

# Mandela Day: Celebrating the tenacity of the South African 'gees' amid multiple crises

By [Andy du Plessis](#), issued by [FoodForward SA](#)

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There is more than enough pessimism across South Africa as we deal with multiple crises - load shedding, escalating food prices, higher interest rates, frustration with widespread government corruption and incompetence, and rampant crime to name just a few.



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Yet, despite the challenges and hardships we experience from day to day, we tend to survive, some even thrive. We cope with humour and we struggle through the negativity, because we South Africans are built tough. 'Ons skrik vir niks en ons staan vas!'

We are a nation that demonstrates 'gees' when it comes to supporting those in need. The recent water crisis in Hammanskraal; various floods and wildfires displacing households in recent times; riots and unrest leaving businesses worse off; and who can forget the devastation caused by the pandemic. South Africans respond generously and with pride.

Mandela Day is no exception. It is the day when we celebrate and remember our most beloved South African, Tata Madiba. We celebrate his birthday on 18 July and remember his (along with countless others') sacrifice, tenacity, and determination.

Mandela Day is also a day when we renew our commitment to build a better South Africa for all, and pledge to live out the values of justice, equality, and dignity. I have seen countless displays of humanitarian action and generosity during my 10 years of service at FoodForward SA. From support to our various calls to action during various disasters, to collaboration on reducing food loss and waste across the food value chain, it is heartwarming to be part of this amazing network of care that is reducing human suffering, promoting food security and good nutrition, and reducing the impact of food waste on our fragile environment.

This year our proud sponsors have once again stepped up and endorsed their support for the 2023 FoodForward SA Mandela Day Packing event, to be hosted at our Cape Town, Joburg, and Durban warehouses. We are grateful for the generous contributions of Pick n Pay, Pick n Pay QualiSave, Food Lover's Market, Massmart, Clover, CHEP, Premier FMCG, Kellogg's, Smollan, OneFarm Share, Standard Bank, HelloChoice, Coca-Cola Beverages South Africa, Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages, and Rhodes Food Group.



We are looking forward to hosting thousands of their staff, learners from primary and secondary schools, and families and individuals volunteering their 67 minutes, packing food to be distributed to the most vulnerable communities across South Africa during the cold winter months, joining in the fun, being part of the Madiba magic, and contributing to nation building on the day.

[To register, go to Webtickets.](#)

Amid multiple challenges we face as a nation, one thing is for sure – *the Mzansi gees* is still alive and well across South Africa.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andy du Plessis is managing director of FoodForward SA.

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