



GEPF™

your investment, your future

HARVESTING LOCAL PRODUCE TO TACKLE UNEMPLOYMENT

Identified in the National Development Plan (NDP) alongside infrastructure development, mining and beneficiation, manufacturing, the green economy and tourism, agriculture is a key sector of the economy and is crucial in a drive to promote food security and economic growth and a significant asset for trade and foreign exchange.

The NDP argues that agriculture is the primary economic activity in rural areas and has the potential to create close to one million new jobs by 2030.

The South African agriculture industry is diverse, with vegetables, fruits, nuts and grains being just some of the produce we harvest from our soil. As one of the priorities of its developmental investment mandate, the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) plays a pivotal role in the agricultural sector.

Why agriculture?

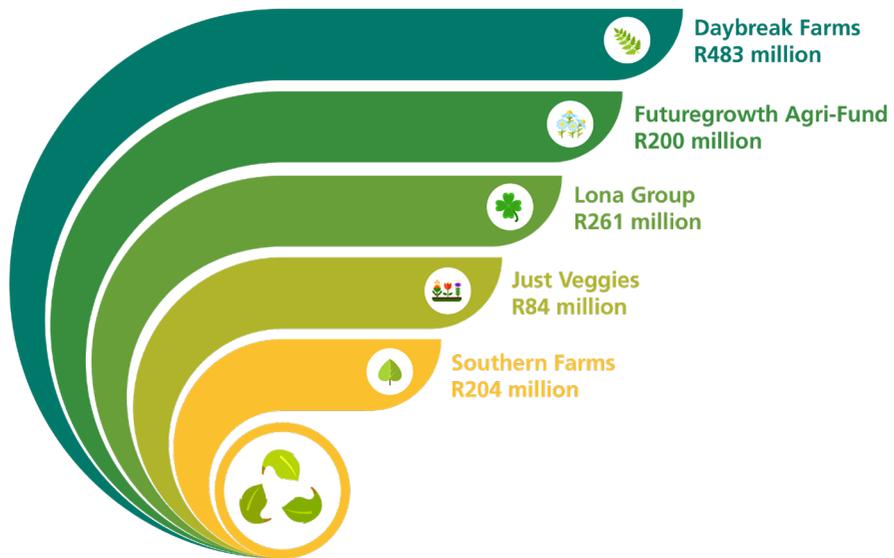
The NDP highlights the potential that commercial agriculture has on job creation. The plan identifies 250 000 direct jobs and a further 130 000 indirect jobs - over and above those currently employed, as an achievable target.

What is the impact of investing in agriculture?

The citrus farming industry is a good example of the positive impact of the agricultural sector can have on the lives of many. Citrus in particular, has seen a boom in recent years, and the farming of citrus fruits is incredibly impactful in job creation. Around 60 000 workers are employed on citrus farms alone, and 40 000 jobs are created in packing plants, which just goes to how big of an impact this industry has on unemployment and poverty alleviation, which is why GEPF has identified it as a priority investment sector.



* These investments were done before March 2019



What has GEPF invested in agriculture?

- R483 million in Daybreak Farms – an investment which resulted in the creation of 2912 permanent jobs and a transformation to 100% black shareholding;
- R200 million in Futuregrowth Agri-Fund which benefited 4 farms;
- R261 million in Lona Group – a marketing and export business for local citrus fruit farms. This investment funded 5 farms and created 1441 permanent jobs and preserved 1348 jobs;
- R84 million was also invested in Just Veggies – a local agricultural enterprise based in Kwazulu Natal, which aims to provide quality fresh and frozen vegetables to the local market and
- R204 million in Southern Farms – an independent grower and exporter of seedless table grapes, situated on the banks of the Orange River. This investment led to 610 hectares planted and created 226 permanent and 1770 seasonal jobs, and also transformed the company to 35% Black Shareholding.

The growth of agriculture is a huge, complex undertaking and it is not the responsibility alone of the national government and its agencies alone. It is a joint and common responsibility of all sector and stakeholders including the local governments, farmers and their associations; the business sector and their industry associations; non-governmental organisations, civic society organizations, as well as all respective agencies, and organisations.