

World Food Day brings great relief to Doringbaai

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The Western Cape Department of Agriculture in partnership with the Matzikama Local Municipality celebrated World Food Day at Doringbaai on the West Coast today. A helicopter view of this town and its inhabitant households tells the tale of underdevelopment, poverty and lack of resources. The sea has always been the main source of economic activity in Doringbaai, but unfortunately the commercial fishing operations closed down a number of years ago.

In the spirit of this year's World Food Day theme, "Food prices: From crisis to stability", the Department established 26 community gardens in Doringbaai and Strandfontein and 20 households received chicken pens with layers and indigenous fowls. "We need to do two things: We need short term solutions to help the people in need now. But then we also need long term solutions that will help this area to help itself." said Gerrit van Rensburg, Western Cape MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development.

A communal food garden, entrusted to local small scale farmers also received support in the form of infrastructure and seedlings from the Department of Agriculture and a school garden was also established to support the school's soup kitchen.

Minister van Rensburg told the community of Doringbaai that food gardens and small scale farming will help people to be less food insecure, but ultimately the economy in this region need to be stimulated. He continued by saying: "We need people to earn enough money so they can buy food for their families and for that we need to create sustainable jobs."

A food mountain made up of contributions from the staff of the Department of Agriculture, the World Food Bank and SA Breweries were handed over to various beneficiaries of Doringbaai and Papendorp by the Mayor of Mitzikama, Ms Diliena Goedeman and Minister van Rensburg. Gift of the Givers contributed household- and personal hygiene products to all the families in Doringbaai.

World Food Day is another event which will try to make an impact in the Zero Hunger Plan of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The plan aims to ensure food security for all, particularly the vulnerable.

Minister van Rensburg left the community with a message of hope, saying: "Our short term efforts will ease the hunger pains. But more importantly: Our long term plans regarding Rural Development must give you hope for the future. Work with us, and together we will make it better."