

Shoprite and Checkers Market Day gives community gardens access to wider customer base

(10 March 2022) Local community food gardens today had the opportunity to sell their fresh and organically grown crops directly to the public at selected Shoprite and Checkers supermarkets nationwide.

Market Day was first introduced in 2017 to further extend the retailer's support of the many community food gardens it partners with to provide the gardens with a platform to sell their fresh produce and to promote themselves to a wider customer base. While it creates an additional income earning opportunity, garden members also gain invaluable skills about operating in a formal retail environment.

"It is scary selling our fresh produce at such a well-known store like Checkers, but we're extremely grateful to Shoprite and Checkers for supporting local growers and giving us the opportunity to sell our produce in their stores," said Zimasa Mlengana from the Farm to Folk community food garden in Vanderbijlpark, Gauteng.

"It is a fantastic initiative which brings the gardeners in direct contact with their customers and helps us understand how to sell and interact with customers," added Sifiso Mhlongo from the Iqabungelihle Cooperative in KwaMashu, KwaZulu-Natal.

The following gardens participated in the Shoprite and Checkers' Market Day – selling produce such as spinach, green peppers, tomatoes, cabbage, lettuce and green beans:

GAUTENG:

- Farm to Folk – Checkers FX Emfuleni
- Siyakhula/Reahola – Checkers Grey Owl Midstream
- NOSA Early Learning Orphans and Vulnerable Children's Centre – Checkers Pretoria North
- Carroll Shaw Memorial Centre – Checkers Tambotie Mall Randfontein
- Mahata Mmoho – Checkers Hyper Vanderbijlpark
- Dithaka Dikopane Cooperative – Checkers Southgate
- Ufuzo Agricultural & Dropping Off Centre – Checkers Bracken Gardens

FREE STATE:

- Phahamang Basadi Community Garden – Shoprite Parys
- Epilepsy South Africa (Parys) – Checkers Parys 2
- Ntoanatsatsi Community Garden – Shoprite Setsing
- Free State Rural Women Assembly Agroecological Hub – Shoprite Botshabelo Mall
- Qholaqhwe Garden Project – Shoprite Mandela Park

KWAZULU-NATAL:

- Iqabungelihle Cooperative – Checkers Hyper Gateway
- Thubelihle Special Opportunity School – Shoprite Ladysmith

- Velemseni Farming Group – Shoprite Estcourt
- Siyazondla kwaPhindangene – Shoprite Ulundi

LIMPOPO:

- Radical School of Entrepreneurship – Checkers Tzaneen Lifestyle
- St. Scholastica OV Program Food Garden – Shoprite Elim
- We Can Women’s Development Co-op – Shoprite Paledi
- Ratanang Agricultural Cooperative Limited – Shoprite Mankweng

NORTH WEST:

- Bakgatla Ba Mosetlha – Shoprite Temba

MPUMALANGA:

- Too Fresh Produce Cooperative – Shoprite Ermelo

WESTERN CAPE:

- Siyazama – Checkers Somerset West

Hunger relief is at the core of the Shoprite Group’s corporate social investment programme. Through its Act For Change programme, the retailer supports more than 160 community food gardens and over 2 500 home gardens, which impacts almost 17 000 beneficiaries. In the past year, more than 570 community members were trained in sustainable food gardening, assisting them to generate an income while growing nutritious and organic food.

The Group’s food garden support includes an 18-month agricultural training and mentorship programme for community members as well as the provision of seeds, seedlings, gardening equipment, water-infrastructure and shade-netting.

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