

Workshop to help SADC countries improve food production

The governments of South Africa and New Zealand will join forces to share their expertise on food safety systems for export with their counterparts in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC).



Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Senzeni Zokwana will chair a workshop on food production in SADC countries alongside New Zealand High Commissioner Richard Mann. Image: GCIS

The two-day workshop in Pretoria, will be co-chaired by Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Senzeni Zokwana, and New Zealand High Commissioner to South Africa, Richard Mann, with participation of experts from Kenya and Uganda, among others.

According to Zokwana's spokesman Palesa Mokomele, the workshop aims to share experience and expertise with southern African countries in agriculture and fisheries.

"The workshop will focus on offering practical solutions for key industries and government officials dealing with food safety issues. This will also be an opportunity to showcase New Zealand and South African producers' robust and world-leading 'farm to fork' and 'grass to glass' food safety standards and legislation," Mokomele said.

Most African countries are focused on increasing the quantity and quality of their agricultural exports and seek greater market access while meeting compliance issues for new and existing export markets.

Key regional multilateral organisations such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the New Partnership for

Africa's Development (NEPAD), the African Development Bank and the Global Food Safety Initiative will also participate.

This trilateral initiative came as a result of last year's meeting between Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, and her New Zealand counterpart Murray McCully, where they agreed to cooperate in the field of agriculture, focusing on issues affecting the SADC region.

Both South Africa and New Zealand expressed the hope that the workshop will assist the region in better market access and improved food production.

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