



R1.5 million income boost from Sundays River Valley citrus project

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Annual income totalling R1.5 million will be pumped into the Sundays River Valley area from a new citrus venture for which the Draft Basic Assessment Re-port (DBAR) has been released for public comment.

Noting that planting and harvesting are done manually and are labour intensive processes, the DBAR says it is estimated that the development will create an additional eight direct and two indirect permanent employment opportunities

An additional 50 seasonal employment opportunities will be created for six months of the year.

The Draft BAR says that it is estimated that the additional income into the local market from the permanent employees will be R300 000 a year and R1.2 million from the seasonal employees.

Labour will be sourced locally from Nelson Mandela Bay and the Sundays River Valley.

It adds that at an average of R80 000 a hectare for site preparation and construction, the estimated capital investment of the development is R7.2 million.

The fruit produced on the site will be for export

In addition to the citrus development, the Venter Wildlife Trust also proposes to establish a poultry broiler housing facility on the 555 hectare site. A separate application for environmental authorisation has been submitted for this.

On Friday, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Tina Joemat-Pettersson said government would be assisting the citrus industry to deepen market access to the BRIC countries, especially India and China.

She said the African continent was the new export destination for citrus industry.

Speaking after a meeting with the Citrus Growers' Association, she said the matter would be discussed when the BRICS agriculture ministers met later this year.

The citrus industry, which is the largest employer of unskilled labour in the country in rural areas, is currently facing a challenge with regard to exports to EU countries as a result of citrus black spot that marks the skin of the fruit.

Eastern Cape, Sundays River Valley, Draft Basic Assessment Re-port, DBAR,

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