



## agriculture & rural development

Department:  
agriculture  
& rural development  
**PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

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### **KZN DARD'S MARULA PROCESSING PLANT UNLOCKS ECONOMIC POTENTIAL FOR UMKHANYAKUDE**

The Marula tree will never be the same again for the people of uMhlabuyalingana in uMkhanyakude District Municipality. This is after the MEC for KZN Agriculture and Rural Development Cyril Xaba lead by the Premier of KZN Senzo Mchunu, accompanied by the MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs Mike Mabuyakhulu and Inkosi Mabhudu Tembe of the Tembe Traditional council officially opened the Marula Processing Plant; **a first of it's kind in the Province in KwaNgwanase, Mhlabuyalingana.**

This beacon for community development is set to change the lives of people in the area and the Province at large. In 2012/13, the KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development committed to build a structure that will see the people of uMhlabuyalingana maximizing the output of their God-given natural resources, in particular the Marula plant, to participate in the agricultural economy, ensure the production of arable land and sustainable food security.

This was realised during the uMthayi Marula Festival which the Department had committed to, as it officially launched the R30 Million Marula Processing Plant for the production of Marula jam and essential Marula oils for various products. KZN DARD built the structure for R25 Million with the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform contributing the R5 Million for a Destoner machine, which has the ability to extract oils off the Marula plant pips.

The processing plant will see close to 50 direct employment opportunities created for the people of the community, primary production, off-taker agreement and many other opportunities will suffice through this structure. Currently, about 49 sites in the area have been identified to supply primary stock to the plant and the Department is busy researching into a cultivar that will see the Marula plant moving from its wild status into a more controlled commodity for an enhanced production.

MEC Xaba speaking at the opening of the plant, **said "agriculture becoming a science and a business is integral in our new strategy and such a structure realizes our exact goal, many by-products now will come out of this plant which will enhance the value chain, creating more jobs and participation in the agricultural economy by the people of uMkhanyakude"**.

The people of KwaNgwanase were also thrilled and astonished by the plant as they celebrated in the festivities and Inkosi Mabhudu Tembe whilst addressing them, **said "the dreams of the people of uMkhanyakude and the Province are being realised a step at a time which allows the communities to grow with the development"**. The Department is busy finalizing the connection of the structure into the electricity grid but already has in place fully fledged generators. The running and human resource of the plant is at the final stages which will see it being fully operational before the next harvest.



From left: MEC for KZN Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs Mr Michael Mabuyakhulu, MEC for KZN Agriculture and Rural Development Mr Cyril Xaba, KZN Premier Mr Senzo Mchunu and Inkosi Mabhudu Tembe during the Official Opening of Marula Processing Plant at Mfihlweni near Kwa Ngwanase



MEC for KZN Agriculture and Rural Development Mr Cyril Xaba, MEC for KZN Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs Mr Michael Mabuyakhulu and KZN Premier Mr Senzo Mchunu during their tour visit inside the Marula Processing Plant





MEC Cyril Xaba, MEC Michael Mabuyakhulu and KZN Premier Mr Senzo Mchunu together Inkosi Mabhudu Tembe and KZN MPL Mr Sihle Zikalala arriving with the regiments for the Umthayi Marula Festival Event



KZN Premier Mr Senzo Mchunu together MEC Cyril Xaba, MEC Michael Mabuyakhulu and Inkosi Mabhudu Tembe during the official tasting of the Marula Traditional Drink





KZN Premier Mr Senzo Mchunu together MEC Cyril Xaba, MEC Michael Mabuyakhulu and Inkosi Mabhudu Tembe during the official tasting of the Marula Traditional Drink



KZN Premier Mr Senzo Mchunu together with MEC Cyril Xaba and MEC Michael Mabuyakhulu singing and dancing to Thonga Dances