



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ICYMI: CREAM OF KZN GOVT CROP LAUNCHES PLANTING SEASON

19 October 2023

<https://www.foodformzansi.co.za/icymi-cream-of-kzn-govt-crop-launches-planting-season/>

The KwaZulu-Natal premier, together with various MECs, got their hands dirty this week when they launched the planting season set to benefit struggling communities and smallholder farmers

The KwaZulu-Natal provincial government, through the department of agriculture and rural development, launched provincial multiplanting season at Impendle, Umgungundlovu district earlier this week as part of enhancing food security.

According to the department, the 2023/2024 provincial multi-planting season is the government's holistic approach to aid communities and smallholder farmers, ensuring they have sufficient, safe, and nutritious food.

A fight against hunger

Over 20 000 hectares of land will be planted this season throughout KwaZulu-Natal with yellow maize, dry beans, and all kinds of vegetables. The department said as part of the effort to develop farmers, they will be linked to the market where they will sell their quality produce.

Premier Nomusa Dube-Ncube said food security is a national challenge and the province of KwaZulu-Natal has several households in the poorest rural areas that are facing food insecurity.

"This is a season for food security, we will do away with poverty and hunger. We want all of our people to create their wealth and succeed. No one should say that they are unemployed when they have land that can be produced and sold to the market," she said.



KZN agri MEC Super Zuma (right) scattering seed at the 2023/2024 provincial multi-planting season at Impendle, Umgungundlovu District on Tuesday. Photo: Supplied/KwaZulu-Natal DARD



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‘We want to meet your needs’

“We are encouraging communities to work together with ward committees where they will gain sufficient information. As the KwaZulu-Natal government, we want to meet your needs because we are dedicated to working for the people, we also want to see the youth taking an initiative, chasing their stories through farming.”

The planting season was led by Dube-Ncube, who was joined by various MECs including for economic development, tourism and environmental affairs, Siboniso Duma; agriculture and rural development, Super Zuma; cooperative governance and traditional affairs, Bongji Sithole-Moloi; education Mbali Fraser; as well for social development, Nonhlanhla Khoza.

The premier said that in an effort to reach all corners of the province, the MECs would be rolling out the provincial programme within their respective districts. She added that communities who have partnered with the department would receive expert advice, farming implements, seedlings, and traditional land for cooperative projects.

Developing a new crop of farmers

Dube-Ncube said the initiative by department of agriculture and rural development was an intervention to assist indigent families and farmers, allowing them to participate in the mainstream economy of the province.

Zuma said the rain that fell over Impendle in recent weeks was a significant sign of success for the planting season. He emphasised that the department would continue to assist rural communities to fight poverty and inequality.

“We will fight hunger and provide food security with our One Home One Garden programme, there must not be a home without a garden.



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KZN premier Nomsa Dube-Ncube (left) alongside MEC Super Zuma (right). Photo: Supplied/KZN DARD

“We have been speaking to religious leaders to promote the One Church One Garden programme to their congregants and we have made a plea to them to partner with the department.

“We have also taken the programme to schools, the One School One Garden and we have created jobs,” Zuma said.

A fight against hunger

Meanwhile, following the launch, the MECs visited the Ntshiyabantu communal estate, a 110-hectare cooperative that will be planting yellow maize this season.

Tractors, fertiliser, manure, and other chemicals were distributed to benefit all 67 members. Ntshiyabantu communal estate chairperson Reuben Nkontwana said families were grateful for the intervention of the department.

“There is a high level of unemployment here in the rural areas but now that we have land and guaranteed assistance from the department, no family will go hungry. We are hoping for more rain so that we have plenty of produce that will bring us enough money for our families,” Nkontwana said.