GIVING CREDIT TO FOREST-FRIENDLY FARMERS

Rapid deforestation and degradation have significantly reduced forest cover across Ethiopia. With ecosystems, water supplies and the livelihoods of rural communities coming under threat, Farm Africa is working hard to help farmers protect this precious natural resource.

The Bale Eco-region is one of the areas most threatened by deforestation. An ecological ‘hotspot’, 1.6 million people rely on its forest products and agriculture to earn a living. The prognosis is bleak. Based on historic rates of deforestation, an additional 84,150 hectares of forest are predicted to be lost by 2031. That’s 135,725 football pitches! Urgent action is needed to reverse this trend.

Farm Africa has worked in the Bale Eco-region since 2006. Our aim is to help local farmers earn a decent living while protecting the precious forest in which they live. To do this, we help people learn about the production of forest-friendly products like coffee and honey. We also help communities organise conservation activities that will help preserve their surroundings for future generations.

And that’s just the beginning. As well as promoting sustainable businesses, we are also helping local people earn money from ‘carbon credits’, as part of a scheme called REDD+. This scheme gives financial reward for every tonne of carbon emissions prevented by conservation activities.

With an impressive 5.5 million tonnes verified so far, credits can be bought by companies across the world as a means of offsetting their own carbon footprint.

As we go to press, the first credits are about to go on sale on the voluntary carbon market. With the potential to fetch $3.30 per tonne, this means that up to $18 million in revenue could be made available.

Shared between Bale’s forest management cooperatives (80%) and the Ethiopian government (20%), this income will support the development of national conservation policy, whilst also enabling Bale’s farmers to invest in their forest-friendly businesses.

For coffee growers, this could help buy the drying beds and washing machines they need to improve the quality and value of their coffee beans. Such investment means that farmers can grow their incomes and build more financially secure futures. What better motivation could there be for Bale’s farmers to come together and protect their precious forest for future generations?

A gift of £111 could help more farmers learn ways to increase their incomes, while protecting precious natural resources for future generations.
In the 100 days it takes a sesame seed to grow, farmers can learn the skills they need to harvest the potential of this popular crop. That’s why, earlier this year, Farm Africa launched its Sesame Appeal. So far the appeal has raised an incredible £92,300 to help give farmers in eastern Africa the chance to turn their farms into life-changing enterprises.

A robust crop that can thrive in a dry climate, sesame is a seed in global demand. Used in products from food and drink to cosmetics and pharmaceuticals, it can open up a world of opportunity for farmers in eastern Africa.

For Clara, a Tanzanian smallholder farmer and budding businesswoman, this tiny seed has been a life-changer. Like so many others, Clara’s family used to depend on growing and selling maize to earn a living. It was hard, thankless work. Unpredictable rainfall, drought and outbreaks of pests and plant diseases make farming here extremely difficult. With little to sell, and limited knowledge of how to market her crops for a good price, Clara struggled. There were times when she couldn’t afford basic medical bills, her children’s school costs - or even food.

But since she joined Farm Africa’s sesame project, Clara has transformed her life. With the support of Farm Africa, Clara has learnt all about sesame production and marketing. She now knows how to produce high-quality sesame seeds that will sell for a good price. She’s even turning some of her sesame into drinks and snacks to boost her income.

Inspired to share her success with others, Clara has set up a group of would-be sesame specialists called ‘Mwangaza’. Acting as a mentor to the group’s 25 members, Clara is keen to help others build businesses of their own. She has even taken part in Farm Africa training where she learnt how to share her sesame knowledge using a smartphone!

As this issue of From the Field goes to print, we are happy to report that the group’s first sesame harvest has been a great success. We would like to say ‘thank you’ to everyone who donated to the appeal and took the time to send their messages of support. As you can see in the photo, Clara and the other members of the Mwangaza farmers group were touched to receive such positive words from Farm Africa supporters in the UK.

