



SIGNATURE THEME 1

Food Futures

Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems

Food Futures positions Walter Sisulu as a leader in food and nutritional sovereignty, building resilient, climate-responsive food systems that address the Eastern Cape's rural livelihoods, land use, and economic marginalisation. The province carries some of the highest rates of rural poverty and child undernutrition in South Africa, alongside substantial arable land and coastline that remain under-used. The theme draws on agricultural sciences, environmental management, rural development, economics, and engineering, strengthening food systems from production through processing to market access and community resilience.

THIS SIGNATURE THEME POSITIONS WALTER SISULU TO:

- Contribute to food and nutritional sovereignty, and to the resilience of household and community food supply.
- Support climate-adaptive, technology-smart agricultural practice suited to smallholder and communal conditions.
- Strengthen rural enterprises, cooperatives, and local economic participation across the agri-value chain.
- Inform policy and governance within agri-food systems at municipal, provincial, and national level.

THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS

Climate-resilient agriculture

Food and nutrition security

Aquaculture and mariculture

Agri-value chains

What each faculty contributes to this Signature Theme

FOOD FUTURES is delivered through Walter Sisulu's existing academic strengths. Set out under each faculty below are the disciplines, capabilities, and lines of work that faculty brings to the theme. Read together, they show how a single theme mobilises all seven faculties at once.

Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences

Nutrition science, food safety, and community health programmes that connect diet to the prevention of chronic and childhood disease in rural districts.

Faculty of Natural Sciences

Crop and soil science, botany, integrated pest management, and the ecology of coastal and inland systems that sustain food production.

Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology

Smart agricultural technologies, irrigation and water infrastructure, cold chains, processing, and the data systems that make small farms viable.

Faculty of Law, Humanities and Social Sciences

Land tenure, communal property rights, indigenous food knowledge, and the social dynamics that shape what households grow and eat.

Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences

Rural development policy, municipal food planning, and the administration of agricultural support programmes at provincial level.

Faculty of Economics and Financial Sciences

Agri-value chain economics, cooperative finance, market access, and the enterprise models that keep value in local hands.

Faculty of Education

Science and technology literacy, school food gardens, and teacher development that carries agricultural knowledge into the next generation.

