

# One home one fruit tree project grows

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THE KwaZulu-Natal department of agriculture and rural development (Dard) has launched a “one home one fruit tree” project in Mount Royal, north west of Durban, where it planted litchi trees in 200 households.

Mount Royal, is one of the most impoverished communities in Durban’s INK (Intuzuma, Nanda and KwaMashu) area with a high unemployment rate.

Dard MEC Themba Mthembu said the project was part of a strategy to reduce food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition in KZN through provision of agricultural support and production of safe, sufficient and nutritious food at household, institutional and community levels. He said the launching of the tree planting project was aimed at celebrating the beginning of spring by providing an important solution to the challenge posed by 2015 statistics that revealed an estimated 3.5 million individuals in KZN were faced with severe inadequate access to food.

“Through this project, we are forming a partnership with eThekweni metro that will

see each household in the INK area having a fruit tree for the purpose of better nutritional intake. Our focus is on the promotion of township economy, reduction of poverty and unemployment as well as escalating urban agriculture,” Mthembu said.

He said the township economy could be viable if township communities began using whatever land space they had for producing nutritious food with high vitamin and protein content. He said Dard has committed R200m to food nutrition security intervention plans that have been developed for each district in the province.

“The one home one fruit tree project is an addition to the ‘one home one garden’ project, which encourages communities to produce their own food. We have planned that the Radical Agrarian Socio-Economic Transformation programme will be engaged to see to it that communities generate income if there is surplus produced through this effort,” he said.

The eThekweni mayor, Zandile Gumede, said: “As eThekweni we are pleased to partner with Dard. – 701295

**FARMING RIGHT:** MEC Themba Mthembu chats to a small scale farmer.