



Concept Note:

Southern African Confederation of
Agricultural Union (SACAU)

2016 Annual Policy Conference and AGM

Theme: Youth, Technology, and
Agriculture Transformation in Southern
Africa

**20 to 27 May 2016,
Royal Swazi Convention Centre, Swaziland**

Hosted by:
Swaziland National Agricultural Union (SNAU)
and
Government of Swaziland Ministry of Agriculture

1. INTRODUCTION

The Swaziland National Agricultural Union (SNAU) is collaborating with the government of Swaziland through the Ministry of Agriculture to host the 2016 Annual Policy Conference and AGM of the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Union (SACAU) which will be held 20 to 27 May 2016 at the Royal Swazi Convention Centre.

2. BACKGROUND

SNAU is an apex body for all farmers' organizations in Swaziland. SNAU was established in the year 2009 with support from the Ministry of Agriculture and SACAU. The Union promotes the creation of an enabling environment for farmers through advocacy initiatives, and ensures that farmers are empowered and their needs are met. Currently, the Union has a membership of about 8,000 farmers.

SNAU has made remarkable efforts to unite the voice of farmers at national level through conducting consultative forums with its members and policy makers including farmers and stakeholders. The Union receives about 9 policy related invitations per month from different stakeholders at national level to participate and contribute to the formulation of various national and regional policies. Moreover, SNAU represents the interests of farmers in 14 action groups at national level and in 3 action groups at regional level. The Union has fostered partnerships with a number of key stakeholders at national, regional and international levels including the Swaziland Ministry of Agriculture, Technoserve Swaziland, Co-operation for the Development of Emerging Countries (COSPE), Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Union (SACAU), and the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD).

SACAU is a regional member-based farmers' organization representing the common interest of over 5 million farmers in southern Africa. SNAU is one of 17 National Farmer Organizations coming from 12 countries in Southern Africa that are affiliated to SACAU. SACAU is recognized by several key regional, continental and international agencies

involved in agricultural development, including Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), African Union Commission (AUC)/NEPAD.

SACAU stands out to be the leading voice of organized agriculture in the southern Africa region. The annual policy conference and AGM are the main calendar events of the organization which brings together all key stakeholders (farmers, policy makers, private sector, public sector, donors, academia, media, etc) to deliberate on issues that affect growth and development of the agriculture sector. Customarily, the hosting of this event rotates among the members of SACAU. The 2015 Annual General Meeting of SACAU which was held in Seychelles, approved that SNAU will host the 2016 Annual Policy Conference of SACAU no later than end of May 2016.

3. CONFERENCE THEME

The theme of the conference is “**Youth, Technology and Agriculture Transformation**”. The conference will attempt to provide answers on how technology can be exploited to develop the agriculture sector and to advance youth development in agriculture.

4. APPROACH:

The Conference will consist of key note addresses, plenary sessions, panel discussions, and presentations. A number of side events will be organized including youth forum, field visits, and dinner.

Youth Forum: The first two days will be dedicated to young farmers’ forum whereby young farmers from the region will have a platform to deliberate on issues that affect their active participation in agriculture. A number of experts on various technologies and innovations will be invited to share with the young farmers new innovations and technologies in the sector.

SACAU Conference: The main conference will take place after the youth conference, and will also be conducted over two days.

Field Day: a field visit for delegates will be organized. SNAU will liaise with the Ministry of Agriculture and stakeholders to arrange the activity.

Dinner: after the field visit, delegates will be invited to dinner. SACAU wishes to launch her youth in agriculture programme during the dinner.

SACAU Annual General Meeting: the AGM will be held on the last day of the conference.

20 May 2016	21 May 2016	22 May 2016	23 May 2016	24 May 2016	25 May 2016	26 May 2016	27 May 2016
Youth Delegates Arrival	Youth Forum Day 1	1. Youth Forum Day 2 2. SACAU conference delegates arrival	SACAU conference Day 1	SACAU Conference Day 2	1. Field visit; 2. Dinner and Launch of Youth Programe	SACAU AGM	Delegates Departure

5. **FINANCING:**

We are expecting to host about 120 delegates who will be attending the event. SACAU in collaboration with SNAU will organize and finance the event i.e travelling costs, accommodation, conference/dinner meals, and field visit for the delegates.

SACAU available funds can only support the participation of 2 delegates per member farmer organization including 2 delegates of SNAU namely the President and the Manager. SNAU has been granted permission by SACAU to facilitate the participation of more local farmers during the event.

6. **GOVERNMENT SUPPORT**

The collaboration between SNAU and the Ministry of Agriculture has remained a positive one and continues to grow every day. This is evident following approval by Cabinet that SNAU Hosts the Conference and further support by government towards the event.

- i. **Participation of more local Farmers:** The government will support the participation of 37 local farmers (SNAU members) in the event. Seven of these farmers will be young farmers who will participate during the youth farmers' forum and in the main conference. The Farmers will be provided for

accommodation, meals and transport by the government through the Ministry of Agriculture.

- ii. **Coordinating Committee:** A coordinating committee that will lead the planning, organizing and coordination of the event has been established under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Agriculture. The composition of the committee is outlined below;

No.	Organization	Position in the Committee
1	MoA – Deputy Director	Chairperson
2	SNAU - Manager	Secretary
3	MoA - DVLS	Member
4	SNAU General Secretary	Member
5	COSPE PRO-Swazi Project Manager	Member
6	SWADE Representative	Member

- iii. **Visa arrangements:** some delegates will be coming from countries which require a visa to visit Swaziland. The coordinating committee will arrange with the Ministry of Home Affairs to organize visas for delegates that will need such.
- iv. **Official Openings:**
- The Youth Forum (21 May 2016) will be officially opened by the Honorable Minister of Agriculture Mr Moses Vilakati, and the Honorable Minister for Sports and youth affairs will do the official closing.
 - The Main Conference (23 May 2016) will be officially opened by the Honorable Prime Minister Dr Sibusiso Barnabas Dlamini. Invitations will be sent by the SNAU to stakeholders who may want to participate during the official openings.
- v. **Field day:** government will provide buses (25 May 2016) to transport delegates of the conference to destinations around the country identified by the coordinating committee for purposes of field visits.
- vi. **Courtesy Meeting with His Majesty:** a courtesy meeting is proposed on 25 May 2016 whereby Presidents of National Farmer Organizations will meet with His Majesty King Mswati III at Lozitha Royal Residence.
- vii. **Dinner:** a dinner will be conducted (on 25 May 2016) whereby the Honorable Prime Minister will be the Guest of Honor.

7. PARTNERS'/STAKEHOLDERS SUPPORT:

A number of partners and stakeholders have been informed about the event and invited to pledge their support towards its success. The Co-operation for the Development of Emerging Countries (COSPE) is in partnership with SNAU in implementing the PRO-Swazi project in the Lubombo region. Through this partnership, COSPE will be contributing financially and technically towards the event. Other partners and stakeholders are yet to pledge their support towards the event. Such support may include design and printing communication and visibility materials, side events, exhibitions and marketing activities.
