



**agriculture &
rural development**

Department:
Agriculture and Rural Development
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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MEDIA STATEMENT

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DEPARTMENT EMPOWERS NGAKA MODIRI MOLEMA FARMER WITH ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT TO ELEVATE POTATO PRODUCTION

Mahikeng - In its ongoing efforts to empower farmers with the tools necessary for enhancing food production, the North West Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) on Friday, 04 October 2024, handed over a ten hectare (10ha) center pivot irrigation system to Sello Nthoesane, an emerging potato producer in the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality. This strategic intervention aims to boost the production capacity of farmers that contribute significantly to the province's food security.

Driven by MEC Madoda Sambatha, this initiative forms part of the department's programme focused on delivering critical farming infrastructure to ensure sustainable food production. The installation of this system will not only allow the farmer to increase his crop yield, but also ensure efficient water application and reduce labour costs.

Systems such as center pivot irrigations are crucial for enhancing the resilience of the agricultural sector in the face of challenging dry climate conditions. "With a crop high in demand and with the potential to meaningfully boost the local economy, we are committed to empowering farmers like Nthoesane with essential resources needed to boost production. This project supports the creation of jobs for local people to improve their livelihood. That is why the department's unwavering commitment to empowering the province's farmers by equipping them with infrastructure remains a priority. Assisting to facilitate the transition of farmers such as Sello to commercial farming will ultimately enhance rural development," said MEC Sambatha.

Sello expressed profound gratitude to the department's effort in supporting black potato farmers in the province. "As a beneficiary of the department's potato programme which started three years ago, aimed at increasing the number of black potato farmers in the country, this center pivot will allow me to expand production to the 10ha that the system covers. Maximizing the use of arable land on the farm is the ultimate goal so that we meet the market's constant demand of fresh potatoes thereby driving profits - the ever growing demand includes informal traders, retailers and agro-processors that manufacture a variety of potato products. The pivot will be fully utilized to its maximum potential" stated the potato farmer.

The initiative forms part of a broader strategic effort to combat food insecurity and uplift farmers across the North West Province.

CAPTIONS

676A7510.JPG – Sello Nthoesane stands on the land he has prepared for potato planting, equipped with the newly installed 10-hectare centre pivot.

676A7487.JPG – Sello Nthoesane demonstrates the operation of the centre pivot to MEC Madoda Sambatha and HoD Thupi Mokhatla.

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The Directorate Communication Services

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