

Wesgro selected as BSO partner for SIPPO to enhance exports of agri-processed goods

Wesgro has been selected to be a Business Support Organisation (BSO) partner for the Swiss Import Promotion Programme (SIPPO). The programme which runs from 2017-2020 will enable the agency to enhance the Cape's exports of agri-processed goods, specifically natural ingredients and processed foods. "Wesgro is excited about the partnership with SIPPO as we believe that the programme will help us to broaden the participation of Western Cape enterprises in export promotion and increase market access into Europe," said Tim Harris, Wesgro CEO.



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"The trade team's efforts to become a partner to SIPPO greatly enhances our efforts in sector development in the Western Cape especially in natural ingredients and processed foods. These sectors have been identified as key divisions for growing the Western Cape's Halal industry. Ultimately, the capacity of the Trade Unit in export promotion will be greatly improved through the partnership," added Harris.

SIPPO is a longstanding, proven initiative and mandate of Switzerland's State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). The programme is implemented by Swisscontact which is active in the field of international development cooperation, aimed at enabling developing and transitional countries to integrate into global markets.

In South Africa, the objective of the new SIPPO mandate is to capacitate and strengthen the competencies of BSOs to better connect export companies with importers in overseas and regional markets. The programme's intervention areas include support in market intelligence; matchmaking; performance measurement; and knowledge transfer and exchange in collaboration with the Import Promotion Desk, Germany; the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries, Netherlands and the Import Information Hub in Austria.

The agri-processing role

The Western Cape Government, through Project Khulisa, has identified the agri-processing sector – with a particular focus on food and beverages exports, as one of the key priority sectors that will provide the greatest growth and job creation, over

the next five years.

Minister of Economic Opportunities, Alan Winde commented: "Because of the important role that agri-processing plays in the province's growth and job creation strategy, programmes like the SIPPO programme are of fundamental importance. This programme will allow us to grow develop our understanding of some key European markets and grow market share for Western Cape products in these markets."

Head of International Trade and Development, Denan Kuni added: "Western Cape companies wishing to expand their footprint into Europe should contact Wesgro's International Trade Unit to participate in the programme."

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