

SA fruit industry launches ethical trade programme

The SA fruit industry has introduced a programme named 'the Sustainability Initiative of South Africa', aims to improve working conditions on farms and avoid an international boycott of SA produce, BDLive reports.



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Agriculture, and the fruit industry in the Western Cape in particular, has faced the serious challenge of violent worker protests in the past three weeks, and some in the sector believe that if all fruit farming parties had adopted the programme earlier, the De Doorns violent labour protests could have been prevented.

Some organised farming bodies in the industry were, however, reluctant to support the programme, arguing that its benchmarks were too strict and that it was imposing international ethical codes on workers' living standards. Fruit South Africa's ethical trade coordinator Colleen Chennell said the programme will now be launched throughout the fruit farming community." The fruit industry's ethical trade programme aims to support growers and employees and continuously improve working conditions on farms throughout South Africa," Chennell told BDLive.

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