



agriculture
& rural development

Department
Agriculture and Rural Development
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

FEMALE ENTREPRENEUR AWARDS 2016

KZN MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr Themba Mthembu drew lessons from history to show how women's role in agriculture can be enhanced.

MEC Mthembu said that the Women's anti-pass March 60 years ago was not just an event but a process. Similarly, the Female Entrepreneur Awards was a process aimed at recognising and empowering women farmers.

According to MEC Mthembu, what is often left out of the story is how this march came about. He said the process started two years before in 1954 when trade unionist, Ray Simons, began speaking to other women about forming a women's organization. They started organizing and by 17th April that year, one hundred and forty six delegates, representing 230 000 women from all over South Africa attended a conference and pledged their support for programmes of the ANC and the Congress Alliance. They formed the Federation of South African Women, known as FedSaw. The organization agreed that their main task was to work towards the liberation of the country, but they said this would not be achieved without the full participation of women.

He said members of FEDSAW went out into the rural areas and all over South Africa educating other women in the struggle for freedom and how the Pass laws were restricting their lives. This resulted in 20 000 women arriving in Pretoria two years later to march to the Union Buildings. "It is clear that events don't just happen, there is a lot of organization and hard work behind the scenes as well as months, even years of preparation," MEC Mthembu added.

He said a valuable lesson from FEDSAW was that if you want to make gains in life, you have to get organized and not only help yourself, but other women as well.

According to the MEC, the march did not just end but culminated in women going back and organizing in their communities. "This is what we want to achieve with the Female Entrepreneur's Award. This must be the start of a journey where the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development can offer you after-care and help you to improve your farming skills so that you can move on to greater heights in your farming enterprises and help empower other women as well," he said

MEC Mthembu said this was in line with what Government wanted to achieve - radical economic transformation and improved service delivery with special emphasis on women. He said he would welcome suggestions, ideas and any opinions on how the female entrepreneur awards can be improved as a vehicle of empowerment.

MEC thanked the officials in KZN DARD and partners from the agriculture sector who ensured that the process of choosing the winners was rigorous and fair. "This is not the end, but must be the start of our own commitment as a Department to ensuring

that women empowerment remains a key aspect of our service delivery agenda,” MEC Mthembu said.

The winners in the different categories are:

Best Female Worker in the Sector (winning a prize of R50 000)

Best Subsistence Producer: winner- (R75 000)

Runner-up (R25 000)

Top Entrepreneur Small-holder: winner (R125 000)

Runner up (R32 000)

Top Entrepreneur Processing: winner (R125 000)

Runner-up (R32 000)

Top Entrepreneur Commercial: winner (R125 000)

Runner-up (R32 000)



KZN MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development Mr Themba Mthembu together with KZN Agriculture and Rural Development Head of Department Dr Sipiwe Mkhize handing over the Best Commercial Farmer Award to Mrs Nomqondiso Mbalo from Simba Mabhele Farm



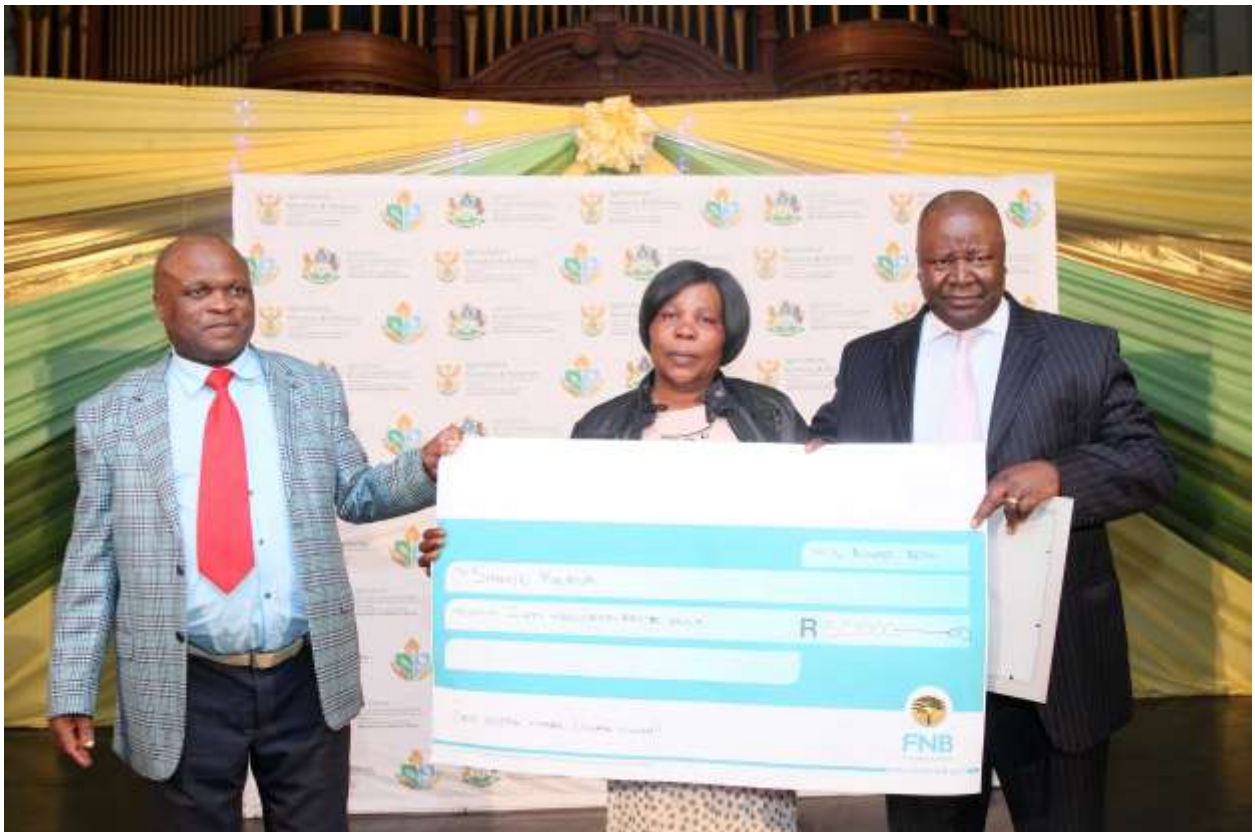
MEC Themba Mthembu together with Head of Department Dr Siphwe Mkhize handing over the Top Small-holder Farmer Award to Ms Hlengiwe Mtshali from Tshalo's Enterprise



MEC Themba Mthembu together with Head of Department Dr Siphwe Mkhize handing over the Best Female Subsistence Farmer to Ms Ntombifikile Ngaleka



MEC Themba Mthembu together with Head of Department Dr Sipiwe Mkhize handing over the Top Processing Farmer Award to Ms Yajna Birtjanund from Yaj May Fresh Produce



MEC Themba Mthembu together with Head of Department Dr Sipiwe Mkhize handing over the Best Female Worker Award to Ms Sipiwe Khubisa



KZN MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development Mr Themba Mthembu, KZN Agriculture and Rural Development Head of Department Dr Siphwe Mkhize, First Lady of the Republic of South Africa Mrs Sizakele Khumalo-Zuma and Umsunduzi Local Municipality Mayor Clrr Chris Ndlela together with all the 2016 winners

*For more information, please contact:
Lelethu Manentsa, KZN DARD
071 492 5716 / 033-343 8271
or e-mail lelethu01@gmail.com*