



R1.5 MILLION PEANUT BUTTER FACTORY HANDED TO KZN ENTREPRENEUR — AND 60 WOMEN ARE REAPING THE REWARDS

<https://www.africanfarming.com/2026/05/23/r1-5-million-peanut-butter-factory-handed-to-kzn-entrepreneur-60-women-reaping-rewards/>

23 May 2026



KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development Mrs Thembeni KaMadlopha-Mthethwa (Middle) joins entrepreneur Phila Zulu (Right) and project beneficiaries during the handover of newly constructed peanut butter processing facility and vehicle to Naturally Nutty in Mngobokazi, Hluhluwe

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has handed over a newly constructed peanut butter processing factory and a vehicle worth R1.5 million to Naturally Nutty in Mngobokazi, Hluhluwe, within the Big 5 Hlabisa Municipality.

The handover formed part of the provincial government's intervention programme under Operation Sukuma Sakhe, led by the Premier and aimed at addressing service delivery challenges in communities, including those within the Big 5 Hlabisa Municipality.

Supporting local Agro-processing

According to the department, the investment seeks to strengthen local agricultural production and create value within communities through Agro-processing initiatives.

Naturally Nutty, owned by local entrepreneur Phila Zulu, works directly with women-led cooperatives consisting of about 60 members who cultivate peanuts and supply produce to the processing facility. The processed peanut butter is then distributed to retailers across KwaZulu-Natal. The department said initiatives such as these play an important role in strengthening agricultural value chains while creating economic opportunities in rural communities.



Products from Naturally Nutty and PhilaZulu Foods on display during the handover of the new agro-processing facility in Mqobokazi, Hluhluwe. Photo: Supplied

Women and youth participation highlighted

Thembeni kaMadlopha-Mthethwa, KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, praised the initiative for its contribution to youth participation and women empowerment.

“I am happy that 60 women are benefiting by supplying their produce to the company,” said kaMadlopha-Mthethwa. “The owner is also being assisted by young people who are part of the project. I am excited to see youth actively involved in agricultural activities.”

She said the project demonstrates the impact that agriculture can have in creating livelihoods while empowering communities.

Building a stronger agricultural value chain

Zulu said the initiative aims to create sustainable livelihoods and strengthen the agricultural value chain in the region.

He added that he hopes to see the business expand further and eventually supply major retailers across the country.

The department believes such projects can contribute towards broader rural development goals by supporting local producers while creating pathways for small agricultural enterprises to grow into larger commercial operations.