

WCDoA supports wine tourism employees with R12m funding

The Western Cape Department of Agriculture (WCDoA) will be providing crucial relief to employees in the South African wine tourism sector, in the form of a R12m support fund. The Wine Tourism Worker Support Stipend (WTWSS) was officially launched at Elsenburg on 16 November 2020. The aim is to safeguard the continuous employment of wine tourism workers by subsidising their salaries for a key quarter of the tourism calendar.



Vinotecarium via [Pixabay](#)

Dr Ivan Meyer, Western Cape Minister of Agriculture, said: "The Western Cape Cabinet has prioritised economic recovery and job creation. During Covid-19 the wine industry and its workers were negatively impacted by the regulations.

"Our contribution goes towards alleviating the impact the loss of income has had on the wine tourism industry and its workers. We are confident that this contribution will bring relief and dignity to workers within the wine agritourism industry. We have prioritised agritourism as part of the economic recovery in the Western Cape."

Dr Mogale Sebopetsa, head of the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, emphasised: "The wine industry is an important industry in the economy of the Western Cape and our support and contribution will enable the sector to restore jobs that had been lost during the pandemic, thereby positioning the agricultural sector in playing a significant role in the economic recovery of the Western Cape.

"Furthermore, the department remains focused on supporting our wine producers through new innovation and technology for improved production, as well as market access for a more prosperous agricultural sector."

"The South African wine industry, and specifically wine tourism, is without a doubt the agricultural sector hardest hit by Covid-19 restrictions," says Marisah Nieuwoudt, Vinpro's wine tourism manager. "We are truly grateful to Minister Meyer and his team for their support of the South African wine industry, and the wine tourism sector in particular, by securing this funding for our employees."

Sector support programmes

As part of the wine industry's Disaster Recovery Plan, Vinpro has been actively involved in discussions with the respective government departments to emphasise the serious impact of restrictions on trade and tourism on the industry, and to propose support programmes that can prevent or reduce job losses in the sector.

The Western Cape Department of Agriculture is committed to supporting the sector and its role players, which includes the wine industry. The department reprioritised R12m from its own budget as support to the wine tourism sector.

The Wine Tourism Worker Support Stipend will enable support to 1,333 wine tourism workers. For the purposes of this project, wine tourism workers are defined as wine and food service employees permanently employed in a winery tasting room in the Western Cape Province.

The stipend of R3 000 will be allocated per person per month for three consecutive months – the peak tourism months of December 2020, and January and February 2021 – to mitigate projected job losses. Each winery may claim for a maximum of 10 employees to give as many wineries access to the fund as possible, and all wineries, including but not limited to Vinpro members, may apply. Wineries are to apply on behalf of their existing, permanent employees and all payments will be made directly to the wineries at the end of the three-month period.

Applications open on 16 November and close on 22 December 2020, after which a screening process will take place in January 2021 and successful wineries will receive confirmation in February 2021.

The relevant employer application form and employee claim form can be downloaded from www.vinpro.co.za/wine-tourism, and submitted to tourism.applications@vinpro.co.za.

Please direct any further enquiries to Marisah Nieuwoudt at marisah@vinpro.co.za.

Through this intervention and support, the Department of Agriculture aims to ensure the growth and stability of the largest wine industry in the African continent. This in turn will contribute towards the employment, safety, dignity and wellbeing of our citizens.

Here, Nieuwoudt explains the wine tourism worker support stipend process and details:

Source: [Vinpro](#)

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