



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
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AGRICULTURE CRITICAL FOR KZN ECONOMY: PREMIER NTULI

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Premier calls for implementation of KZN agriculture development plan.



KwaZulu-Natal Premier Thami Ntuli has called for the implementation of the provincial government's agricultural development plan to be fast-tracked to stimulate economic growth and provide food security to the province's residents.

Speaking at the KZN Agricultural Summit hosted by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (KZNDARD) in Durban on Tuesday, Ntuli said the province's agricultural sector has the potential to inject billions of rands into the provincial economy by supplying both domestic and international markets.

"We already have commercial farmers in the province who are exporting their products, and in the process creating jobs and providing food security to our people.



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But the province's economy can grow by leaps and bounds if the province's emerging farmers run successful farming operations," he said.

As the provincial government, we have already injected R2 billion into our Agri-hubs, which are located at various parts of the province. Working with emerging farmers, particularly in the rural areas, we will ensure that the province's agriculture sector becomes the engine of the provincial economy.

Given that most agricultural operations were located in rural areas, Ntuli said the success of the provincial government's agricultural development plan would bring the KZN government closer to its goal of creating an inclusive economy.

With KZN having one of the highest unemployment rates in the country, Ntuli said growth in the province's agriculture sector would also assist the provincial government to tackle the problem of food insecurity.

The Human Science Research Council says that South Africa is not food insecure, but that there are pockets of people who don't receive enough meals or adequate nutrition from what they eat. The levels of food insecurity varied across districts.

"Seventeen percent of the households in the province suffer from severe food insecurity, while 4,3% suffer from severe hunger.

"Severe food insecurity was more prevalent in the Zululand district, where 35% of the households were severely food insecure and 17,1% and 4,3 % experienced severe hunger.

"Unemployment is linked directly to access to food, and it impacts directly on food security," he said.

Speaking at the same event, KZNDARD MEC Thembeni kaMadlopha-Mthethwa hailed the summit as a "major success".



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“It brought under one roof municipalities, provincial government departments, agricultural experts and farmers. People shared their success stories while experts touched on critical matters in the sector, including the importance of utilising the latest agricultural technology to maximise output and reduce costs.

“As a department, it’s important for us to empower our farmers, particularly the small-scale farmers operating in rural areas. We want our emerging farmers in rural areas to produce at a large scale so that we can address the current problem of food insecurity in rural areas,” he said.