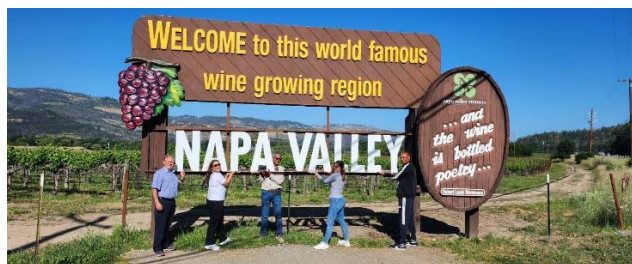


Summary

International Study Visit to California



The Standing Committee on Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, the Standing Committee on Infrastructure and the Standing Committee on Finance, Economic Opportunities and Tourism undertook an international study visit to California from 15 – 19 May 2023.

The main motivation for the international study visit to California was the signed Memorandum of Understanding between the Western Cape Department of Agriculture and the California Department of Food and Agriculture. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 11 March 2022 to promote the co-operation between the regions that shared similar challenges and climates. It will be effective for five years from the date that it was signed but may be renewed. The international study visit to the State of California was therefore aimed at improving relationships, supporting the implementation of the agreement, monitoring the benefits to be gained, and identifying possible amendments to existing policies.

The delegation was welcomed to California by the South African Consul-General to the United State of America, Ms Thandile Babalwa Sunduza, via a Microsoft Teams meeting.

The delegation met with representatives from the California State Senate and the California Legislative Assembly, Chairpersons of various Portfolio Committees, the Secretary of State, the California Department of Food and Agriculture and representatives from the University of California (Davis Campus) in Sacramento. The Delegation also observed a Senate Sitting and was introduced on the Senate Floor, undertook a VIP tour of the California State Capitol, visited a farm supported by the California Department of Food and Agriculture in terms of sustainable agriculture practices, market access, research initiatives, and regulatory compliance, and attended a hearing on the Budget and Fiscal Review on Resources, Environmental Protection and Energy. Discussions centred around climate change matters, agricultural visas, housing challenges, partnerships and renewable energy.

The delegation also embarked on an unaccompanied tour to Silicon Valley in San Francisco and Napa Valley which were two of the most well-known regions in California. Both areas had unique characteristics that set them apart from each other, but they both offered significant economic benefits to the State.

All meetings proved insightful, and relationships were forged that will contribute to collaboration and improved relations between the Western Cape and California.