DIRECTORATE: MEDIA AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION Private Bag X250, Pretoria, 0001; 20 Steve Biko Street, Pretoria, 0001 Tel: 012 319 6000; Website: www.nda.gov.za

MEDIA STATEMENT **17 OCTOBER 2025**

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE JOINS HANDS WITH PARTNERS TO FIGHT HUNGER IN KWAZAKHELE, GQEBERHA

In line with this year's World Food Day theme, "Hand in Hand for Better Foods and a Better Future", the national Department of Agriculture (DoA) partnered with the Eastern Cape Department of Agriculture and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to commemorate World Food Day 2025.

This year's theme calls for collaboration across governments, organisations, sectors, and communities, to transform agri-food systems and ensure that everyone has access to healthy food. In accordance with this, DoA also partnered with various companies for support with agricultural inputs and food items that were distributed to households that are involved in agricultural activities and indigent households within the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality. Partners included Fruit South Africa, Kellenova, Oceana Group, Shoprite & Checkers, ZZ2, Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP), the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), and Macadamias South Africa. The event was held in KwaZakhele, Gqeberha, Eastern Cape on 16 October 2025. All partners acknowledged that by working together hand in hand, the country will be able to eradicate hunger.

Mr Mooketsa Ramasodi, Director-General of the Department of Agriculture, acknowledged partners that worked with the department to make the World Food Day commemoration a success. Kellenova, Shoprite & Checkers, ZZ2, Oceana Group, Fruit South Africa and Macadamias South Africa donated 300 food packs each to be given to 300 households in Gqeberha, Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality.

"It is only by working together—across sectors, borders, and communities—that we can build inclusive, sustainable, and just food systems that leave no one behind," stated Ms Lebogang Botsheleng, Acting Deputy Director-General: Food Security and Agrarian Reform from DoA.

The National Food and Nutrition Security Survey (NFNSS) identified Eastern Cape as one of the provinces with a high number of food insecure households in the country.
The NFNSS shows that:

- 61% of households in the Eastern Cape rely on diets with low dietary diversity, typically dominated by starchy staples and lacking vital nutrients such as protein, vitamins, and essential mineral elements.
- among children aged 0 to 5 years in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan, 40,3% are stunted reflecting chronic undernutrition.
- 14.3% of children suffer from severe stunting, and 1,3% from severe wasting, indicating acute malnutrition.
- 4,7% are classified as severely underweight.

Zandile Mposelwa, Director: Corporate Affairs at Kellanova, mentioned that they appreciated the opportunity to partner with DoA. “Almost 21% of South African households experience food insecurity and they do not know where their next meal will come from. We work with the department because we get grains from the farmers to make Kellogs, corn flakes. Every year, we donate 7 million meals to the schools in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, and Eastern Cape. As Kellanova, we are committed to alleviating hunger and making sure that food is accessible,” she said.
Another sponsor, ZZ2, said that they were proud to partner with DoA for the 2025 World Food Day commemoration in raising awareness on issues relating to food and nutrition security.

"The Shoprite & Checkers Group welcomes the DoA’s initiative to combat hunger and its focus on collaboration with the private sector, government, and communities. Over the past year, the group invested over R453 million to support people in South Africa and will continue partnering with key stakeholders to support vulnerable communities," said Maude Modise, Managing Trustee of the Shoprite Foundation

“Aligned to this year’s World Food Day theme, at Oceana Group we believe that real change happens when we work together. We are grateful to share the power of sustained partnerships. Oceana Group continues to nourish communities across South Africa and beyond—from providing school meals to supporting early childhood development and hunger relief initiatives. This is all made possible through the support of our employees, partners, and stakeholders, who offer their hands, time, hearts, and hard work to make a difference in

building a more food-secure future for all. Together, we are helping to create lasting impact," said Zodwa Velleman, Oceana Group Executive: - Regulatory and Corporate Affairs

Lindokuhle Hlokuma, a grade 7 learner from J.K. Zondi Primary School, which was supported as one of the World Food Day legacy projects, said that she was delighted that her school benefitted from the garden tools and was assisted with establishing a food garden. "The garden will help us to learn about plants as well as be able to sell what we planted and help our school," said Lindokuhle.

The main objective of World Food Day is to promote global awareness and action for those who suffer from hunger, and to highlight the need to ensure a healthy diet for all. This year marks the forty-fifth anniversary of World Food Day and 80 years anniversary of the founding of FAO.

For media enquiries, please contact:
Moses Rannditsheni
Director: Media and External Communication
Cell: 063 135 5425
Email: MosesR@nda.gov.za

Issued by the Department of Agriculture