

**PRESS RELEASE FROM THE CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE
(CTICC)**

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CTICC digs deep for Mandela Day

Staff from the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) volunteered their time and resources to help micro-farmers at the urban farming group Abalimi Bezekhaya on International Mandela Day.

The CTICC has had a long-standing relationship with the non-profit organisation that aims to combat poverty by empowering farmers to grow food sustainably, using organic methods, in community gardens to generate an income.

On Mandela Day, CTICC staff got their hands dirty by planting, watering, and cultivating produce gardens operated by Abalimi Bezekhaya (which translates to "farmers of home") in Khayelitha.

The CTICC has been involved with Abalimi since 2013, through corporate social responsibility initiatives and the purchase of produce. At the CTICC sourcing the freshest organic and seasonal produce is vital to the Centre's food and catering services. Harvest of Hope, Abalimi's social business arm has been providing the CTICC with top-of-the range organic vegetables for the past three years.

"Our social responsibility goes beyond financial support. At the CTICC, we believe in social upliftment and this is enhanced by the caring actions and participation of our staff. They recognise that giving of their time and talents not only deliver benefits to communities, but also for themselves. We are committed to creating volunteerism opportunities for all our staff," says Julie-May Ellingson, Chief Executive Officer of the CTICC.

A network of garden centres operates under the Abalimi Bezekhaya umbrella, supporting an impressive number of micro farmers across Khayelitsha and Nyanga. Over the past two years, the CTICC has purchased produce worth over R124 000 from Harvest of Hope.

For Mandela Day 2016, the CTICC is also donating wheelbarrows, rakes, spades, and other horticultural products in the hope that it will contribute to the incredible produce already grown by the urban farmers.

Abalimi is one of four local community organisations which the CTICC supports.

"We are committed to partnering with local communities to help create a society that can contribute to improving the lives of all South Africans. Achieving food security remains an important challenge in the country. The CTICC is proud to be associated with Abalimi Bezekhaya as well as being part of creating an institution that values volunteerism," adds Ellingson.

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