



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA ADVISORY

19 APRIL 2017

MINISTER ZOKWANA ENGAGES WITH COLLEGES OF AGRICULTURE IN EASTERN CAPE

The Minister of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Mr Senzeni Zokwana, will visit the Grootfontein Agricultural Development Institute and the Fort Cox College of Agriculture and Forestry as part of the Government Imbizo Focus Week which is an unmediated information sharing platform and dialogue between government and people.

Education and training in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors is confronted by various challenges including the legislation governing the Colleges of Agriculture, employability of agriculture college graduates and the participation of women and youth in the three sectors. Following these challenges, the Imbizo will emphasise the implementation of norms and standards for agricultural training institutes which is expected to be officially endorsed as a guideline to the mandate of these colleges. This gathering will also provide a platform to engage with stakeholders in the education and training of the three sectors to support and drive the development agenda of food security and rural wealth creation. The Imbizo will also engage with stakeholders on the implications of transferring Colleges of Agriculture from the department to the Department of Higher Education and Training.

The Grootfontein Agricultural Development Institute is a specialised centre of excellence in small stock production with a proven record of training in wool and mohair production. The college is situated in the dry Karoo Middleburg town, surrounded by Cradock, Graffreinet and Colesburg town which are dominantly small stock farming areas. It has developed partnership with the wool and mohair industry and well-known for its research in the field.

The Fort Cox College of Agriculture and Forestry is a centre of excellence in Forestry. It is located near the Kat Valley Citrus growing area. It is also near the University of Fort Hare making it easier to tap on the expertise from the university in support of its training programmes. The Fort Cox is also the only college that is semi-independent and governed by a board appointed by the MEC for Agriculture in the Eastern Cape to provide leadership and oversight.

DAFF has been awarding bursaries since 2004, after introducing an external bursary scheme in response to government's call to bridge the skills gap, promote rural development and to eliminate skewed participation in South Africa.

The scheme is used by DAFF as a skills pipeline to contribute towards the promotion of inclusive economic growth, job creation and food security by ensuring a constant supply of required skilled personnel in the highly competitive fields of agriculture, forestry and fisheries. A variety of programmes which include the bursary scheme, have since been introduced to attract young people to the abovementioned sectors, and needless to say the effort is paying off very well. Over the years, DAFF has funded deserving young people to follow careers which have been identified as scarce and critical such as:

- Agricultural Economics, Bio-Resource Engineering, Food Science and Technology, Veterinary Science, Viticulture and Oenology, Agronomy, Entomology, Plant Pathology, Soil Science and Grassland/Pasture Science, Genetics, Microbiology, etc. in the agricultural sector.
- Forestry and Wood Science in the forestry sector.
- Oceanography, Marine Biology, Ichthyology and Aquaculture in the fisheries sector.

Details of the events:

The Grootfontein Agricultural Development Institute

Date: 20 April 2017

Venue: Grootfontein Agricultural Development Institute

Time: 09:00 (followed by project visits)

The Fort Cox College of Agriculture and Forestry

Date: 21 April 2017

Venue: Fort Cox College,

Time: 09:00 (followed by project visits)

Members of the media attending the event are requested to confirm their attendance with Samuel Kgatla on 082 738 5237 for The Grootfontein Agricultural Development Institute and to Jamela Nkanyane on 082 346 9781 for The Fort Cox College of Agriculture and Forestry.

Any requests for further information should be forwarded to:

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