



rural development & land reform

Department:
Rural Development and Land Reform
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ONE HOUSEHOLD, ONE HECTARE LAUNCHED IN KENTON-ON-SEA IN EASTERN CAPE

By Tshepo Diale



Jubilant land reform beneficiaries during the launch of the one household one hectare in Eastern Cape, Kenton-on-Sea

Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Gugile Nkwinti launched the “one household, one hectare” programme at Gorah farm, Kenton-on-Sea, in the Ndlambe local municipality.

The Minister handed over a portion of land and planting seeds to the Kenton-on-Sea Agri-business and multi-purpose cooperative. The Minister was accompanied by the district mayor of Kenton-on-Sea, Khunjuzwa Kekana and the Director-General, Mdu Shabane.

“We want to make sure that we are bringing dignity to people living in rural areas. We are linking this initiative with the Agri-park. We are rekindling the class of black commercial farmers which was destroyed by the 1913 Natives’ Land Act. We are also fighting the scourge of poverty. For us as a department it’s a chance for development. South African is a country which is comprised of the developed and undeveloped. Therefore this is the chance for us to develop. We are turning around the rural areas. Each beneficiary will receive a certificate to be used as collateral if they want the bank to assist them. The land or the certificate cannot be sold because the land belongs to the state” said the minister.

The co-op chairwoman Mrs. Milia Kani, 68, who is leading 14 households, said they will be planting potatoes, onions and maize. “This hectare will help feed my family and the community. The community is going to benefit a lot from this initiative. We are excited and we are committed to make it work. We are going to produce for the community because we are going to work hard to produce” said Mrs. Kani. According to Mrs. Kani, 80% of the profit will remain with the family and 20% will be allocated to the cooperative.

Mike Spag who is the mentor of the beneficiaries says he's honored by the opportunity. “I have been giving opportunity to help the country fight the scourge of poverty. My role is to show the beneficiaries how to farm well. There is no work in Kenton, these hectares will help the beneficiaries reduce poverty in their homes” Spag said.

It's not an original notion, as the Minister will be the first to concede. An allotment, or community garden, as it is known in North America, is a plot of land made available for individual, non-commercial gardening or growing food plants. Needy people are given access to a plot of agricultural land on which they can cultivate and grow vegetables and fruits sufficient to feed their families. Family members themselves supervise the planting, nurturing and harvesting of the crops.

According to Professor Sheryl Hendriks, founding Director of the Institute for Food Nutrition and Wellbeing at the University of Pretoria, 30% of South Africans have faced food shortages in the last 30 days; 25% experience food challenges over the period of a month; 6% of South Africans are facing hunger; 16.6 % face food shortages affecting their productivity; and 27% of children are affected by stunting. (We are one of 12 countries [out of 189] where the incidence of stunting, a result of malnutrition, increased over the Millennium development period).

Yet, statistics show a 17.4% drop in agricultural output. And only 18.3 % of South Africans are involved in any kind of agriculture. The cost of food in South Africa increased 4.40% in September 2015 over the same month in the previous year. Food Inflation in South Africa averaged 6.31% from 2009 to 2015. Predictions are that if the current drought conditions persist, food inflation will accelerate.

Nutritionists recommend a minimum intake of 2,400 calories per person per day, which, if taken in the form of a balanced diet (starch, carbohydrates, fats, protein) currently comes at a cost of over R60 per day. And that's without transport costs.

It all adds up to a grim picture as far as a food secure future is concerned. The more so when one considers that it is estimated the world will have 2 billion more mouths to feed by 2030.

According to Minister Nkwinti, the plan is to allocate a one hectare allotment to every needy household. Land acquired by the state will be surveyed by the Surveyor General, land use plans will be formulated, and a notarial title deed will be issued to each household. Any surplus land left over after each household is allocated their one hectare will be communally owned and designated for collective use (e.g. grazing, water and energy needs, development of public infrastructure and enterprise development). Households will be supported to produce for consumption needs and organised into primary cooperatives linked to the Agri-Parks initiative.

A similar plan will be applied to communal land under traditional leadership, and to restituted and redistributed land outside of communal areas.

South Africa has maintained the percentage of its population experiencing undernourishment at less than five percent since 1990 and has continued to bring down the absolute numbers of hunger over the past twenty-one years.

"South Africa shows how important political will to improving food security and nutrition is". "Our Constitution states that every citizen has the right to have access to sufficient food and water, and commits the state to supporting the progressive realization of the right to food" said the minister.