

Farming cooperative helps provide livelihoods

The Kanana Poultry Farm Primary Cooperative in Nietgedacht, Gauteng, was born out of the need to generate an income for the co-op members and produce food for their families. Shoprite, recognising the role that farming cooperatives play in helping to improve food security at a community level, partnered with the co-op late last year.

Matlou Robert Ratshabedi, a farmer by profession, started the cooperative and it now provides employment to nine community members. Robert says, “We saw the tough economic situation and knew that we needed to produce our own food and start making an income.”

“Shoprite have been extremely helpful. They’ve given us tools and seedlings as we’ve needed them. The permaculture workshops have also been interesting because they have encouraged us to farm without chemicals,” says Robert.

All the community food gardens supported by Shoprite receive 18 months of intensive training, aimed at upskilling the gardeners to sustain an organic food garden.

Robert says that although they have a water source in the form of a nearby river, collecting water is difficult. He is grateful that Shoprite have agreed to assist them with a water tank and irrigation piping to make watering easier.

He says that as the food garden continues to grow, they will employ more young people from the community, “We need to transfer skills to people in the Diepsloot area. By giving them these skills, the cooperative will benefit more than just its members.”

The Shoprite Group has a robust programme in place to address the food security challenges faced by so many people across the continent on a daily basis. Through its support of 146 community food gardens, and 2 313 home-based gardens, the Group fosters long-term food security and generates livelihood opportunities.

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