



Heritage Day Celebration through indigenous food systems

24 September 2023

The community of Empembeni in Esikhaleni was treated to a first of its kind celebration of indigenous crops and food on Sunday at the Ndesheni Sports Field.

The event which was held to commemorate Heritage Day as well as to share the province's rich culture, attracted crop and livestock farmers, community leaders and industry experts.

Prepared meals which incorporated vegetables produced by local farmers as well as hand work were displayed at an exhibition centre.

KZN Agriculture and Rural Development MEC, Mr Super Zuma, said the success of the event was an indication of the hunger for knowledge and the pride the community had on their culture and heritage.

"This is our very first Heritage Day celebration but we have decided as a Department to have an event of this nature every year going forward because it is a necessary platform for us to come together to celebrate who we are," said MEC Super Zuma.

MEC Super Zuma said indigenous crops were rooted in the cultural heritage of the nation and that they contributed towards food security. Mr Zuma added that there were guaranteed economic opportunities for farmers of indigenous crops.

MEC Zuma strongly expressed the importance of investing in indigenous crops and healthy food which assist with the management of various prevalent diseases such as high blood pressure and diabetes.

The MEC concluded by saying that the Department was ready to train community members who had not yet benefited from the Department's planting programs.

"We want healthy communities, so we will teach our people how to plant and take care of these indigenous crops," said MEC Super Zuma.

Comfort Dlamini, who came all the way from Ward 06 in Jozini to showcase his organic produce said with high food prices, he had been sustaining his family from his garden.

Mr Dlamini said he was grateful for the opportunity presented by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to exhibit and to exchange knowledge with members of the Empembeni farming community.

“My garden has sweet potatoes, corn and cassava. All these organic products keep our immune systems healthy,” said Mr Dlamini.









