

**FROM THE FIELD
SPRING 2018**



FARM AFRICA

SHOWCASING THE POTENTIAL OF KENYA'S FARMED FISH

Every year, Eldoret's Agribusiness Trade Fair gives Kenya's 'agri-entrepreneurs' a chance to showcase new technologies and ideas. Farm Africa's aquaculture experts were keen to make the most of this opportunity - because the transformative potential of Kenya's fish farms is a message that needs to be shared.

In Kenya, the demand for fish is rising, but due to overfishing, supplies from natural water sources are dwindling.

Fish farming is a sustainable solution that takes the pressure off wild fish stocks as well as bringing jobs and income to those involved. But with people hesitant to swap the nation's favourite - wild tilapia - for farmed alternatives, the solution isn't always an easy sell.



That's why Farm Africa used the 2017 Agribusiness Trade Fair to showcase the versatility and variety of Kenya's farmed fish. With chefs on hand to prepare tempting local delicacies (including fish kebabs and fish fingers), the proof was in the produce.

The team also took this chance to promote an unconventional ingredient: catfish. Making up just 17% of Kenya's fish production, you won't find this whiskered fish on many menus. But with supplies of wild tilapia falling desperately low, it is important that Farm Africa helps change attitudes towards eating alternative kinds of fish.

It might not be pretty, but the catfish's year-round breeding cycle and nutritional value make it the perfect choice for Kenya's fish farmers and consumers alike.

Our samples went down well, and we were pleased to see people put looks aside and enjoy this tasty source of nutritious protein. Who knew farmed fish could taste so good?

"We used the opportunity at the fair to find out about consumption habits. We wanted to find out if people were willing to eat catfish, it's excellent, but it looks better in the form of a fish finger!"

Arnoud Meijberg
Aquaculture Team Leader
Farm Africa

INCENSE: ETHIOPIA'S GAME-CHANGER

The average household in Ethiopia's Benishangul-Gumuz region earns just £68 a year. Struggling to provide for their families, many farmers are forced to cut down trees to grow crops and graze livestock. The forest is rapidly disappearing, so Farm Africa is working with local communities to create a sustainable solution.

Before Alfadel began producing incense, he relied on agriculture and gold mining to earn a living. But when his farming efforts failed, the situation started to get desperate. He was running out of options.

Farm Africa knows that incense production can give people like Alfadel the livelihood they need without having to damage their precious forest. In fact, it does the opposite.

One of the country's biggest exports, incense gives the trees a value that farmers are keen to protect. It's a game-changer: economically and environmentally.

Farm Africa taught Alfadel how to tap tree trunks and harvest incense without causing damage to the tree.

We showed him the best way to dry and store his incense and we made sure he had the tools he needed. We even linked him to local buyers.

A testament to his new-found skills, Alfadel produced an impressive 200kg of incense in his first year of business. A year later he doubled his harvest and sold 400kg for ETB19,000 (£673)!

With his income secure, Alfadel's children are now in school, and he is looking forward to sending them to college. The family is thriving, and so too can the forest they depend on.

"Next year I will strive to double my production and earnings again! Now I am strong enough to feed, educate and provide support to my children. In the near future, I will be able to send my children to college so as to make my life full of happiness and comfort."

"I came to realise that if our forest resource is destroyed, my dreams will not come true. I will do everything I can to protect the forest." Alfadel



Incense is made by harvesting resin from trees



Just £33 could help more farmers increase their incomes while protecting natural resources for future generations.

MEET THE FEMALE BEEKEEPERS KEEPING TANZANIA'S NOU FOREST IN BUSINESS

Beekeeping is an industry with potential. And for the women of Tanzania's Nou Forest, the business of beekeeping and honey production is one that's changed their lives.

Joyce is 45 and lives in Erri village in the Nou Forest. She has spent most of her life keeping cattle and growing crops - but poor soil quality means that she, and hundreds of women like her, are simply not able to grow enough to earn a living.

Many families have little choice but to cut and sell forest timber in order to earn some extra income. It is a vicious cycle that is destroying their most precious resource.

It is for this reason that Farm Africa launched a project to help communities like Joyce's find better ways to earn an income - while protecting their native Nou Forest. The solution? Beekeeping.

While traditional beehives suspended from the branches of trees already existed in Erri, it is culturally unacceptable for women to climb trees, and this made the business of beekeeping inaccessible to them. So when Farm Africa introduced 'Langstroth' hives, which sit on the ground, women were keen to get involved in honey production.

Our local team made sure that Joyce and other women in Erri were given the technical knowledge and beehives they would need to kick-start their business. And kick-start it they did. Today Joyce's Erri Jitegemee Beekeeping Group is well known for their ingenuity and creativity. Unlike other local beekeepers, they tend not to sell raw honey. Instead they look for ways to add value by making products like soap and candles.

