

Russia makes room for black SA winemakers

Black-owned wine companies will get a foot into the Russian market when a group of importers visit South Africa. The four-day Russian Inward Buying Mission will start on Monday at the Invest South Africa Western Cape One Stop Shop. The delegation will also visit some of the farms and premises in various parts of the Western Cape during the mission.



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The mission is a result of a meeting between South African Trade and Industry Deputy Minister Bulelani Magwanishe and the CEO of Marine Express, Andre Kuzmin, on the sidelines of the St Petersburg International Economic Forum in June. Marine Express is one of Russia's leading wine importing companies.

"Marine Express is undoubtedly one of Russia's leading importers and distributors of wine and liquor. Their distribution covers all of Russia's regions and goes through all distribution channels. Its clientele comprises of more than 400 customers located in more than 60 cities. These include retail chains, restaurants, hotels and wholesale companies," said Deputy Minister Magwanishe.

He invited the CEO of Marine Express to South Africa with the specific objective of creating access to market for black-owned wine companies to enable them to export their wines to Russia.

The Treasure Chest project

Black and women winemakers and brand owners from the Western Cape belonging to Treasure Chest will participate in the session. Treasure Chest comprises 14 black wine owners, 90% of whom are women. A wine cooperative from the Eastern Cape, as well as other stakeholders in the wine industry, will also be part of the session.

"The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) supports the Treasure Chest project because it is a unique wine trade initiative that aims to address transformation in the wine industry and bring economic and social development to wine brand owners.

"Their objectives of creating jobs and contributing to increasing the country's exports to achieve economic growth are in line with the department's mandate and objectives," Deputy Minister Magwanishe said.

Caterpillar Southern Africa's B-BBEE programme

Meanwhile, Minister Rob Davies is expected to speak at the launch of the Caterpillar Southern Africa's Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Equity Equivalent Investment Programme (EEIP) on Wednesday. The programme, which will be launched in Johannesburg, is expected to contribute to supplier development and the development of youth. "The programme is expected to contribute towards the achievement of enterprise creation and supplier development, foreign direct investment, accelerated growth and development of black rural women and youth.

"It is also expected to contribute towards sustainable growth and development, human development with a focus on education and skills development, and infrastructure investment with an emphasis on developing the country's research and development infrastructure," said Davies on Thursday.

The Minister said the EEIP is a DTI initiative where multinational companies are invited to participate and contribute positively towards B-BBEE in South Africa. Caterpillar, he said, applied for participation in the Equity Equivalent Investment Programme with the aim of empowering local and black-owned enterprises through Enterprise and Supplier Development.

"On 21 January 2016, Caterpillar Southern Africa was granted exemption from selling equity and instead to participate in the Equity Equivalent Investment Programme. The proposed programme is aimed at contributing towards product localisation to increase the South African industrial base. The investment amount is R1.3bn based on the 25% of the business value from the South African operation," Davies said.

The approved business plan seeks to promote localisation and industrialisation and is expected to create about 3,900 jobs direct and indirect jobs.

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