



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE MEC RESPONSIBLE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, Ms NANDI NDALANE ON THE OCCASION OF FOOD WORLD DAY HELD AT MAKGOBA TRUST FARM ON 12 OCTOBER 2021.

The distinguished traditional leadership of Makgoba Community

The Head of the Department, Ms Ramatsimele Maisela

Chief Directors Present here

Senior Management from the Department

Farmers present here

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Thobela

Today as the people of Limpopo we join the global community in celebrating World Food Day. On Saturday this week the World food Day will be celebrating 41 years of existence, following its inception in 1980, by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. World Food Day is one of the flagship activities in the calendar of events in our department. This is fundamentally because one of our key mandates as a Department is to enable, sustain and ensure food production for the masses of our people. Our reason to exist as a department lies squarely in ensuring that food security is maintained while hunger and starvation are eradicated. According to Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, World Food Day is commemorated annually to promote global awareness and advocate collective action to assist those who suffer from hunger and highlights the need to ensure healthy diets for all.

Programme Director

If you look at the understanding of the United Nations in the commemoration of this Day, you will realise that this event today relates directly to that understanding or definition. We are not only here to observe the event but to practically ensure that we help those who suffer from hunger and importantly ensure that healthy diet is provided to the poverty-stricken members of our community. Poverty remains one of the key enemies of our people despite the freedom and democracy we currently enjoy. This is worsened by the high levels of unemployment which unfortunately affects the vulnerable members of our society.

Programme Director

As the Department we are fully aware of these sad realities as a result our daily preoccupation is to work towards eradicating poverty through our various empowerment programmes while ensuring that we provide conditions for the creation of job opportunities. The consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic have to a larger degree aggravated the poverty situation in our communities. This was evident during the hard lockdown with many of our people running out of food and relying on hand outs to survive. You will agree with me when I say, that was a terrible period where we witnessed the vulnerable members of our community out food and out of options. Though government intervened through Social Security programmes which included provision of food parcels and social relief of distress the truth is, that period exposed the levels of hunger and poverty in our communities.

Programme Director

We have a responsibility as the Department working collectively with our people, the private sector, non-governmental organisation to ensure that we obtain food security for our people.

This year, Food and Agriculture Organisation will be celebrating the sixth year of the World Food Day after the United Nations Development Programme declared a new set of sustainable Development Goals.

These are 17 goals with the 169 targets, which took over from the Millennium Development Goals which were implemented from the year 2000 and phased out in 2015. These Sustainable Development Goals are now the main reference goals for development of policies and programmes at the national and international level. To name but a few of these sustainable development goals they include amongst others, end poverty, zero hunger, health and wellbeing, quality education, clean water and sanitation, sustainable energy and sustainable consumption and production. I call on you to familiarise yourselves with the sustainable development goals in order to relate with them but importantly help achieve them for better communities.

Programme Director

We are celebrating World food day under the theme: “Our actions are our future. Better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life”. This is a call for all of us to take action for a better future which is free from poverty and starvation. While I may have appeared to be painting a gloomy picture in the state of affairs regarding hunger and poverty as the Limpopo province we appear to be in a better position as far as food security is concerned. A reality which must be celebrated and sustained. According to statistics South Africa the percentage of persons with limited access to food in 2018 decreased in all provinces except Limpopo where it remained as in 2017. Limpopo Province compared to other provinces has the highest number in terms of households that have adequate access to food at 92,6 percent. This is encouraging indeed but at the same time it gives us more responsibilities not only to maintain this high number but to increased it to a higher percentage. The ideal situation which we must all strive to achieve is that no person should be without adequate healthy food under our watch. This presents us with a huge responsibility as a department and as a people.

The October month therefore offers opportunities to strengthen the national and international solidarity in the struggle against poverty, hunger and malnutrition as well as drawing attention to the achievements of food and nutrition security.

Programme Director

As we commemorate this Day today, we have identified 200 poorest households which shall receive food hampers or parcels which were procured by the Department. We hope that this gesture will provide some relief to the identified families. We understand that the food we going to provide to you may not be enough, however, we trust that working together with you, traditional authorities, municipalities, Department of Social Development and other partners we will eventually find sufficient food provision for everyone. No child deserves to sleep on an empty stomach. This government of the people by the people shall not rest until poverty is eradicated in all our communities. Sufficient food provision to everyone secures integrity to our people and social cohesion.

Programme Director

I will be making a cardinal mistake if I can conclude my address without calling on our people to vaccinate against Covid-19 pandemic. As a country and province in order to defeat this pandemic so far we know, that vaccination is the best available and proven fighting chance against Covid-19. Much appreciation to those who heeded the call and are already fully vaccinated. To those who are yet to vaccinate you are advised to take this opportunity and vaccinate so that we can return to our normal way of living. On the same note I would like to encourage each one of you who are registered to vote on the coming Local government elections to exercise their right to vote. Your vote is your voice so use it by voting correctly on the 1 November 2021. May we have a great day as we commemorate World Food Day.

I thank you.