"Last year we won a prize for entrepreneurship in the farmers' exhibition in Arusha. This made us well known, so we are now recognised at district level." Joyce

Business is booming, and Joyce is now able to earn the money she needs to support her family and send her children to school. But the real difference is one you can't buy.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, Joyce and other women like her have gained the skills and confidence they needed to become economically independent, respected members of their community.

As this Farm Africa project comes to an end, we are proud to leave Joyce and her community knowing that their success - and their precious Nou Forest - are here to stay.

"I send special appreciation to Farm Africa as an organisation for making us women seen. Before, we were invisible in the community. You have helped us increase the value of females in the community." Joyce



Langstroth beehives sit on the ground so they are easily accessible



A gift of £61 could help women like Joyce gain the skills they need to become thriving entrepreneurs.



Business is booming for Joyce and the other women of the Erri Jitegemee Beekeeping Group

FARM AFRICA SUPPORTERS RAISE £190,000 TO GROW MORE FUTURES

Last year, Farm Africa was chosen by the government to receive UK Aid Match funding to expand our Growing Futures project in Kenya. So far, our supporters have raised an incredible £190,000 – that's £380,000 when it's matched! Together we can give thousands of young farmers the chance to grow a brighter future. Thank you.

Isaac and his wife, Peninah, are one couple who know what a huge difference this support will make. Before joining our Growing Futures project, they struggled to get by – growing just enough maize to provide two meals a day. Such a poor diet meant that their children would often get sick, and without surplus crops to sell, Isaac and Peninah couldn't pay for healthcare.



Isaac with his family

But when Farm Africa showed Isaac the advantages of growing a new crop, French beans, he and Peninah knew that this could change their future. Quick to grow, French beans are a popular vegetable that can be sold for a good price. Isaac and Peninah have never looked back – because, thanks to Growing Futures, they have tripled their family's income!

"Since Peninah and I started working with Farm Africa, we've been able to expand our farming, cultivate more land and improve our home. We have a steadier income and our resources are greater." Isaac

Today Isaac and Peninah can plan for a future full of opportunity. And it is thanks to the generosity of Farm Africa supporters that we can give more young people the skills they need to lift themselves out of poverty. Training more than just farmers, we believe that this tried and tested project has the potential to create a new generation of 'agro-entrepreneurs' – who can drive the economy of the whole region.

Thank you once more to everyone who donated to our Growing Futures appeal. It is because of your support that Farm Africa will see this important project grow. We couldn't have done it without you.



Your support goes a long way in helping farmers in rural Africa transform their own lives. Thank you.

SAFEGUARDING FUTURES, WHATEVER THE WEATHER

In recent years, parts of Ethiopia have been hit hard by extreme weather, with pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities being particularly affected. But the installation of 25 automated weather stations could help take the bite out of climate shocks by enabling communities to prepare for potential catastrophes before they happen.

In 2016, the SNNP region missed two rainy seasons, resulting in water shortages and an outbreak of animal disease that severely depleted the livestock herds that pastoralist communities rely on.

While it might be impossible to control the weather, it is possible to build resilience to it. That's why, as part of a project led by Farm Africa, a total of 25 solar-powered automated weather stations have been installed across three regions of Ethiopia.

The stations will supply local communities with accurate and timely data which will help farmers predict the availability of water and grass for

their livestock to graze on, and allow government agencies to pre-empt and monitor extreme weather events.

The National Meteorological Agency of Ethiopia, who runs the stations, will use the weather data to provide woreda (county) level information on air temperature, humidity, rainfall, soil temperature and wind direction.

The project team will share weather reports with farmers through field staff and local radio stations, who translate the content into ten different languages, and make the information understandable and relevant to the communities they work with.

Equipped with reliable projections of future weather patterns, pastoralist communities can anticipate changes and develop adaptation plans, such as water conservation activities, accordingly.

So be it heavy rain or no rain, farmers in Ethiopia are ready to survive any challenge the weather throws at them.

The launching ceremony of an automatic weather station in the SNNP region



OUR VALUES

Farm Africa believes smallholder farmers can and will play a key role in achieving rural prosperity in Africa. We deliver on our belief by being:



EXPERTS.

Deep expertise and insightful evidence-based solutions are at the heart of everything Farm Africa does.



GROUNDDED.

Our experts work closely with local communities, engaging them in every level of decision-making.



IMPACTFUL.

We take a long-term view so we can deliver lasting changes for farmers and their families.



BOLD.

We model innovative new approaches and are not afraid to challenge strategies that are failing.

CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITIES



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

We tap into local communities' real-life experiences and work with them to innovate and adapt appropriate approaches that they feel a sense of ownership over.



EMPOWERING WOMEN.

We're committed to empowering women as decision-makers in communities. With women's full inclusion, our work will be far more effective.

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