

KZN couple continues family tradition supplying first-grade fresh produce

A married couple from KwaZulu-Natal, both of whom are pensioners, have continued a family farming tradition with their inherited farm in La Mercy, and have been regular suppliers of high-quality produce to the Shoprite Group for more than three decades.



Balamaine Govender and Krish Naidu of B Govender Farm

Balamani Govender inherited the farm from her parents, who were among the first successful farmers in the region. Together with her husband Krish Naidu, the pair have continued working the land well into their late 60s and early 70s.

Cherry Belle radishes

Today the couple continues to exclusively supply Shoprite with a variety of vegetables grown on their small-scale farm. They produce coriander, mint, watercress, herbs, and spinach – but it's their specialisation in Cherry Belle radishes that has garnered the two the most attention.

The choice to farm these radishes, a common addition to a traditional French salad, was a logical one, explains Naidu. "Cherry Belle radishes grow throughout the year, and the weather and soil structure on the farm is very conducive for its growth. It has quick returns from seed to harvest."



“In order to supply Shoprite we had to meet certain requirements, follow a growing programme, and most importantly follow a food safety programme for which we get audited annually.” Naidu says this has further enhanced their business.

“First-grade produce will produce first-class sales. My experience tells me that once the products are of good quality, Shoprite will sell more – which has always been the case. I solely supply Shoprite, and business with Shoprite has been great and this allows me to expand my farming and create more employment,” says Naidu.



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Thando Vilakazi and Namhla Landani 16 Feb 2021



Naidu and Govender continue to work hands-on at one of the region's most successful small-scale vegetable farms. As with most farming it is seldom easy and straightforward to regularly supply high-quality produce to a supermarket chain, but central to their success is the “tremendous relationship” they have built with Shoprite over the years, states the couple.