



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Food Safety Breakfast speech by the Deputy Minister Ms Tokozile Xasa

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The Programme Director
MEC for Economic Development, Environment & Tourism, Mr Skhumbuzo Kholwane
Chairperson of FEDHASA, Mr Eddie Koza
Representatives of SAFCO, Mr Stanford and Mr Gunter
Host units
FSAs
Ladies and Gentlemen

Today is about celebrating one of the achievements that we have in the industry partnership with a few of our critical stakeholders that have been able to implement. Government has set goals for all of us to achieve and we trying to attain some of the broad objectives, but encouraged some of the growth and development that has been seen in the tourism and hospitality industry. Food Safety is a scientific discipline aimed at handling, preparing and storing food in ways that prevent food borne illnesses. It is also meant to ensure that the goal of consumer confidence in the safety of food in today's global food systems is achieved.

The Department of Tourism just celebrated tourism month which is mechanically in line with the Food Safety. In other words when you talk about tourism you talk about Food Safety, and of course transforming the lives of the people. But then we cannot talk about Food Safety if we don't mention anything about service excellence, which is a catalyst to making South Africa a globally competitive destination. South Africans need to inculcate and embrace the culture of quality service. During our journey to Service Excellence event in Upington recently, we stated that Service Excellence provides a measurable tool that can be used to assess service levels of all organizations in the tourism sector.

The Food Safety project is one of those that were initiated in view of that demand identified as a gap during and after the 2010 World Cup which was hosted by the country.

Individuals and families everywhere want to have the peace of mind that comes from knowing that the food they put on the table is safe. The things that we need to do as a country as well as an industry to improve food safety are very same things that we need to do to ensure that our consumers have confidence in us as a food safe destination. We know that the food industry has a primary responsibility and capacity for ensuring food safety. For the success in food safety also the commitment of top level business leaders in food companies is a requirement. This requires careful planning, investment of resources and a sustained effort at working levels on a daily basis where food is produced, processed and handled.

The United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety Inspection Service has helped to get the word out about important safety tips and tools to combat food borne illness, by hosting two part of series.

Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to highlight the fact that unsafe food causes many diseases, ranging from diarrheal diseases to various forms of cancer. A safe food supply support economy trade and tourism, contribute to food and nutrition security and stimulates sustainable development.

According to the National Development Plan which is a country's vision for 2030, Tourism has to focus on the development of tourism especially in rural areas. The main drive for the whole procedure is to create decent employment, sustainable livelihoods, eradicate poverty and income inequalities. Therefore tourism is highlighted as one of those 6 priority areas that can make a contribution in this area.

The Youth Accord that was launched by the national Department of Education with its partners, expect all sectors including tourism to put a focus in the development of youth in the country, and also prioritize the FET graduates who fall in the trap of becoming unemployed graduates after they graduate. The tourism sector both public and private in responding to all the national requirements of government developed and launched the National Tourism Sector Strategy and this was launched in 2011. As a gap, the NTSS identified that the sector is unable to attract nor even retain quality people of all skills level.

Our government partners in provinces who always play the coal face role in the implementation of projects initiated nationally are doing a great job.

By 2020 an estimated 5000 Food Safety Assurers including 500 mentors will have trained and educated 75000 food handlers on the minimum requirements of food safety practices. Making South Africa a Global Capital for food safe destinations.

The HRD strategy which was developed and launched in 2008 identifies a few strategic pillars for the development of skills within the sector. This included targeting certain training interventions with a few view.

With the national initiative of the Food Safety Assurer, South Africa remains to advocate responsible tourism, contributing to making a positive impact by improving the current social economic challenges and creating the much needed job opportunities for our youth.

With our food safe destinations we furthermore instil national and international consumer confidence and provide an added value to be a preferred holiday and business destination. Indeed this would add to the vision of the NTSS of making South Africa to be one of the first 20 destinations of choice by 2020.

In conclusion

I would like to call on all to ensure that we are open to grow this and all other initiatives that are set up to ensure that we become the best destination as South Africa. Therefore more are called to contribute, take part and get involved in this fight against unemployment which contributes to increased levels of poverty in our country.

I thank you