

Shoprite takes hands with Brackenfell community to transform park into food garden

More than 60 community members in Brackenfell have turned an empty piece of barren land into a thriving food garden roughly the size of two rugby fields – sporting 42 vegetable patches.

Situated in Protea Village, the Suikerbossie Park garden was started in May 2022 to support a group of urban farmers who use the fresh produce in their own households or to support the broader community through a food security programme facilitated by the garden project. So far, more than 500 fresh vegetable parcels have been delivered to vulnerable families in the local area and surrounds.

Today, this garden serves as a symbol of unity—bringing together individuals from all walks of life while fostering sustainability of food sources and community resilience. One of the farmers, Colbert Mdoda, says that the garden was therapy for him. After being involved in a serious car accident, gardening provided a source of healing while he learned to walk again and regained his strength in his journey to recovery.

“The training, tools and expert advice have helped us turn this unused land into a thriving green oasis where we feel a sense of community. Knowing that there is a network of support – from fellow gardeners and local partners, including Shoprite – has given us the confidence to keep growing and thriving because together, we are cultivating something truly beautiful,” added Mandy Leibbrandt who initiated the urban farming project at Suikerbossie Park.

Shoprite is supporting the Suikerbossie Park garden with 18 months of hands-on permaculture training for the urban farmers, as well as equipping them with gardening resources such as tools, seedlings, seeds and compost.

Hunger relief and food security are at the core of Shoprite’s [Act For Change programme](#) through which it supports more than [230 food gardens](#) and 4 000 home gardens – covering over 4.5 million m² – indirectly impacting about 60 000 beneficiaries.

In the past year, more than 2 500 community members were trained in sustainable food gardening, and the community food gardens collectively produced a harvest of more than 73 400 kg.

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