

Role players meet to discuss alcohol ban's impact on wine industry

The industry body Vinpro, Agri Western Cape, the agricultural interest group Saai and Western Cape wine producers met last week to discuss the impact of the second ban on alcohol sales on the wine industry.



Kym Ellis via unsplash.com

Jannie Strydom, CEO of Agri Western Cape, says constructive discussions about saving the wine industry and protecting people's livelihoods are critical. He says the ban is a potential disaster for an important agricultural sector and that the interests of primary producers and the wine value chain must be protected at all costs.

Francois Rossouw, CEO of Saai, adds that family farmers are the most vulnerable stakeholders in the value chain affected by the ban on wine sales. He says a further blockade in their marketing channels could have a catastrophic impact. "Wine and grape producers represent some of the oldest family farms in South Africa," he says.

Rico Basson, executive director of Vinpro, says the industry has suffered a loss of revenue of R4,5bn in the past 14 weeks. He says job losses have already occurred as a result of Covid-19 regulations, and an estimated 18 000 more jobs could be lost. "Multiply 18,000 workers by five dependants each, and we then look at almost 100,000 people facing total poverty," says Basson.

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