

FOOD SECURITY AT THE CENTRE OF SIMISO'S BEING

Each day Simiso Mathonsi works hard to feed his love for farming and all things agricultural. This is a love he has had from a young age, watching his late grandmother growing her own crops which he would harvest and sell to the local community. Simiso is very aware of the problem of food security in South Africa, which is caused by the growing population as well as unforeseen challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic. This avid agriculturalist thinks a mindshift post COVID-19 is a necessity. He believes that a permanent solution to tackle challenges of hunger and poverty in South Africa will be for the country to produce its own food.



“I have had the privilege to travel to China and visited the Demonstration Centre of China-South Africa, Agricultural Technology Station. One lesson I learnt was that South Africa is behind with technology and is missing out on innovative agriculture. To meet the huge demand for food, we need to adopt modern technology to meet this growing demand like other countries,” said Simiso.

Being selected to participate in the National Science Week as a student at MUT was a life-changing opportunity for Simiso. It was at that time that he realised he had chosen a career he loved and wanted to grow in. He acknowledges

that the little opportunities provided by MUT outside the lecture room confirmed his belief in the potential of farming to change people's lives.

Simiso is currently working on a poultry project in Mandeni, northern KwaZulu-Natal. He designed the project to make a difference to the local community. Besides creating job opportunities, he aims to transfer skills to people who are interested in farming and agriculture-related value chain activities. Having realised that many people struggle to develop sound business plans and write funding and partnership proposals, he will use his skill set to develop his community in this area.

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