

Kgodiso Development Fund, Raisin SA launch Vine Academy in Northern Cape

The Kgodiso Development Fund and Raisins SA have officially opened the Vine Academy in Kakamas, Northern Cape, which will provide classroom-based and practical training for emerging farmers and farm workers. It will establish a model farm to serve as a research and development centre for raisin production and farming in South Africa.



Source: Gallo/Getty

The Vine Academy was founded in partnership with Martin Oosthuizen High School, one of the oldest agricultural schools in South Africa. The academy was identified as a strategic asset in addressing human resources as well as research and development gaps in the raisin industry.

“The development of farmers and farm workers is essential to the transformation of the entire food system in South Africa. Both the Vine Academy and the model farm form part of a critical initiative that will provide effective solutions to the agriculture challenges in South Africa,” said Kgodiso Development Fund executive director Diale Tilo.



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21 Sep 2022

Investing in the raisins sector

The Kgodiso Development Fund joined forces with Raisins SA a year ago, investing R12m to address the skills shortage, research, and development needs in the raisins sector.

“Creating a sustainable and competitive raisin industry in South Africa is our goal. Education plays a crucial role in the transformation of South Africa's agriculture industry, as well as the country's economic growth. Skills development should be treated as an investment that is strategic to this industry,” said Ferdie Botha, CEO at Raisins SA.

The establishment of the Kgodiso Development Fund is one of PepsiCo SA's public interest commitments, made to government at the time of the acquisition of Pioneer Foods, and forms part of its strategic end-to-end sustainable transformation called PepsiCo Positive.

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