



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORTS SUMMIT 2025

The success of the agricultural sector relies on research findings integrated with science. That's according to the KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development Ms Thembeni kaMadlopha-Mthethwa during the Annual Agricultural Research Progress Report Summit held outside Winterton under uKhahlamba Local Municipality from the 20th to the 21st of August 2025. The Department boasts six Research Stations namely: Dundee, Kokstad, Makhathini, Bartlow Combine with Cedara and Owen Sithole Colleges also serving as Training Institutes. The Summit featured renowned agricultural scientists and bodies such as South African Sugarcane Research Institute (SASRI) and South African Agricultural Council with Dr. Nemera G. Shargie capping the programme as the guest speaker.

The Summit serves as a platform where Researchers share findings on their research experiments ultimately used as solutions to the rapidly growing concerns around climate change, animal diseases and soil degradation and other challenges plaguing the sector. One of the ways worthwhile for the farmers was the knowledge sharing on experiments to produce cultivars and breeds that are resistant to diseases.

'FROM SEEDS TO SEEDLINGS: CULTIVATING TODAY FOR TOMORROW'S IMPACT' was the theme for today's gathering. A clarion call for the government and relevant stakeholders in the agriculture sector to invest in agriculture, driving sector growth and ensuring a resilient and sustainable agricultural and rural development.

Addressing hundreds of attendees that also included staff, kaMadlopha-Mthethwa stressed that the research findings be implemented across the province for the growth of the sector. "The Agricultural Research Progress Report is mandated to conduct scientific research, document findings and transfer knowledge to proactively influence the agricultural sector in collaboration with relevant stakeholders. Given that agriculture requires scientifically-based methods, we have to keep on learning from best practices and experts and listen to their expertise. The success of our farmers relies on continuous research-driven information generation, such as this platform, to provide them with a competitive edge in a rapidly evolving world" she said.

The gathering also learnt about the early warning systems to mitigate the effects of adverse weather. The Department working with the disaster management teams, have developed an app to serve as a public tool to report agricultural weather-related incidents, accessible on the Department's website: www.kzndard.gov.za.

The other topics covered include an indigenous chicken hatchery programme, an overview of hemp programme and cultivar evaluation, an overview of seeds multiplication programme, cheaper food production by the manipulation of soil ammonia oxidising microorganisms and mushroom production and its impact on food security. This is accessible on the following link:

<https://gis.kzndard.gov.za/portal/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?draft=true&id=91a9c4e0e4fc419bb0e9de8c050970bd&page=Abstracts-%26-Presentations&views=View-17%2CView-12>













