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Indigenous Knowledge Systems in South Africa's Food Security

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ABSTRACT The paper highlights the challenges and prospects of IKS in food security in South Africa. A major challenge identified was the impact of western food culture on the healthy food practices of African indigenous communities especially the conceptualization that eating indigenous food species is associated with poverty. This is contrary to African food security which embraces the perception of eating healthy food. Local farmers, especially women rely on their IKS for food security because of affordability, accessibility and positive experience. Men's land ownership marginalized the role of women as the main indigenous food security producers. The recommendations made are: capacity building for indigenous women food farmers; policy makers to address constraints experienced by farmers of indigenous produce; public, private community partnership working together to support the interface of indigenous and modern farming systems for food security; further research on the gender dimensions of land access and indigenous plant species for food security.