



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

22 March 2024

MORE RURAL FARMERS ENTER THE CANNABIS INDUSTRY AS ADDITIONAL PERMITS ARE RECEIVED BY UMKHANYAKUDE GROWERS

Songs of gratitude filled kwaMhlabuyalingana on Friday when members of the Shukasibheme Project, a co-operative in Mseleni, received a permit authorizing them to cultivate hemp.

Men and women broke into song, appreciating the unmatched efforts made by the KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (KZN DARD) of eradicating poverty, inequality and unemployment.

Shukasibheme consists of 58 members of Magcekeni sub-ward and the co-op has 17 hectares of land obtained from the Mabasa Traditional Council. This is the land that will be used to grow hemp and other crops.

To date, the Department has spent over R1,1 million in fencing material towards the installation of a borehole for irrigation water as well as for providing mechanization and production inputs.

Mr Manzini, Shukasibheme Chairperson, said there was a high rate of unemployment within the community but since the formation of Shukabheme, many lives had changed.

He said the permit would open doors and allow them to become business people as the Department would be linking them to the market, securing their income.

“It has always been our dream to get this permit and today it has come to pass. We are going to work hand in hand with the Department, doing it for our families. We are grateful to the government that prioritizes its people. We will now be able to feed our families and create jobs with our land,” said Mr Manzini.

38 hemp permits have been issued in uMkhanyakude District. In total, the Province now has 664 permit holders.

MEC Super Zuma reminded permit holders that they were bound by the law and that those who were found to be misusing their permits would lose them.

MEC Zuma added that he would be meeting with traditional leadership to finalise all agreements before the work begins in Shikusasibheme.

“We want the economy to return to the rightful hands, therefore, it is imperative that we all become part of all efforts towards this vision. There is no time for laziness but we must try to be part of the solution at all cost,” said MEC Zuma.

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