

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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U.S. Producers Increasingly Interested in Trade with South Africa

Report Categories:
Agricultural Situation

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Report Highlights:

During the week of January 6, 2014, FAS/Pretoria met with a large delegation of the Future Farmers of America representing over 20 states, as well as a medium-sized group of Kentucky farmers and agribusiness representatives. These outreach opportunities provide FAS/Pretoria with a platform to inform a large group of U.S. agricultural stakeholders about FAS/Pretoria's work in the region to address market access issues for U.S. livestock products, as well as identify sales opportunities.

General Information:

During the week of January 6, 2014, FAS/Pretoria met with a large delegation of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) representing over 20 states, as well as a medium-sized group of Kentucky farmers and agribusiness representatives. These outreach opportunities provide FAS/Pretoria with a platform to inform a large group of U.S. agricultural stakeholders about FAS/Pretoria's work in the region to address market access issues for U.S. livestock products, as well as identify sales opportunities.

Recommendations

1. Follow-up with FFA and the Kentucky Agriculture Leadership Program to seek opportunities for trade promotion and expand fellowship opportunities to their states.
2. FAS/Pretoria will work with the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States to collaborate on a Bourbon product promotion.
3. Ensure all incoming trade missions and U.S. agricultural stakeholder groups are made aware on the long-standing market access issues implemented by South Africa.

Future Farmers of America's Visit South Africa

FAS/Pretoria met with the state leaders of the FFA on a recent visit to South Africa, January 9, 2014, as part of FFA's International Leadership Seminar for State Officers (ILSSO). FFA program brought more than 70 students from over 20 states to understand agricultural practices and food security in South Africa.

The ILSSO gives current and past state officers an opportunity to experience culture and agriculture in a 10-day experience abroad. The program provides students with a global perspective through interactions with farmers, agribusiness professionals, and government officials in a foreign country. Armed with this perspective, state FFA officers will be empowered to return to their local communities and make decisions that position American agriculture strongly in the global marketplace.

The objectives of ILSSO are:

1. Develop a foundational understanding of global perspective; including but not limited to: culture, personal perceptions, and international agriculture.
2. Identify personal growth potential and opportunities.
3. Devise a plan for practical application of knowledge and skills acquired.

Questions from the FFA students were highly focused on agricultural competitiveness of the South African agricultural sector, and the role the South African government plays in ensuring food security and supporting small-holder emerging farmers. FAS/Pretoria on the other hand, also created awareness on South Africa's trade restrictions on U.S. livestock products, and noted how they undermine food security by driving up food prices in country. Feedback from the FFA leadership, chaperoning the group, noted that this was an important step in helping these future agriculturalists understand the role South Africa plays in global agriculture. They thanked FAS/Pretoria for hosting the group and offering our perspectives and expertise.



Nicolas Rubio, Agricultural Attaché, and Corey Pickelsimer, Senior Agricultural Attaché speak to the FFA delegation about trade with South Africa.

Kentucky Farmers and Agribusiness Leaders

The following day, on January 10, a 25 member delegation of the Kentucky Agricultural Leadership Program (KALP) visited the U.S. Embassy, Pretoria, South Africa, as part of their International Study & Leadership Seminar January 4 to 17, 2014. FAS/Pretoria discussed FAS's role in promoting U.S. agriculture in South Africa and the region and provided a better understanding of the political, economic and cultural aspects that affect the agricultural sector of South Africa.

The farm and agribusiness representatives from Kentucky asked very pointed questions about trade opportunities with South Africa. Members were informed of the current market access restrictions South Africa maintains on U.S. beef, pork and poultry products, but noted that there were distinct opportunities for U.S. spirits, such as Bourbon, and trade in live horses or horse semen and embryos. South Africa has a highly evolved horse racing industry, and there is high demand for improved genetics within the country. Additionally, the growth of the middle class has seen an expansion in whiskey consumption over the past several years. We noted that South Africa consumers are most familiar with scotch whiskey, but that bourbon had a small foothold in the market with higher end retailers carrying mid- to upper-end brands, such as Woodford Reserve. At the closure of the discussion, the representatives from Kentucky thanked FAS/Pretoria for the frank and informative discussion and some noted their plan to explore some of the aforementioned market opportunities in the future.