



MEC'S FARMERS ENGAGEMENT

Small and emerging sugarcane farmers will be making more profit as the yield is expected to increase following the intervention of the KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD).

MEC Super Zuma visited Simonti, Mkhambathini on Monday 04 December 2023, to hand over 900 bags of fertilizer and almost 2 000 bags of lime to improve soil quality. Farmers were faced with the challenge of high acid levels in the soil resulting in lower yields.

With fertilizer and lime as well as other additional agri-chemicals, the production will get a much-needed boost.

Bongani Mchunu, chairperson of the Simonti Farming Primary Co-operative which employs 50 people, expressed deep gratitude to DARD for the tremendous role it continued to play within the sector, as well as to individual farmers.

Mchunu shared that he was last employed in 1980 and since then, he had been living on sugarcane profits. He said as Johannesburg had its gold, sugarcane was the province's gold.

"I want to thank MEC Zuma for the manure and lime that he has brought to us. This will help to greatly improve our yield.

With our hard work, supported by the Department, we have been able to build homes, we have sent our children to school and they have gone to universities and now we are trying to bring them closer to the sugarcane business. We are extremely grateful to MEC Zuma for the continued support," said Mchunu.

MEC Super Zuma said he was impressed by the Simonti farmer's sugarcane quality, but he was mostly proud of the job opportunities that had been created by the farmers. He said the fertilizer and lime provided by the Department would go a long way in increasing productivity, guaranteeing increased profits.

"We are proud of the work we see and we will continue to work with these farmers. We need to move them from their current level of emerging farmers to a higher level of commercial farming," said MEC Zuma.

Mkhambathini District Mayor, Councillor M. Zuma, shared that the Department played a crucial role in the development of small-scale and emerging sugarcane farmers. He said the district appreciated the enormous effort, dedication and ceaseless effort to rural economic development.

"Siyakuthanda Nqongqoshe Nxamalala siyakuthanda, uphinde ubuye Ngqongqoshe uphinde ubuye," said Zuma.















