

## **Creche food garden supported by Shoprite**

Fifteen community members from Qholaqhwe Village, near Phuthaditjhaba in the Free State, recently secured Shoprite's support to aid the development of the food garden at the Qholaqhwe Creche.

"It was initially started for two reasons. It was to help create employment for the youth in our village and because we were spending a lot of money buying food for the creche's feeding scheme," explains Qholaqhwe Garden Project and Creche Manager, Malebane Moloi.

The creche has more than 200 children under the age of six and has an aftercare centre for around 40 children. "Thanks to the food gardens we don't have to buy any vegetables for the children's meals anymore," says Malebane.

The food gardens' winter yield this year has included cabbage, spinach and kale, while in summer they grow green pepper, carrots, green beans and various other vegetables. Aside from supplementing the feeding scheme with vegetables, surplus produce is also sold within the community.

Shoprite's support includes 18 months of hands-on permaculture training for the garden members. "We know how many seedlings we need to plant in order to have the yield that we'd like," explains Malebane. "The training has also taught us more about accurate record keeping so that we can grow our business further."

Shoprite also has plans to invest in the necessary water infrastructure to help alleviate Malebane and her team's water scarcity challenge. "The water supply is not consistent in the area where we are planting, so having access to water will really help our farming."

The Shoprite Group has a robust programme in place to address the food security challenges faced by so many people across the continent daily. Through its support of 150 community food gardens, supports 2 578 home-based gardens, the Group fosters long-term food security and generates livelihood opportunities.

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