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North West Provincial Government  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**



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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Att : ALL EDITORS**  
**Media Houses**

**Date: Monday, 29 April 2019**

### **MEC MOHONO ESTABLISHES AQUAPONIC PROJECTS FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES**

**POTCHEFSTROOM** - An innovative and cost-effective aquaponics food security projects handed over by MEC Desbo Mohono to impoverished families in Matlwang Village near Potchefstroom town last Thursday, 25 April 2019 will contribute in addressing a number of challenges affecting the area and surrounding communities which include improving access to nutritious food, job creation and promoting healthy living habits.

Aquaponics is an innovative, intensive and inexpensive food production technique that brings together aquaculture (fish farming) and hydroponics in a closed system that dramatically conserves water and space, and yields abundant and marketable fresh produce and fish.

In aquaponics, the water from the fish tanks is used to grow the plants. The plants get their nutrients from the nutrient rich water produced by the fish wastes. Since in the process of deriving their nutrients from the waste water, the plants are actually cleaning the water, the water is thus recycled and reintroduced into the fish tanks.

At least ten (10) complete aquaponic units were handed to 10 families.

The projects are part of on-going efforts by Rural, Environment and Agricultural Development Department to respond to food security challenges affecting North West communities. These include unemployment or low-income households and small-scale farming where limited resources such as land, farming equipment sees communities and emerging farmers locked in cycles of generational poverty and food insecurity.

Keitumetse Tlotleng (42 years), a mother of two aged 03 and 14 years and is one of the beneficiaries from Matlwang village.

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She received a complete aquaponic unit with one ton of finger lings (fish), pond, feed, anti-chlorine bottles, solar panel system and spinach seedlings as part of poverty alleviation initiative.

Tlotleng is positive that this initiative by government will go a long way in helping unemployment people like her to make an income.

“I am extremely happy to be part of these initiatives by our government. If we continue to work hard I believe it will really help us and contribute in reducing the level of unemployment,” said Tlotleng

Tlotleng plans to expand her garden in the area around the aquaponic tank, to create a warm, tropical climate conducive to the well-being of the fish.

She works in the project with her partner and has stressed that she wants to do more with what government has given her and her family.

Another beneficiary is Rosinah Dithipe, a single parent with two children. She is the eldest in the family. Rosinah is unemployed and is taking care of her sibling.

Rosinah received 10 goats from government as a food security starter-pack project.

She said she has always had a passion for livestock farming. Rosinah has promised to look after these goats and her dream is to become a successful black female farmer.

The roll out of food security projects investments came after the department relooked at the way in which it structured its programmes to focus on creating food security and turning agriculture into a business.

Led by MEC Mohono, the programme focuses specifically on rural communities, with the aim of promoting sustainable food production to alleviate hunger, poverty and create job opportunities.

When handing over these projects, MEC Desbo Mohono said her department will not rest until the lives of residents of North West are changed for the better.

“These food security interventions will ensure that people gain access to productive resources; where a segment of the target food insecure population is unable to gain access to productive resources, then food security interventions will ensure that segment gains access to income and job opportunities to enhance its power to purchase food.

“The food security interventions will also ensure that the target food insecure population is empowered to have nutritious and safe food; where another segment of the target food insecure population is still unable to access sufficient food because of disability, extreme conditions of destitute – food security interventions will ensure that the state provides relief measures that may be short-term to being medium-term and sustained basis, depending on the nature of given interventions.

“Food security interventions will proceed from an analysis that is grounded on accurate information and the impact of which - in eradicating hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity - is constantly monitored and evaluated,” said MEC Mohono.

Mohono reiterated that there is still more to be done in the province regarding all forms of agriculture.

She urged everyone to take part in the sector as it offers great opportunities.

The food security projects roll out will continue to other districts and MEC Mohono has assured residents of North West that her department has a clear a plan to change the face of agriculture in the province.

Other beneficiaries received from the identified two hundred (200) have received indigenous chickens/fouls for Africa, fruit trees, vegetable seedlings, goats and back yard garden infrastructure.

The department has monitoring mechanisms in place to oversee the day-to-day running of this food security projects and to ensure all farmers participate in the province’s and country’s economy. Each project will be allocated an extension officer to offer continuous extension and advisory services to ensure growth and sustainability.

**CAPTION : IMG 8751 & 8755 :** MEC Desbo Mohono at one of the projects in Matlwang. Amongst the food security projects she handed to beneficiaries include a complete aquaponic unit with one ton of finger lings (fish), pond, feed, solar panel system and spinach seedlings as part of poverty alleviation initiative.

**IMG 8890:** MEC Desbo Mohono in Matlwang handing over food security to two hundred food security projects indigent families.

**Issued by the Communication Services Directorate**

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