MINISTER
AGRICULTURE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE CELEBRATES SOUTH AFRICAN CHEESEMAKERS' REMARKABLE WINS AT THE 2025 WORLD CHEESE AWARDS

The Minister of Agriculture, John Steenhuisen, congratulates South Africa's cheesemakers on their exceptional achievements at the 2025 World Cheese Awards in Switzerland, saying the results reflect the passion and dedication that define the country's dairy sector.

Held in Switzerland, the awards brought together more than 200 international judges who tasted and assessed thousands of cheeses through a strictly blind process. Despite the competition's global scale, South African producers stood out for all the right reasons.

Klein River Cheese delivered one of the strongest performances of the event, collecting ten medals, among them a Super Gold for its 24-months-old Babylonstoren Parmesan. This Stanford-based family run business won Gold for its 12-months-old Parmesan and six-months-old Woolworths Gruberg Mature, respectively. It received silver awards for its Spar Signature Selection Smoked Artisan Gouda and 12-months-old Gruberg Vintage, respectively. Their Havarti, Danbo, Cape Leopard, three-months-old Gruberg Young and Woolworths Oak-smoked Stanford won bronze awards.

Dalewood Fromage also earned a Super Gold for its well-known Boland cheese and Gold for its Huguenot. Adding to the celebrations, Nellie Fischer of Dalewood Fromage was honoured as Best Female Cheesemaker, a distinction that highlights her leadership and the respect she has earned within the industry.

Lancewood received a gold medal for its sweet chilly medium fat cream cheese and a bronze medal for its Lancewood Mature Cheddar.

Bronze awards were also won by Fairview Cheese for its Paarl Rock Brie and Lactalis South Africa won three awards, i.e., a 10-months-old, matured Gouda, a 20-months-old, matured Gouda and its three-to-four-months old President Cheddar.

Reflecting on the achievements, the minister said, “The awards capture the spirit of countless farmers and workers whose hands and skills shape the flavourful cheeses we enjoy every day. Their pride in their craft is visible in every medal won.”

South Africa produces over 82 000 metric tons of cheese a year, made from more than 800 million litres of milk. While the majority is enjoyed locally, the country also exports dairy products to markets across Africa and the Middle East. In 2024, South Africa exported roughly 56 000 tons of dairy products, with cheese making up about 16% of this volume. South Africa is a net exporter of cheese. “These steady gains in production and market reach underline why international recognition matters—it strengthens confidence in South African quality and opens new doors for local producers,” the minister said.

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