

McCain and Shoprite partnership supports vulnerable communities with food gardens

(20 April 2022) McCain South Africa and Shoprite will ensure greater food security in the communities of Delmas and Springs following their support of two food gardens.

Community members at both gardens - located at the Siyanqoba Centre for People Living with Disabilities and the Tholakele Centre of Hope - will be equipped with 18 months of hands-on permaculture training, plant materials and gardening tools to enable them to run sustainable gardens.

“We are extremely grateful for the support from both McCain and Shoprite. The garden will help us provide food for the more than 40 children in our care,” says Maria Monyana, co-founder of the Siyanqoba Centre for People Living with Disabilities in Botleng, Delmas.

Since it was founded in 2016, the employees at the Siyanqoba Centre have tried to start a vegetable garden to supplement the meals they prepare with fresh produce, but without the proper training and resources, they have struggled to sustain it.

“We don’t have much money to buy vegetables to ensure healthy meals for the 40 children we look after, but now we can grow our own to use in the meals we prepare,” added Pastor Tholakele Tshabalala from the Tholakele Centre of Hope. The centre was started in 2006 as an early childhood development centre (ECD) and the staff members often use their own money to buy fresh produce to supplement the meals they prepare for the children.

The food gardens are an extension of McCain Foods SA’s food donation programme, which aims to assist communities by addressing the broader challenges of food insecurity and promoting self-reliance.

“This forms part of our Thriving Communities sustainability pillar, which has seen us donate tons of frozen vegetables to the Siyanqoba Centre for People Living with Disabilities and the Tholakele Orphanage, and many more such centres across South Africa. We, however, recently came to the realisation that we also need to contribute towards assisting these centres to become self-reliant,” says Monako Dibetle, Communications Manager for McCain Foods SA.

Hunger relief and food security are at the core of the Shoprite Group’s corporate social investment programmes. 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.

“Shoprite is committed to building the resilience of the communities in which it trades, and this partnership will equip these two centres to grow their own nutritious food. It is one of the many initiatives Shoprite has in place to address food security in under-resourced and vulnerable communities across South Africa,” said Judy Maluleka, CSI Manager.

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