



a world class African city

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MEDIA RELEASE

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The City takes a lead in the first ever urban food resilience programme in the country

The City of Joburg is leading the first ever urban food resilience programme in the country.

This arose from the State of the City Address (SOCA) by the Executive Mayor, Clr Mpho Parks Tau, today – Thursday May 9, 2013

This programme is led by a coalition which includes government as a whole, the not-for-profit sector, the private sector and most significantly the communities themselves. Each part of that coalition will have a different but equally important role to play.

Over the past nine (9) months, the fundamentals of this programme have been put into place. Food insecure communities at the hungriest edges of our City have been mobilised and empowered to transform open spaces into food-producing gardens, including many that might otherwise have remained or become dumpsites or vacant spaces.

Many committed researchers, and advocacy groups, have come together to provide a common sense of the urgency around the food resilience challenge. The City has commissioned research for the end of the current financial year and will produce the first comprehensive report on food insecurity and resilience in the city.

A full time tractor service has already been deployed to serve community farms and by the start of the next financial year, will be attached to 3 new agri resource centres, with expansion planned to 7 centres by June 2014.

These centres provide on-going support and advice to micro-farmers; including training, help with land preparation and provision of basic tools. These centres, including four (4) new ones that will be open in the next financial year, will also act as the gateway to city-owned farming land for the emerging farmers supported through the programme.

These centres currently host the first stage of our hub-and-spoke sites, which will link several small farms in a given area with the infrastructure and logistics they need to serve the market.

Many small farms working together can increase total agricultural output. Our Food Empowerment Zones will leverage the City's large land assets to provide opportunities for large-scale farming, providing opportunities for emerging farmers to come together as a common economic force.

"We are asking everyone in this city to support this initiative, be ethical about where you buy your food from, support our food empowerment zones, buy from our local producers and help us become food resilient." said Clr Tau.

ENDS