



MEDIA ADVISORY

Groundbreaking agreement between Unisa and the Gompo Farmers Association (GFA) to benefit farmers and youth in the Eastern Cape

Approved for Public Release

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Farmers and youth in the Eastern Cape are set to benefit from a groundbreaking agreement between the University of South Africa (Unisa) and the Gompo Farmers Association (GFA) which will be formalised through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at Dow Village, East London on Friday, 01 March 2024.

The Gompo Farmers Association (GFA) is an organisational structure of farmers created to ensure sustainable agriculture, deliver food security, environmental sustainability and economic opportunity for farmers in the Eastern Cape. The GFA also supports initiatives spearheaded by other role players with specific objectives of advancing farmer empowerment and development.

The signing ceremony will be attended by representatives of Unisa's Eastern Cape Region and College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (CAES), 100 local farmers, representatives from the Provincial Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform, Buffalo City Municipality, Traditional Leaders, and the private and public business sector.

Guest speakers on the day will include His Majesty King J Sandile of the AmaRharhabe Kingdom, Ahh!!!Vululwandle, the Deputy Minister in The Presidency responsible for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, the Honourable Sisisi Tolashe, the Executive Mayor of Buffalo City Metro, Councillor Princess Faku as well as the Acting Executive Dean of the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (CAES) at Unisa, Professor Monde Ntwasa.

Unisa and the GFA have agreed to collaborate with the aim of responding to specific requirements of certain skills, enterprise and economic development services to address the economic development needs of identified farmers and beneficiaries.

With the signing of the MoU, the two parties commit to collectively advance learning and research opportunities in agriculture and agribusiness, including the development of a model farm for sustainable agriculture and food security. It also advocates for the inclusion of the innovation capacity of Unisa through an Accelerator System within the model farm that will result in the establishment of a Biogas Digester Plant to foster environment-friendly agribusiness.

The parties, through the signing of the MoU, will also commit themselves to the following collective objectives:

- To grow research capacity and activities in the field of agriculture.



- To strengthen youth education, skills and human resource base.
- To enhance community engagement and empowerment and assist farmers to manage their own businesses.
- To promote the use of new production methods which will enable emerging farmers to make a meaningful contribution towards economic development.
- To play an active role in rural development, land and agrarian reform as well as food security.
- To assist in fundraising initiatives for farmer development and explore bursary opportunities for aspirant youth.

The agreement will further enhance the partnership by promoting a cross-pollination of ideas, expertise as well as various forms of support resources between the two parties in the Eastern Cape Province.

The signing ceremony will take place as follows:

Date : 01 March 2024

Time : 10h00

Venue : Robbie de Lange Municipal Hall, Westbank, East London

Members of the media are invited to attend and cover the ceremony.

\\Ends.

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