



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ICYMI: KZN Agri celebrates 'deep-rooted' indigenous crops

<https://www.foodformzansi.co.za/icymi-kzn-celebrates-deep-rooted-indigenous-crops/>

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As the country is wrapping up the heritage month, the department of agriculture, and rural development in KwaZulu-Natal went out of its way to bring indigenous crops to the community of Mpembeni in Esikhaleni.

According to the department the community was treated to a first of its kind celebration of deep-rooted heritage crops and educated on its benefits.

The department said the event was held to commemorate Heritage Day as well as to share the province's rich cultural attracted crop and livestock farmers, community leaders and industry experts.

Indigenous crops importance

MEC Super Zuma said prepared meals which incorporated vegetables produced by local farmers and hand work were displayed at an exhibition center.

"This is our very first Heritage Day celebration, but we have decided as a department to have an event of this nature every year going forward because it is a necessary platform for us to come together to celebrate who we are," Zuma said.

Zuma said indigenous crops were rooted in the cultural heritage of the nation and that they contributed towards food security. He said it was of importance that farmers who are producing indigenous crops be incorporated into the economic opportunities. "It is very important to invest in indigenous crops and healthy foods which assist with the management of various prevalent diseases such as high blood pressure and diabetes.



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MEC Super Zuma with some of the farmers and government officials handing over tools of trade to indigenous crops

“We want healthy communities, so we will teach our people how to plant and take care of these indigenous crops,” he said.

Zuma said the department was ready to train community members who had not yet benefited from the department’s planting programs.

Comfort Dlamini, who came all the way from Ward 06 in Jozini, to showcase his organic produce said with high food prices, he had been sustaining his family from his garden.

Dlamini said he was grateful for the opportunity presented by the department of agriculture and rural development to exhibit and to exchange knowledge with members of the Mpembeni farming community.

“My garden has sweet potatoes, corn, and cassava. All these organic products keep our immune systems healthy,” Dlamini said.