

# SA beef industry taps into Saudi's Halal market

This year's Saudi International Halal Expo in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) which occurred between 7 and 9 November, saw one of South Africa's leading beef producers, Beefmaster Group, take the stage following the announcement of a between the two nations, which is likely to see the country export beef products to KSA from as early as 2023. This is envisaged to unlock widescale opportunities for SA's beef sector.



Source: [123RF](#)

Gert Blignaut, chief operations officer (COO) of Beefmaster Group, says that global meat lovers have developed a taste for South African beef. "Since exporting our products in 2008, we have seen that every market penetrated has added South African beef to their shelves because of our quality and service assurances, as well as our beef being competitively priced," says Blignaut, who is attending the Expo.

The Halal-certified beef producer used the platform provided by the Expo to cement the newfound relationship between the two nations, meet with potential customers, and showcase its beef products.

## Qaulity beef

"We already know that the KSA has been impressed by the quality and service assurances of SA's beef products, our mission will be to reiterate this at the Expo," he says.

Blignaut adds that all beef cuts produced at Kimberley's Beefmaster Group processing facility are Halal-certified. "South Africa is one of the five largest producers of Halal-certified meat worldwide," says Blignaut. "Trade fairs like this are critical for our industry because it helps to stimulate the trade and supply of SA beef."



## New deal to unlock opportunities for SA beef sector

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The South African beef industry has made inroads into new export markets over the recent past. Beefmaster Group exports products to the Middle East and Halal markets, like the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and Jordan, and potentially from 2023, to KSA.

According to the South African Red Meat Producers' Organisation, South Africa currently exports 4% of its beef production, and there is scope for more.

"The most recent deal between SA and the KSA is likely to add between 500 to 1,000 tonnes of beef per year to South Africa's export coffers," says Blignaut.

The Middle East imports approximately 90% of its beef and lamb, according to reports, making the opportunity for beef exports ideal for South Africa. South African beef is already loved in markets like these for its premium quality, which includes a leaner taste, with less fat, making it sought after.

"We are looking forward to being a critical partner to the KSA in supplying the nation with quality beef," concludes Blignaut.

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