

Press release: Western Cape Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development wishes China wine delegation good luck

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Illustration: Photo by Wouter Kriel

W-Yantai 1: "From left to right, Schalk Visser, KWV Sales executive; Nomdumiso Pikashe, Sesfikile Wines, Managing Director; Gerrit Van Rensburg, Western Cape Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development; Hao Guangfeng, Consul General to the Peoples' Republic of China in South Africa"

Body: "Gerrit van Rensburg, Western Cape Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development yesterday gave his best wishes to the South African wine delegation, which will participate in the 5<sup>th</sup> Yantai International Wine Festival, in Yantai, Shandong Province, China. Held from the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> of September, this international event is considered important for any company planning to do wine business in China.

The delegation, consisting of 20 wine industry companies, is jointly supported by the Western Cape Department of Agriculture; Wesgro, the Provincial investment agency, and the Department of Trade and Industry.

Van Rensburg said existing international platforms, such as the BRICS group of nations and the Regional Leader Summit are ideal for the launching of market access initiatives. "The Western Cape was host to the Regional Leader Summit in 2010, and the Governor of Shandong Province used the opportunity to invite our wine industry to partake in the Yantai Festival", Van Rensburg said.

"It often helps to have official backing when entering new international markets and I am confident the Western Cape Government's association with Shandong will make opening new doors in China easier", Van Rensburg said.

The local wine industry is experiencing difficult times, with exports to traditional EU markets being under pressure. Van Rensburg said the Western Cape Government's number one strategic priority is to create an enabling environment for the private sector in which to grow the economy and create jobs. "We want to assist you on your visit to China, in order for you to grow our economy".

Van Rensburg said growing the economy links closely with his department's objective of seeing Western Cape agricultural production increase by 10% over the next ten years. "If we are producing more wine, we also need markets to sell it to", he said.

Van Rensburg told the Chinese Consul General, Hao Guangfeng, he believed this participation in the Yantai Wine Festival will be the beginning of a long and fruitful relationship which could also expand to include trade in other agricultural products"

Additional information:

The BRICS group of nations consists of Brazil, Russia, India China and South Africa.

The Western Cape Province is a member of the Regional Leaders Forum, other members being Bavaria (Federal Republic of Germany); Quebec (Canada); Upper Austria (Austria); Shandong (People's Republic of China); Georgia (United States of America), and Sao Paulo (Brazil).

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