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Goat herds for Saudi Arabia

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NOKUTHULA NTULI

SAUDI Arabia is poised to import at least R2m worth of goats from the provincial stock.

MEC for agriculture and rural development Cyril Xaba announced this at the Goat Expo and goat meat cook-off competition in Mphelankani village, in uMsinga on Saturday.

The announcement came amid threats to food security in KZN and resultant food price increases in the face of the persistent drought across the province.

“With livestock dying and farmers cutting down on their herds, the price of red meat is going to become too expensive for the majority of our households,” Xaba said.

He said farmers had to adapt to climate change and adjust their farming patterns to avoid food shortages.

“Goats do better in drought conditions and they need much less feed than cattle. Goat farming is one way of practising climate-smart agriculture,” he said.

The department plans to pilot a com-



GO GOAT: King Goodwill Zwelithini, centre, at the expo. PICTURE: MBUYISELO NDOLOVU

mercial goat farming project in areas most affected by the drought which include Umsinga, Nkandla, Nongoma, Jozini, Umhlabuyalingana and Hlabisa.

“The master plan is about creating wealth by commercialising goat farming. It is about promoting goat meat and bringing goats into the mainstream of the livestock industry,” Xaba said.

He said that Saudi Arabia, where goat meat is a delicacy, had already approached the provincial government in a bid to supply at least 1 million goats a year to the kingdom in an export agreement.

nokuthulan@thenewage.co.za