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### **483 Youth to enter tourism industry as Food Safety Quality Assurers**

**29 June 2018**

#YOUTHMONTH18 - Tourism culminated its Youth Month activities with a graduation ceremony to honour 144 learners from the Gauteng and North West Provinces who successfully completed the Department's National Food Safety and Quality Assurers Youth Training Programme.

The Gauteng and North West learners form part of the 483 graduates from across the country who will enter the tourism workforce as Food Safety Quality Assurers with accredited NQF level 2, 3 and 5 qualification in practices related to the manufacturing, storage and processing of food in the hospitality industry.

During Youth Month, the Department hosted provincial Food Safety Quality Assurance graduations and Izimbizo to highlight the opportunities that exist in the sector for unemployed youth.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony in the North West Province, Deputy Minister Elizabeth Thabethe urged graduates to honour the legacy of the 1976 Youth by participating in the opportunities that resulted from the gains of democracy.

"The youth of 1976 fought against oppressive systems so that you can enjoy the gains of democracy today. Honour their legacy and struggle by taking advantage of the learnership opportunities offered by all spheres of government," said Deputy Minister Thabethe.

Amidst the high unemployment figures, Tourism remains committed to investing in empowering the youth through its youth skills development programmes.

In 2017/ 2018 financial year, the Department trained five hundred (500) unemployed youth from across the country as Food Safety Quality Assurers. Deputy Minister Thabethe said the department has committed to tripling the 2018/19 intake for the programme.

"Food Safety is a scarce skill that is critical to enhancing service levels and the competitiveness of our hospitality industry."

"In this financial year, we have committed to train 1500 unemployed youth as Food Safety Quality Assurers, and contribute to reduce the high unemployment rate," added Thabethe.

Food safety is a scientific discipline that focuses on the handling, preparation and storage of food to prevent food-borne illnesses. The programme comprises of 30% of theory and 70% of practical training, and learners were placed at hospitality establishments within their respective Provinces for experiential learning.

The Deputy Minister Thabethe acknowledged the role played by host employers in providing training for the learners including permanent work opportunities, and appealed to them to continue availing their establishments for the learners to gain practical experience.

#### **Enquiries:**

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