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MEDIA STATEMENT

STAKEHOLDERS FORMALLY ADOPT THE FRUIT INDUSTRY SOCIAL ACCORD

24 February 2022

Principal stakeholders in the South African fruit industry, being representatives of fruit industry associations, government, organised civil society and labour, have agreed to cooperate and partner by adopting the Fruit Industry Social Accord. The aim of the accord is to achieve socio-economic growth within the fruit industry according to the guidelines of the National Development Plan. The stakeholders have mutually accepted the principles, guidelines and common objectives contained in the Fruit Industry Social Compact (FISC).

The Fruit Industry Social Compact is an accord between government, industry and labour. The inaugural Fruit Industry Value Chain Round-Table (FIVCRT) sitting in February 2014 adopted the FISC as a point of departure for its work. The FISC also informed the establishment of five working groups (i.e. employment and worker welfare, trade, transformation, resources, and research and development) based on the work streams identified in the FISC. The consultations started early in 2019 and were concluded in 2020. During the 25th virtual sitting of the FIVCRT held on 30 August 2021, government, labour, fruit industry bodies and civil society representatives adopted the Fruit Industry Social Accord.

Based on the concept document of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Value Chain Round-Table (VCRT) forums were established. The VCRT forums bring together participants from different sectors of a value chain and are meant to provide a platform for private sector and government partners to develop and implement joint action plans for market success over the medium to long term.



At the roundtables, key industry leaders from across the value chain, such as suppliers, producers, processors, food service industries, retailers, traders, producer associations, labour and civil society groups meet with national and provincial government officials.

By adopting the accord, the stakeholders committed their respective organisations to working individually and jointly in the areas of employment and worker welfare, trade, transformation, resources, and research. The five growth enablers identified in the social compact are aimed at achieving the following:

- Enhancing the role and level of participation of previously disadvantaged individuals through investment in infrastructure, skills development, empowerment, economic development and successful land reform programmes;
- Increasing employment opportunities, skills development and the welfare of employees in the fruit industry through expansion of productivity, investment in skills development and the improvement of workers' standard of living;
- Improving global and local trade competitiveness by fast-tracking coordinated activities to enhance market access and market development, enhancing food safety and bio-security and removing barriers to trade.

By adopting the accord, stakeholders in the South African fruit industry commit to working together to achieve socio-economic growth to best position the South African fruit industry as a world leader. The parties of the accord consensually commit and agree that action and implementation should be the hallmark of their partnership.

The signing of the accord comes after consultations were held across the country, mainly focusing on the stakeholders being actively involved in the primary production of the fruit value chain.

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