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R25 MILLION MODIMOLA EPWP PRODUCES FARMING ENTREPRENEURS

North West MEC for Public Works, Honourable Howard Yawa says that the age of hope has through the Expanded Public Works Programme opened opportunities for women and the formerly marginalised to venture into agriculture. He was speaking at the graduation ceremony for Modimola Learnership Contractors held recently in Mafikeng.

Thirty learner farmers received NQF Level 2 National Certificates in Mixed Farming from the Chief Executive Officer for Taletso College, Ms Geldenbloem. They qualified after nine months theoretical training in Mix Farming, Plant Production and Maintenance, Pest control, Applied business in Agriculture, Mathematic and Communication.

Speaking on behalf of the twenty-two women farmers and eight male graduate farmers, forty-five years old Ms Gladys Dijwe who also received a certificate of conduct for the most dedicated and committed learner said, "My involvement in this Project has brought much relieve to my family of eleven as I became the only employed person in my household. The Project has given me skill and an employment opportunity. In the past I could not afford a slice of bread for my nine children"

In his address, MEC Yawa said that before the launch of the R25 million Modimola Integrated EPWP on the 16 September 2004, many unemployed rural villagers in the impoverished village went to bed with hunger pangs.



“To them the next day had only one purpose, to find food, to survive and to have some energy,” said MEC Yawa.

MEC Yawa emphasised that the programme is one of the many government initiatives aimed at bridging the gap between the first and second economy. The core objectives of the programme are job creation, skill development and improved social services.

Government has assisted the thirty farmers to establish a co-operative as a farming enterprise. R2 million has been spend in the development of the farming infrastructure.

The chicken lay unit produces an average of a thousand eggs per day which are sold to the local villagers at a reasonable six rands per dozen. Due to the success of this element of the project, a second chicken lay unit is to be set up.

Planting for crop production has also progressed well on the 15hacters farm allocated by the Barolong Boo-Ratshidi .900 000 beetroots, 140 000 cabbages and 30 000 spinach has been planted. Harvesting of spinach has started and it is expected that the first cabbage will be harvested early in September.

Delivering a quality product to the market is the objective of the farming enterprise.

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