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AGRICULTURE MEC HANDS OVER INFRASTRUCTURE WORTH R60 MILLION

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's MEC, Mrs. Thembeni kaMadlopha-Mthethwa, has officially handed over key infrastructure projects worth R60 million to the Jozini community in northern KwaZulu-Natal on 12 March 2026. The projects include the provision of fencing materials and poles valued at nearly R7 million, benefiting six agricultural cooperatives, covering over 56 kilometres, as well as the Makhathini Irrigation Scheme's subsurface drainage, pump and canal maintenance project worth R53 million.

During the handover ceremony at the Mlawu area of Jozini Local Municipality, kaMadlopha-Mthethwa said her Department is committed to improving the lives of local farmers. Previously, beneficiaries were ploughing along the banks of the Pongolapoort (Jozini) Dam, where floods and water releases would often damage their vegetable crops. The Department intervened by clearing a safe working environment for 403 cooperative members by fencing the new area.

During the handover ceremony, MEC kaMadlopha-Mthethwa said that the realisation of these projects demonstrates the Department's commitment to its promises.

MEC kaMadlopha-Mthethwa said, "Working with the Department, the farmers cleared a new, safe place for their gardening services which will be fenced to ease their challenges."

The provision of poles and fencing materials was welcomed by farmers, with Solekile Ndlovu expressing relief that the safety concerns they faced from wildlife would be a thing of the past. Bheki Tembe also appreciated the Departments intervention, saying, 'We relayed a message to the MEC about our struggles with our gardens not being fenced. Today, she is delivering."

Meanwhile the MEC also announced the allocation of R53 million for the Makhathini Irrigation Scheme projects, aimed at providing farmers with a reliable water supply for their vegetable and crop production. "The uMkhanyakude District is the breadbasket of the province and we need to ensure that projects in Makhathini Irrigation Scheme with 4 500 hectares of land, are used optimally and are productive," said kaMadlopha-Mthethwa.

The MEC urged for the restructuring of vegetable and crop arrangements to align with all cooperatives under the farming scheme.






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