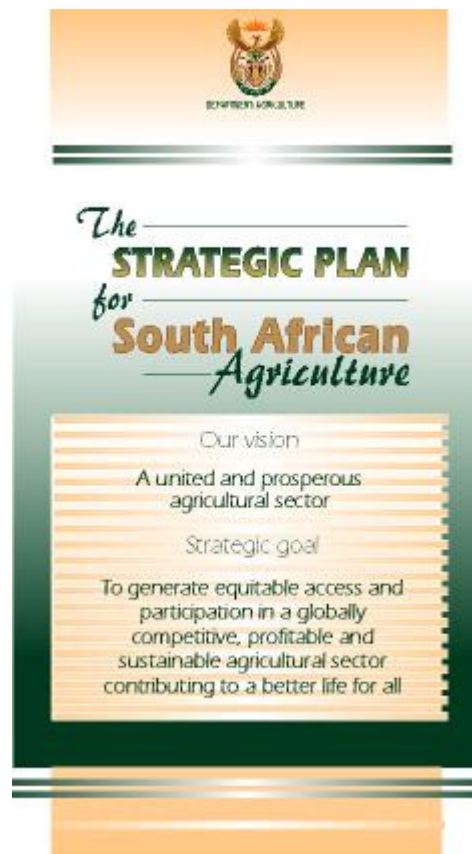




The strategic plan for South African agriculture is the product of cooperation between Government, Agri SA and NAFU.

Early in 2001 President Thabo Mbeki requested the different role-players to identify a mutual strategy that would provide enough focus to unite the sector. From this request followed the strategic sector plan.

The vision for the sector implies sustained profitable participation in the South African agricultural economy by all stakeholders. It recognises the need to maintain and increase commercial production, to build international competitiveness and to address the historical legacies and biases that resulted in skewed access and representation. It gives a clear picture of where South African agriculture wants to be in the long term.

The strategic plan consists of three core strategies:

- Equitable access and participation

The objectives of this strategy are to enhance equitable access to and participation in agricultural opportunities; to deracialise land and enterprise ownership; and to unlock the full entrepreneurial potential in the sector.

- Global competitiveness and profitability

The aim of this strategy is to enhance profitability through sustained global competitiveness in the agricultural sector's input supply, primary production, agriprocessing and agritourism industries.

- Sustainable resource management

This strategy aims to enhance farmers' capacities to use resources in a sustainable manner and to ensure the wise use and management of natural resources.

Some elements of the core strategies are complementary and will contribute towards creating and restoring confidence in agriculture. With this in mind, the task team identified a number of essential supporting and enabling strategies:

- Good governance
- Integrated and sustainable rural development
- Knowledge and innovation
- International cooperation
- Safety and security

These complementary strategic objectives provide the critical foundation without which the strategic goal will not be realised. They also emphasise the dependence of the sector on the support of other government cluster departments and industries.

The partners who have tasked themselves with the responsibility for the plan's implementation will also produce the detailed action plans. To this end, the leading partners will establish the permanent joint committee. They are also making an effort to involve organised labour, NGOs, community-based organisations and foreign organisations.

As a first step to move the strategic plan closer to implementation, the strategic partners identified the following priority programmes and actions:

- Implementing the broad-based safety and security strategy for good working and social stability, trust and confidence
- Fostering a shared vision on agriculture, good governance and social partnerships
- Fast tracking the programme of land redistribution for agricultural development and processes of empowerment for targeted groups
- Transforming agricultural research, transfer of technology, education and extension to be more responsive to markets
- Redefining the mandate of agricultural marketing and international trade in the post-control board era against greater global competition and demands for market access, infrastructure and information
- Building credible agricultural statistical and economic analysis systems that will be accessible to all farmers and enterprises
- Establishing the integrated rural financial services system outlined by the Strauss Commission Report
- Developing an effective integrated risk management system for plant and animal health systems, price and

income systems and natural disasters

- Targeting investment in rural development nodes to provide livelihoods, infrastructure, irrigation, electricity, telecommunications, transportation, training and skills development
- Establishing an agricultural cooperation programme for Africa to spearhead the New Africa Initiative in agriculture
- Lowering the overall cost of production, including a further reduction in the taxes and duties on diesel and other inputs.

In all of this, they recognise the valuable role of the private sector in achieving the goals of participation, competitiveness and sustainability.

Therefore everything will be done to ensure greater collaboration and coordination between government and the private sector—implying farmers, farmers' organisations and agribusiness—in order to attain the new vision of a united and prosperous agricultural sector.

The following outcomes are expected from the successful pursuit of these strategic objectives:

- Increased wealth creation in agriculture and rural areas
- Increased sustainable employment in agriculture
- Increased incomes and increased foreign exchange earnings
- Reduced poverty and inequalities in land and enterprise ownership
- Improved farming efficiency
- Improved national and household food security
- Stable and safe rural communities, reduced levels of crime and violence, and sustained rural development
- Improved investor confidence and greater domestic and foreign investment in agricultural activities and rural areas
- Pride and dignity in agriculture as an occupation and sector

The partners commit themselves to providing the necessary time and financial and material resources to see to the successful implementation of the strategic plan.

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