

SA should invest in agriculture to keep food affordable

Prof Andre Jooste, head of the National Agricultural Marketing Council, told the Agriculture Business Chamber (Agbiz) congress in KwaZulu-Natal that it is no longer sufficient for governments to show concern over the prices of only staple foods - South Africa's poorest communities are spending at least 36,4% of their income buying food, compared with 2,9% spent by the rich, *Business Day* reports.

High food prices have a greater effect on food security, particularly for the most vulnerable rural people, he said, It was important that both the South African government and agribusiness "get a better understanding of what is going on in the agriculture value chain". This will provide solutions and opportunities to "design better policies, and guide investment." Prof Jooste urged conference delegates to lobby the government to increase its budget on agriculture, saying there was clear proof of how such investment benefited the economy in countries such as Brazil, *Business Day* says.

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