last week.

Under the commodity approach, the commodity groups have committed to helping black smallholder farmers and land reform beneficiaries become more successful through access to markets for their goods, mentorship and training. The commodity groups have also contributed funding and in-kind support towards the implementation of successful land reform projects in the province.

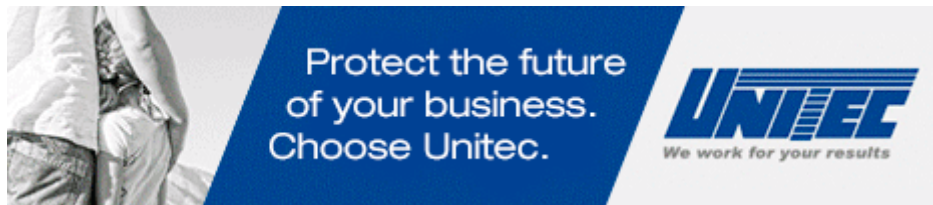


MEC of Economic Opportunities, Beverley Schäfer said: "Agricultural development is a process and government alone cannot achieve success without private sector involvement. New black farmers are supported by the Department of Agriculture through all of its programmes, but the required information and skills sets lie in the broader agricultural sector. Government most often does not have enough funding and capacity to support the new entrants to run a successful agricultural business.

The success confirmed through an independent evaluation on the support to agricultural land reform beneficiaries and new entrants, shows a great achievement, but this was not done in isolation. So the continued commitment of the private sector was confirmed through the signing of Memoranda of Agreements last Friday."

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