

Acquiring work-ready farming skills (Gauteng)

By [Ben Rycroft](#), issued by [The Social Employment Fund](#)

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Puseletso Kekana joined the SEF programme in August 2022 as a first-time team leader. The role was a steep learning curve, dealing with people and resolving daily issues was a transformative experience that contributed to his personal growth. Throughout his journey, he familiarised himself with farm-specific terminology such as germinating, mulching, and transplanting, which expanded his farming knowledge.

Puseletso says he has undergone tremendous personal development, making this experience truly exhilarating. “My perspective has evolved, and I now have a more forward-thinking mindset. I no longer limit my thoughts to the present; instead, I constantly ponder how to achieve my future goals as an individual”.



Economic development

Puseletso is part of a group that was assigned to Northern Farm in Gauteng. As participants in the SEF project, all 30 members have been granted a 5-year lease for a plot of land for agricultural production by the City of Johannesburg. This lease includes the provision of inputs like seedlings to jumpstart their agricultural activities. Equipped with enhanced

knowledge and practical skills, the group intends to utilize the field for productive purposes, this will see the group forming a cooperative to create structure in how best to manage this resource.

Thinking ahead

Puseletso expressed, “if we make efficient use of this opportunity, we can ensure five years of food security and explore countless possibilities of becoming successful farmers. This is a significant achievement, considering that we were initially just project participants with no resources.”

Beyond SEF

Having had the opportunity to be part of the programme and experiencing the feeling of being something meaningful has boosted his confidence. “I would love to be the one individual from my community to provide the kind of support and opportunity I got for other members of my community” he said. He plans to provide learning tools for new participants, giving them the necessary tools to create more employment.

Human transformation

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Solidaridad for granting us this invaluable opportunity, which has truly been a lifeline for us. On a personal level, I am determined to make the most of this opportunity. Not only does it provide us with a monthly income, but it also instills in me a deep sense of motivation, knowing that the project has placed great trust in my abilities. I see this as a long-term commitment that I am fully dedicated to.

Gratitude

Puseletso believes that the project’s recognition of young talent, along with the support from the City of Johannesburg, opens doors for youths like him to engage with the government. We can advocate for more social employment programmes like this, aimed at enhancing and expanding the horticulture sector through youth involvement. By creating positive change in our communities, such initiatives have the potential to improve unemployment rates and boost youth confidence significantly.

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