



MEDIA STATEMENT

Att : All Editors
All Journalists

Date : Wednesday, 21 May 2025

DARD CELEBRATED WORLD BEE DAY IN COLLABORATION WITH MDA IN MARIKANA

The North West Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) in collaboration with the Mining Development Agency (MDA) joined the global community in celebrating the 2025 World Bee Day under the theme, "Bee Inspired by Nature to Nourish Us All." The provincial event was hosted at the MDA's Agricultural Hub in Marikana, near Rustenburg.

MEC Madoda Sambatha, addressed beekeepers and stakeholders at the event, emphasising the need to develop the bee industry in the province to an aggregator level. He stressed the importance of formalising the beekeeping sector and announced plans to establish an integrated register of all beekeepers in the province as a foundation for growth, regulation and support.

"This sector has the potential to contribute meaningfully to food security, job creation, and economic diversification in our rural communities. Formalisation and structured support are key to unlocking this potential," said MEC Sambatha.

Speaking to beekeepers, MDA CEO Tshimane Montwedi shared important insights into the agency's work in sustainable development through beekeeping. "This programme is not just about honey; it is about dignity, independence and restoring economic agency to former mineworkers and rural communities," said Montwedi.

The MDA's initiative has empowered over 100 beekeepers across areas including De Wildt, Ramakokastad, Zeerust, Vryburg, Matlosana, Rustenburg, and Manyaledi. To date, more than 800 beehives and starter kits have been distributed in the North West.

In response to increasing theft and environmental threats, the MDA has also introduced innovative solutions including IoT-enabled monitoring devices linked to the Beezi App, and SABS-approved fire-resistant "green crete" hives—pioneering technologies to safeguard hives from wildlife, theft, and veld fires.

Montwedi also highlighted the role of the Marikana Agri-Hub, which includes hydroponics, egg production, a training centre, and a packhouse to support market readiness. "This ecosystem represents more than infrastructure. It represents the convergence of training, production, processing, and market access—an engine for rural development and inclusive economic growth," he stated.

The event was attended by key industry players and stakeholders, including the National Department of Agriculture and the South African Bee Industry Organisation (SABIO).

Lucas Radise, Deputy Chairperson of the North West Beekeepers Association shared his vision for an empowered and well-organised beekeeping sector, reinforcing the importance of collaboration between government, industry and grassroots producers to maximise on the market gap and supplying quality raw honey as well as other bee products.

The 2025 World Bee Day celebration not only honoured the ecological significance of bees but also marked a renewed provincial commitment to developing and empowering the beekeeping sector for the benefit of all.

CAPTION:

IMG 1243: MEC Madoda Sambatha expressed the significance of establishing a provincial beekeeping strategy that will guide the development and sustainability of the industry.

IMG 1244: MDA CEO Tshimane Montwedi said the agency is committed to assisting former mineworkers with resources, skills and knowledge to participate and contribute towards the North West economy through beekeeping.

IMG 1245: Beekeepers in the province showcased their produce at the Provincial World Bee Day celebration.

End.

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