



agriculture & rural development

Department:
agriculture
& rural development
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

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SPEAKING NOTES FOR KZN MEC FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, MR CYRIL XABA AT THE FAREWELL FUNCTION FOR KZN STUDENTS LEAVING TO DENMARK TO STUDY AGRIBUSINESS

Greetings to our young travellers. The day has finally arrived for your departure to foreign shores. I am not going to be on that plane with you, but I am just as excited and nervous as you are. The reason I feel this way is because you are representatives of a special project run by the provincial government that is aimed at attracting young people to agriculture. The success of the project depends on how you conduct yourself in Denmark.

Please make the best of this opportunity offered to you. Study hard and come back and help grow the farming sector in our province.

I know that you will be warmly welcomed by your host country. The reason for this is because the last group of students who completed their training, worked hard and excelled. They left a very good impression on all the people who interacted with them.

You must do the same and become good ambassadors for your country and the province of KwaZulu-Natal. This will ensure that future groups of students who go to Denmark to study, will also be well received.

The KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government is committed to getting young people involved in agriculture. We want to show you the opportunities that exist in the sector and play a role in ensuring that more young people get a chance to train and become farmers.

When you go on this course, you will learn that there is much more to agriculture than just working on the land. You will learn that there is science involved in modern farming and that it is a business enterprise. As you well know by now, the College you will be attending is known as the Dalum Academy of Agricultural Business. It is not just a college of agriculture, but of Agricultural business.

You will be offered training not just in modern livestock farming and running commercial operations. You will be exposed to the possibilities of becoming agricultural entrepreneurs. I came across a new term in the media the other day, where they were talking about agropreneurs.

As a group, you are fortunate because you are going on training at a time when radical transformations are taking place in the agricultural sector in KwaZulu-Natal. By the time you return in ten months, there will be big changes and plenty of opportunities to apply what you have learnt.

The KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is currently implementing its new strategy for agrarian transformation throughout the province. This is being carried out in conjunction with the establishment of Agri-Parks.

With the Agri-Parks, farmers will not only grow crops and raise livestock. They will be able to be part of secondary industries that process the products from their farming activities. All of this is being done to develop and grow our rural economies.

By the time you return, the potential for jobs in the agricultural sector will be high. We will need you to use your training to grow your own farming enterprises. We will expect you to share your knowledge by mentoring others and help to play a part in unleashing the agricultural potential of our province.

Sometime in the future we will want to hear your success stories. Hopefully from among you, there may be a future farmer millionaire or a couple of agropreneurs.

Yes, you can dream big, because you have opportunities in a free, democratic South Africa, that were denied to your parents and grandparents.

My final message to you young ambassadors is to travel safely, work hard and enjoy your time in Denmark. Make the best of the time you have there and do us proud.

I thank you!