

# THE SEED NEWSLETTER



YOUNG FARMERS'  
FEDERATION OF UGANDA

Shaping the future of farming.



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## Who is a Farmer; Lifestyle vs Entrepreneurship?

"A farmer is a person who grows crops and rears animals". This is what comes to mind when one is asked to define who a farmer is. In other definitions, a farmer also called an "agriculturist"; is a person engaged in agriculture, raising living organisms for food or raw materials. The term usually applies to people who do some combination of raising field crops, orchards, vineyards, poultry, or other livestock. A farmer might own the farmed land or might work as a laborer on land owned by others. For the majority of people in developing countries, farming can be traced back to ethnicity and they have carried on with farming as a way of life and not majorly as a source of income (this is widely known as subsistence farming). Some theories call this gardening not farming; defining gardening as the growing of crops for homestead consumption. while farming as the cultivation of land that involves transaction after the sale of the produce.

Notwithstanding how farming is defined, the economy today demands more from farmers than just being able to feed their families; the economy today demands more of farmers as

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“Agriculture not only gives riches to a nation, but the only riches she can call her own”

*Samuel Johnson,  
1830 -1909, American  
Agricultural Chemist*

compared to gardeners, those who will be able to contribute to the gross domestic product of the country. In the case of Uganda where over 70% of the population works in the agricultural sector, there is a need to leverage on the labor force to create gainful returns for the economy. 24% budget contribution is not proportionate enough and this grossly affects the production factors in the sector. Despite the low funding to the sector, Uganda still demands a lot from the farmer because agriculture is the backbone of our nation.

In the early ages, the development of agriculture enabled the human population to grow many times larger than could be sustained by hunting and gathering. Currently, over one-third of the world's workers are employed in agriculture, second only to the service sector, although the number of agricultural workers in developed countries has decreased significantly over the centuries. The sector employs less than 10% of the population in developed countries due to the high levels of mechanization. As we embrace the digital age and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, must Africa focus on giving up the work of 2/3 of its population and hand it over to machines; or we can invent a different model, a model which embraces our way of life!

Even as we define what farming is for us in the African context, there is a need to draw a clear line between farming to make profit and gainfully contribute to the economy versus farming for satisfaction or as a form of prestige. What does it profit if one spends 25% of their salary to maintain a farm just to fit within the circles in society. Whether a farmer is placed in different

hierarchies of the society for example upper, middle or lower classes, being a farmer should not only be based on the accessibility to production factors such as land, capital and labour but also the ability to make profit.

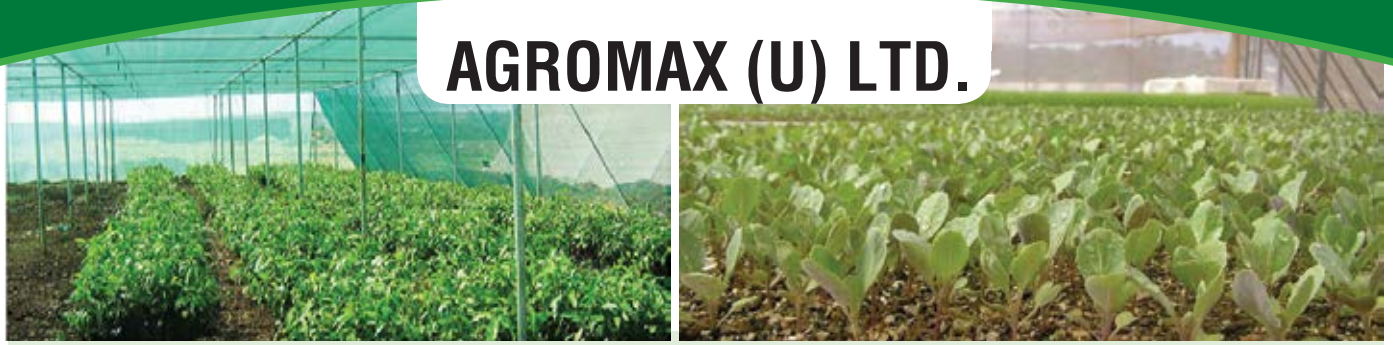
Previously, farmers were mainly identified through land ownership and having access to labour; today, access to more factors of production such as capital and machinery, and the ability to innovate and take risks is shaping the modern farmer.

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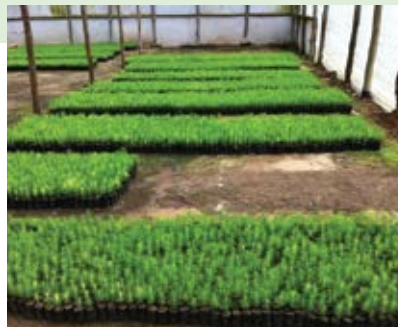


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## SECRETARIAT



## COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

Knowledge and skills transfer are one of the main factors for development especially in the grassroots structures of any organization even and with the current education systems which is less practical, few individuals have the opportunity to experience the soft skills like communication and leadership that facilitates their work and on that note therefore, that equipping leaders with these skills will enable them easily train and pass on vital information to the member.

A building is as strong as its foundation; For the Young Farmers' Federation to boast of its impact, its presence must be felt right from the grass root levels to the top. From the 25th – 27th February 2020, UNYFA organized a Communication training to equip DYFA's TOTs and leaders with communication,

facilitation and leadership skills to foster their engagement with the members of the associations they represent and to build capacity of UNYFA leaders at grassroots in effecting peer to peer learning sessions as a key aspect when training farmers.

