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Botswana lifts ban on vegetable imports from South Africa

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South Africa's Western Cape Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism, Dr Ivan Meyer, welcomes the lifting of the ban on vegetable exports to Botswana.Â

Minister Meyer said, â??This move will encourage increased trade among Southern African Customs Union (SACU) members, who view the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as a critical tool for developing regional value chains

and enhancing exports.â?•

Botswanaâ??s gradual lifting of vegetable imports will occur in two phases. Phase 1, which began in December 2024, includes vegetables such as turmeric, patty pan, pumpkin, sweet potatoes, green peas, sweet corn, broccoli, cauliflower, gem squash, baby marrow, green bean, sweet melon, mushroom, calabash, cantaloupe, and eggplant.

Phase 2 is expected to start on 1 April 2025. This will see an easing of restrictions on beetroot, butternut, cabbage, carrot, garlic, ginger, green melons, herbs, lettuce, onions, potatoes, sweet pepper, tomato, and watermelons.

Minister Meyer continued, â??The Western Cape accounted for 37 per cent (R 3.3 million) of South Africaâ??s vegetable exports to Botswana in Quarter 4 of 2024. Regarding the contribution to Phase 1 nationally, the provincial share has steadily increased during the period under review, reaching 63 per cent in Quarter 3 of 2024 and dropping to 55 per cent in Quarter 4 of 2024. It is expected that with the lifting of import restriction for vegetables listed in Phase 2, there will be an improvement in South African exports to Botswana, including those from the Western Cape.â?•