It is astounding how the right crops and knowledge can have a profound impact on someone’s life. We are also astounded by just how much Farm Africa’s supporters care. Thanks to your generosity and commitment we can give more people like Clara the chance to go from small-scale farmers to successful entrepreneurs.

Just £28 could help more smallholder farmers like Clara learn the skills they need to become successful entrepreneurs.
A LEGACY THAT LastS: LEAVING A GIFT FOR AFRICA’S FUTURE

The hallmark of Farm Africa’s work is our commitment to achieving change that lasts – not just today, but for generations to come. By choosing to remember us in your Will, you can help give communities across eastern Africa the chance to prosper. Together we can create a life-changing legacy.

Having an up to date Will is the only way to ensure that your wishes are met and your loved ones are taken care of in the future. It’s also an opportunity to make sure that causes that are important to you are not forgotten about.

By remembering Farm Africa in your Will, you help to ensure that we can continue to change lives long into the future.

Large or small, your legacy will help to give Africa’s farmers the chance to see their livelihoods, their children, and their grandchildren, thrive. With your support, we want to make sure that each new generation can be born into a life that’s ripe with opportunity – and grow up in an environment that has been protected and preserved for their future.

If you have any questions about leaving a gift to Farm Africa in your Will, do not hesitate to get in touch with our team who will be happy to help. Telephone: 020 7430 0440, Email: remember@farmafrica.org or visit www.farmafrica.org/remember for more information.

FROM AGRICULTURE TO AQUACULTURE: FISH FARMING IN KENYA

Tilapia, Kenya’s most popular freshwater fish, is an important part of the country’s diet. Once abundant in the fresh water of Lake Victoria, years of over-fishing mean that stocks of this rich and nutritious food source are now running low.

This shortage threatens the delicate balance of Lake Victoria’s ecosystem. It also means that many people no longer have access to a local, affordable source of protein that is vital for their nutrition and health.

It is for this reason that Farm Africa is helping farmers like Florence to make a success of aquaculture, or fish farming as it’s more commonly known. It really is a great solution: not only does it help families improve their diets, it also generates income, creates employment and protects the precious natural resource that is Lake Victoria from further damage.

Florence and her husband ventured into fish farming 10 years ago. They dug their first pond with the help of the Kenyan government, who gave them fingerlings (baby fish) to kick-start their business. But without specialist training and equipment, they soon found that there was little profit to be made from their pond.

In April last year, Florence made the decision to join the Farm Africa fish farming project. Our expert project team taught her feeding techniques that will help her rear bigger and better quality fish. With the technical skills in place, we also gave Florence business training to help her keep up with market trends and identify the best opportunities to sell her fish.

Today, Florence and her husband have four fishponds – each full to the brim with tilapia and catfish. Florence sells her fish at the local market and, as her business grows, so does her confidence. One day she hopes to supply her whole village with the fish they need to eat a healthy and balanced diet.

A gift of £61 could help farmers in eastern Africa learn the skills and expertise they need to build thriving businesses.
2016 was a milestone year for Farm Africa.

Our work reached 1.9 million people across eastern Africa. That's the highest number of people we have ever helped in a single year. We could only achieve this because of the generosity of our supporters, so we'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to everybody who has kindly contributed to our work.

In 2016:

10,528 BRILLIANT SUPPORTERS GAVE US A TOTAL OF £1,198,272

WE RECEIVED 15 GIFTS IN WILLS TOTALLING £169,000

609 FANTASTIC FUNDRAISERS RAISED £140,696 FROM THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

If you would like to read the full version of our 2016 Impact Report, visit www.farmafrica.org/impactreport

9th Floor
Bastion House
140 London Wall
London EC2Y 5DN

T: 020 7430 0440
E: info@farmafrica.org
W: www.farmafrica.org

Registered charity no. 326901 (England & Wales)

Photo credits: © Farm Africa/ Lisa Murray/ Nichole Sobecki