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By Reporter

THE Government of Zimbabwe is encouraged by efforts being made by Africa Grain and Seed (AGS) and the Seed Investment in Zimbabwe to lure investment towards the country's vibrant agriculture sector, Minister of State in the Office of the President and Cabinet in charge of Monitoring the Implementation of Special Agricultural Related Programmes, Hon Davis Marapira has said.



AGS has in the past months been courting a consortium of investors from South Africa, who visited the country late in February, this year, to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with AGS.

The consortium is mainly interested in agriculture and information and communication technologies, and energy, among other viable sectors.

Hon. Davis Marapira poses for a group photograph with African Grain and Seed officials, and the investors from South Africa

In a statement of support to AGS and its partners, Minister Marapira said courting investment towards agriculture was crucial as it bodes well with the government's Vision 2030 and increasing agricultural productivity; hence, enhancing the nation's chances of being food secure.

"My ministry, with the leadership and vision of His Excellency, President Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, is delighted to see investors focusing on agriculture. We are confident that the investments that AGS and its partners have earmarked for Zimbabwe's agricultural sector will enable the country to increase agricultural production of key crops to become food secure as well as participate in the lucrative export market of agricultural produce.

"Such investment constitutes the critical ingredient for increasing agricultural production and profitability of our farms, which enables us to achieve our Vision 2030 goals on agriculture and regaining our status as Southern Africa's breadbasket," said Minister Marapira.

Furthermore, he lauded the corporate (AGS) and its partners for forging partnerships with agricultural training institutions to equip local farmers with the requisite skills necessary for efficient production on the farms, citing, skilled farmers are essential if the country is to achieve its full potential.

"I am also pleased that Africa Grain and Seed and their investors are also focused on investing in agricultural skills training through partnership with local agricultural colleges. I welcome this approach.

"Our agricultural sector cannot achieve its full potential if it does not have a cadre of skilled farmers, farm managers, and ancillary personnel. As Zimbabwe, in general, and the agricultural sector, in particular, embark on growing new crops, such as cannabis, we need the skilled people trained in the production and processing of such new crops," he added.

AGS and its partners are looking at investing billions of dollars in the country's agriculture value chain and other economic key sectors.

Zimbabwe's economy is largely dependent upon agriculture.

THE government, through National Development Strategy 1 (NDS 1); is working on measures to stimulate agricultural production to ensure 80 percent of the industry's raw material needs are met from local inputs.

However, agriculture has been impacted heavily by climate change in recent years; hence, the government's move to court partners in the mould of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on various projects including the most recent, Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT).

Government reckons that economic growth would be reinforced by higher output in agriculture, mining, manufacturing, construction, accommodation and tourism.

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