

The Champ celebrates World Food Day with Thibella residents



World Food Day is annually held on October 16 to commemorate the founding of the United Nations' (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The FAO aims to raise levels of nutrition across the globe, improve agricultural productivity at all levels, enhance the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy. It also provides assistance to countries changing their agricultural policy, to aid regions out of famine situations, to help implement appropriate technology and facilitate a neutral environment to discuss issues around food production. In the spirit of such a day, the department of Agriculture and Rural Development in the Free State Province identified Maluti-a-Phofung Local Municipality as one of the beneficiaries the department would like to invest in as it has the potential, capabilities and the weather advantage to see the project succeed. Accountability and responsibility was laid in the trusted hands of the executive and administration of Maluti-a-Phofung Local Municipality, in the leadership of the Executive Mayor Mofumahadi Mathokoana Mopeli.

The Executive Mayor Mof. Mopeli expressed her gratitude and placed well wishes for the appropriate and satisfactory usage of the given equipment for the municipality. She has a vision of seeing the Thibella region greened and profitable for the development and nourishment of this community. "Ke ka lona ebile e le molemong wa lona hore tsena tsohle di le sebelletse, di le ntshetse pele" she told the community gathered at the Thibella Stadium on October 29th 2011. She was explaining that it is up to the community and to their advantage to use the provided equipment in terms of profit making and development. A great deal of people were gathered at the stadium with the full complement of Councillors, Directors, Managers and officials from Maluti-a-Phofung, Setsoto Local Municipality, Thabo Mofutsanyana District Dignitaries, Office of the MEC of Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Department of Education and Traditional Leaders, who attended the event in support of the worthy course.

"Our part as the department is to assist in provision of the goods is complete but beyond that we have positioned the municipality to be administratively responsible for the correct usage of these tools. "The Champ" and her team will be the ones to care and indemnify proper usage of the new equipment" referring to the Mayor Mof Mopeli, stated MEC of Agriculture and Rural Development Mr Mosebenzi Zwane in his address. He went on to insist that the people are the ones to implement "mohoma-mobung" a metaphor used mostly to indicate that work must be done. "The land has been given to you, now the government is giving you tools and machinery to produce in order to start making a living for yourselves" persisted Mr Zwane, pleading to the masses to take action that will strengthen camaraderie in the provincial efforts to combat hunger, malnutrition and poverty. His department handed-over two tractors, 16 tunnels with irrigation systems, water

tank and seedlings, 1000 summer vege-packs, Rekgaba ka Diratswana packages of 50 gardening tools, 60 fruit trees and 150 ornamental trees among other gifts for the day to the community of Thibella.

The Traditional Leader representative of Thibella Morena Mashoeleshoele Dirahadibonoe Sekonyela, thanked the departments and the government for the length of assistance given on the day," the people of Thibella are blessed and the village will be empowered by what has been done here today" as he addressed the visitors.

The event presented an opportunity to reflect on issues of food supply by looking at food production, distribution and security in the municipality. The municipality has embarked on several initiatives that are directed in assisting communities that are food insecure to deal with challenges of accessing food) and, also to a certain extent - food production and marketing of the excess produce for profit benefits for the community. These interventions of government continue to support small scale and emerging farmers with inputs, as indicated but further provide training and mentoring. Vulnerable households were identified for relevant targeted food security interventions and those were assisted with planting and will be closely monitored for further assistance.

