

# Agriculture MEC encourages planting of vegetable gardens

NTOMBIZETHU NGCOBO

Challenges should not stop you from planting a garden.

This was the message conveyed by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development MEC Super Zuma during an oversight inspection of a vegetable garden at the Themba Njilo homestead in KwaMnyandu location in Pietermaritzburg yesterday.

Njilo wants to give the less fortunate first preference before selling these vegetables.

"Njilo knew that there was a water challenge in this area, but that didn't stop him from starting a garden. Once you start by being negative you will not continue. Young people need to come forward. The department is here to help them," said Zuma.

"One home, one garden' is important to alleviate poverty. What he has done by mobilising and encouraging people around this area to be involved in the 'one home, one garden' project is assisting us as the department.

"We are now going to respond to what has been a challenge, which is the shortage of water. We will send our engineers and see what we can do and respond to the challenge," Zuma added.

Zuma urged people not to shy away from agriculture.

"Everyone needs to be involved, more especially if we want to allevi-



Themba Njilo, the owner of a garden in Pietermaritzburg, is pictured with MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Super Zuma, watering the garden he planted in Elandskop. He followed the MEC's initiative of 'one home, one garden'. Njilo also owns the Themba Njilo Foundation, a non-profit organisation that assists disadvantaged communities. **PHOTO: NQUBEKO MBHELE**

ate poverty."

Themba Njilo said his love of planting vegetables started at a very young age.

"We have a huge water challenge in

this area. When watering plants, we use a watering can.

If we can have water, everything will be fine. There are a lot of people who are in need. Before selling these vegeta-

bles, I need to ensure that the less fortunate get first preference. Job opportunities will be created as the business grows," he added.

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