

Agbiz getting agro-food industry fit for the future

The biennial congress of the Agricultural Business Chamber (Agbiz) is a premier agribusiness networking opportunity - a major event on the South African food, feed, fibre and wine sectors' agenda - where top speakers, agribusiness leaders and policy makers meet to shape the future of our agro-food industry.



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The Agbiz Congress 2016 will be taking place at the Lord Charles Hotel in Somerset West, Cape Town from 1 – 2 June 2016, and is expected to attract over 200 delegates. The congress themed “Fit for the Future”, takes place as Agbiz celebrates its 70th anniversary.

Congress delegates consist of the CEO's, senior executives and board members of most of the major South African agribusinesses, including, for example, the agribusiness divisions of all the major banks, insurance companies, development finance institutions, agribusinesses/cooperatives, input suppliers, as well as agro-processors.

Providing insight

Dr John Purchase, CEO of Agbiz, says the congress, which is open to all interested parties, will provide delegates with insights into topics such as the local and global economic situation, land reform, transformation, trade developments, energy solutions, water security and socio-economic scenarios for South Africa. In addition to the congress programme, Agbiz is also hosting a pre-congress workshop on transformation/B-BBEE, as well as a post-congress food, salt and wine pairing tour.

“Our keynote speaker, Lesetja Kganyago, Governor of the South African Reserve Bank, will share perspectives on the South African economy and indicate the economic path South Africa needs to follow to ensure significant inclusive growth in an environment of relatively low and stable inflation. Kganyago's presentation will provide a look into the real economic challenges faced by South Africa, such as depressed GDP growth rates, unemployment, investment downgrades and policy impact on the investment environment, depreciation of the rand and inflation, including food inflation,” says Purchase.

Topics covered in the programme will be presented by the following confirmed speakers:

- Economic outlook, Etienne le Roux, chief economist at Rand Merchant Bank (RMB)
- BEE and black youth expectations, Mpumelelo Mkhabela, former editor at Sowetan
- Trade developments in South Africa, Peter Draper, managing director at TUTWA Consulting
- Water security and water governance in South Africa, Prof Mike Muller, visiting adjunct professor, Graduate School of Governance at the University of the Witwatersrand
- Land reform policy update and Agbiz perspectives, Dr John Purchase, Agbiz CEO
- Status of land reform implementation, Leona Archary, deputy director general, Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
- Energy security, Brian Statham, chairman of South African Energy Association
- Scenarios for South Africa, Chantell Ilbury, independent scenario strategist, facilitator and bestselling business author

Agbiz Congress Student Case Competition

Included in the congress programme is the Agbiz Congress Student Case Competition. Sixteen top graduate students from major universities across the country will compete in four groups against one another in developing business-oriented solutions for a real-world business problem or case, specifically written for this event. The competition serves as an excellent opportunity for students to showcase their skills to industry leaders.

Pre-congress workshop and post-congress tour

Dr Purchase says this year Agbiz will for the first time be hosting a pre-congress workshop, as well as a post-congress tour.

The pre-congress workshop on 31 May will be focussing on the implementation of B-BBEE strategies, in line with the new AgriBEE Sector Code, that are imperative for inclusive growth. The workshop themed transforming leadership in agribusiness, is structured to provide information to executive management and key employees for making informed decisions on B-BBEE implementation. The focus of the workshop is on ownership solutions, skills development, enterprise and supplier development, as well as multi-cultural leadership. Joyene Isaacs, head of Western Cape Department of Agriculture, will be the opening speaker at the event.

An exciting post-congress tour has been arranged for delegates to make the most of their time in the Western Cape, as well as to extend their networking opportunities beyond the congress. The tour includes wine tasting at Bergkelder Cellar in Stellenbosch as well as wine and salt four-course lunch, presented by salt aficionado, Chef Craig Cormack, who has

assembled a fine collection of local and international salts with recipes that melt seamlessly with Die Bergkelder's range of wines.

For further information and registration, visit [Agbiz Congress 2016](#).

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>