

Shoprite gives hundreds of suppliers access to market

The Shoprite Group is giving entrepreneurs and SMMEs access to economic opportunities by providing hundreds of suppliers with access to market.

Last year the group invested more than R177 million in enterprise and supplier development in line with its continued commitment to giving market access to an increasing supplier base.

A large percentage of its fresh produce suppliers are small- to medium-sized businesses, with more than half of them delivering on contracts worth less than R500 000 a year.

While job creation and economic growth rely on the development of entrepreneurs and small and medium businesses, poor economic conditions and regulatory obstacles stand in the way of entrepreneurial growth. Shoprite helps entrepreneurs overcome one of their major obstacles - gaining access to market - by sourcing as much as possible from local suppliers.

It also helps suppliers, where necessary, in planning, product mix and training to ensure the partnership is sustainable and mutually beneficial.

Shoprite has been active for some years in establishing and maintaining a support ecosystem for small businesses and entrepreneurs amongst its suppliers, whose success is essential for economic growth and job creation.

One such supplier, [Elias Pangane](#), a vegetable grower from the Hazyview community in Mpumalanga, has seen his business expand substantially since doing business with Shoprite.

Pangane, who started out selling vegetables to tourists and locals along the side of the road, now supplies butternut, green beans, chillies and tomatoes to stores across the group's Gauteng division.

Each year he has been able to supply more produce to the stores as his business continues to grow, and he now employs 30 people, some of which are provided with a place to live on the farm.

Another supplier, Sharon Rambally, who farms in KwaDukuza on KwaZulu-Natal's north coast, was planting okra, calabash, beans and other vegetables, but did not have any security of supply until she approached Shoprite in 2013. Since then, her business has increased over 100% in rand value and gram weight and she now supplies to eight stores in the region.

Edwin Mabotsa started hydroponic farming in Windsorton in the Northern Cape, an area which was reeling after mining investment dried up. Beset by start-up difficulties, he almost gave up when Shoprite approached him to ask if he would plant cucumbers as there was a shortage of growers.

Tshwaraganang Hydroponics cooperative, has grown from being able to supply a few crates a week 10 years ago to become a national supplier, employing 14 permanent workers.

The Matsamo Community Property Association in Mpumalanga, founded through the Land Restitution Act, has leased land to Tomahawk, which farms papayas, bananas and sub-tropical fruit and employs 1 400 people including seasonal work.

Matsamo CPA chairperson Moses Thumbatho says Tomahawk is transferring skills to the community who one day may take over farming operations.

At the Coega Dairy, Tshilidze Matshidzula is producing private label milk to the Shoprite Group, expanding the business from one which was previously only able to sell to the local community.

The Shoprite Group invites potential suppliers to make contact on its [Become a Supplier](#) webpage.

For more supplier stories click [here](#).

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