

Lightning Strikes twice in Ephraim Mogale

There is general believed that lightning does not strike twice; this will not convince the people of Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality.

Within a very short period the municipality was visited by ANC Deputy President Mr Cyril Ramaphosa and the ANC and State President of the country Mr Jacob Zuma, both leaders came for different mission.

State President Jacob Zuma was on the mission of highlighting the food security challenges the country is facing and encouraging communities to be involved in the agriculture activities to avert the food security challenges. The president, as chairperson of the Masibambisane NGO, visited the agricultural projects in Phetwane Village, Ward 16 of the municipality to harvest mealies and fish project. These projects are funded by the NGO. Phetwane community has planted mealies during the last season which they made good harvest of.

Addressing communities at the Tompi Seleka Agricultural and Technological College, State President called on all community members to be cautious of the food security challenges the world is facing. He called on all community members to dirty their hands through the agricultural activities that include the ploughing of vegetable for home consumption. The presidents further encouraged young people to follow career in agriculture to alleviate food security challenges.

Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality's economy is characterized and dominated by agricultural activities. The soil type in the area is good for various agricultural crops. Approximately 80% of the land in municipality is used for agricultural purposes and large area along the Olifants (Lepelle) river is unique agricultural land for agricultural production or activities.

The municipality is a major producer of citrus and table grapes, cotton and vegetable production, cattle ownership amongst subsistence farmers, with a significant growth in the agricultural economic sector at 21.2%. Most of the produces are transported to major market, such as Johannesburg Fresh Produce and Tshwane Fresh Produce because the municipality does not have its own agricultural fresh produce market that allow local produces to be stored and sold to both the private and public consumers.

The agricultural economic sector is the largest employer which employs 31% of the active labour or the employees in the formal sector. The agricultural economic sector is envisaged to be the main contributors in addressing the Millennium Development Goals, according to which the Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality is expected to halve unemployment, from just over 40% to 20.9%, with labour projection of 38 300 by 2015. These mean a creation of 19500 new jobs, an estimation of 1950 new jobs per year.

The municipality believes that majority of the jobs can be created through the secondary agricultural economic sector of agro-processing, the creations of agricultural corporates and organic farming.

President Zuma was flanked by Agriculture Minister Tina Joemat-Petterson, Public Works Minister Thulas Nxesi, Water and Environmental Affairs Minister Edna Molewa, Minister of Settlement Connie

September newly inaugurated Limpopo Premier Mathabathe and MEC and Mayors of the Limpopo Provinces.