

South Africa:

Premier Ramathuba praises agricultural project 'Majeje Citrus'

At the State of the Province Address, Limpopo's Premier, Dr. Phophi Ramathuba, highlighted the Majeje Citrus initiative, a citrus farming project aimed at benefiting the Majeje Traditional Community. This initiative was launched in 2021 through a partnership between Hosi Ntsanwisi, his traditional council, and various stakeholders to develop citrus orchards across 457 hectares on Waterbok and Masalal farms. To date, 96 hectares of lemons, 50 hectares of Star Ruby grapefruit and 66 hectares of oranges have been cultivated.

The project, which is set to fully mature by 2027, has already seen significant infrastructure development, including two solar plants, two balancing dams, and the refurbishment of existing buildings. Boela Bruwer, an agricultural economist and project leader, acknowledged the support from Premier Ramathuba and the Limpopo Department of Agriculture, which has been integral to the project's progress.

Located near Letsitele along the R529 road, Majeje Citrus has converted former grazing land into productive citrus orchards without displacing local cattle farmers. This initiative has been facilitated through a collaboration with Komati Fruit Group and Masalal Packers Pty Ltd for the export of the harvested fruit, under the GRASP plan by the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The project, supported by a R30 million soft loan from the Motsepe Foundation, alongside funding from Absa Bank and a grant from the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, currently employs 70 workers. This number is expected to increase significantly once full production is reached. The first harvest, expected in 2025, will mark a significant milestone for the Majeje Citrus and contribute to the economic development of the Majeje Traditional Community.

With 220 hectares already equipped with irrigation systems and the solar plant operational, the project is well on its way to achieving its full potential, promising economic renewal and job creation for the community.

Source: Tzaneen Voice (<https://tzaneenvoice.co.za/majeje-sitrus-a-visionary-agricultural-project-praised-by-premier-ramathuba/>)

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