Building capacities of the youth in the various grassroots levels will not only transform the livelihoods of the members but also strengthen their organization. From the three-day workshop which was facilitated by FACE trainers convened 40 participants, DYFA leaders were able to understand the qualities of a good facilitator and to draw their road map highlighting the next steps they are to undertake when back to the respective associations and initiatives but in mind the diversity in membership across different regions.

The workshop was a complete success as evidenced by Kanungu DYFA which has already taken on the lead to conduct the training on Communication and Leadership at their DYFA. This was a comment from one of the DYFA leaders regarding the step Kanungu DYFA has taken; "We cannot be effective in our work without professionals in different leadership structures of UNYFA from grassroots up to national level; what you are doing is so inspiring, I know that if all our DYFAs follow your lead we shall surely shape the future of farming"



## GEN-X FARM SUCCESSION; A MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE FAMILY FARMS

Agriculture is one of the major drivers of economic development in most African countries; however, the sector is threatened by the challenges of land degradation, poor yields and a fast-growing population, coupled with very limited investment in agribusiness, lack of adequate skills, and climate change. The sector is further threatened by spiking population which results into insurmountable pressure on farm lands. The dwindling farm sizes over the last past decades has made it nearly impossible for majority of family farms to remain sustainable because of the model in which land or farms are passed on to the next generation.

With the support from the German Farmers Federation (DBV), the Andreas Hermes Akademie (AHA) and the Young Farmers' Federation of Uganda (UNYFA) is piloting a farm succession project in Uganda to collect data on the status quo regarding current practices, policies, laws and gaps and site specific tools will be developed which will be adopted to facilitate implementation of farm succession, not only in Uganda but also across the African Continent. The program is funded by GIZ and the German Ministry of economic cooperation and development (BMZ).

From the 10-12th March 2020, the federation conducted a Situation Analysis Workshop to gather information from various stakeholders in the Government, legal sector, civil society, development partners, young farmers and old farmer.

Through the workshop, it became clear that inclusive value chains of both youths and women is key for generation farming and farmers still need more sensitization and training in aspects of Laws and financial literacy.

"We have to consider farming as a business not a hobby as this is what is protected by the law" As highlighted by Council Mark Shyaka. The workshop was an eye opener for all the participants regarding the laws and from the various testimonies shared, it was evident that in the heart of every farmer, lies the desire to leave a legacy. No farmer wants their farm to die with them.



*Participants in a group discussion at the recent GenX Situation analysis workshop*



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# INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

## THE 85TH INTERNATIONAL GREEN WEEK

### FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY

International Green week is the world's biggest exhibition of the food, agriculture and gardening industries. The 85th International Green Week (IGW) took place in Berlin, Germany from 17-26 January 2020. The renowned international fair on food, agriculture and gardening welcomes approximately 400 000 visitors every year, and has showcased new developments and innovation since its foundation in 1926.

Besides showcasing the different products and high-level technology, the expo has an objective of culture and tradition where the different cultures are exhibited by the participants of the expo all through-out the event. Participants of the first cohort of the International Young Farmers' Exchange Farmers (IYFEP) were fully engaged at this prestigious event for farmers. All the participants took rounds to speak about the work on our partners AHA and Schorlemer Shifting at their respective stalls within the event. Also present at the Green Week were the President, CEO and Programs Manager of UNYFA travelled to have a feel and represent UNYFA and Uganda at large.

The International Young Farmers' Exchange participants had an opportunity to tour around the exhibition that had more 1,800 exhibitors and more than 100,000 products in line of food and beverage, representatives of the food industry, wholesalers, retailers and restaurants, Importers of agricultural products, specialists from all areas of agriculture, forestry, fishing and horticulture and Political and administrative experts.



*International Young Farmers Exchange participants meet the German minister for Economic cooperation and development (BMZ) to share their experiences during the #IGW2020*







*Kabiito Denis with young farmers at the German African Agribusiness Forum*

## THE 6TH GERMAN-AFRICAN AGRIBUSINESS FORUM (GAAF)

The German-African Agribusiness Forum (GAAF) is an exchange and networking platform bringing together policymakers and professionals working in agribusiness from Africa, Germany, and around the globe. This year, the 6th GAAF was held on 20th January in Berlin, Germany in the course of the 85th International Green Week (IGW), under the patronage of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Germany. The Forum whose theme was "Driving private sector engagement for Africa's Agriculture," was organized by the German-African Business Association (Afrika-Verein) and the German Agribusiness Alliance.

It was highlighted at the forum that the transformation of agriculture largely depends on the proper approach to the value chain development and considering the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders along the value chain. Africa was well represented at the forum by AU officials, Pan Africa Farmers' Organization and East African Farmers' Federation President, Ms. Elizabeth Nsimadala, Rt. Hon. Gen. Al Hajji Moses Ali, First Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy Leader of Government Business in Parliament who was the Guest of honour, our very own Young Farmers' Federation of Uganda CEO, Mr. Kabiito Denis and Mr. Olengo Felix, an exchange farmer in the first cohort of the International Young Farmer's Exchange Program.

In his address, Rt. Hon. Gen. Al Hajji Moses Ali said that the objectives of the Forum were well thought out and were in line with the Uganda Government's Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan (ASSP) which is fully aligned to the National Development Plan (NDP II) and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) that puts

emphasis on increasing agriculture production and productivity, market access and creating a favorable legal, policy and institutional framework for the operation of both the public and private sectors in agriculture. Also underscored at the forum was how Africa can leverage on digital transformation in order to unlock its agri-food potential.

## WFO GYMNASIUM



*UNYFA CEO, Kabiito Denis at the graduation ceremony of the First Edition of the WFO Gymnasium at WFO headquarters in Rome in February 2020*

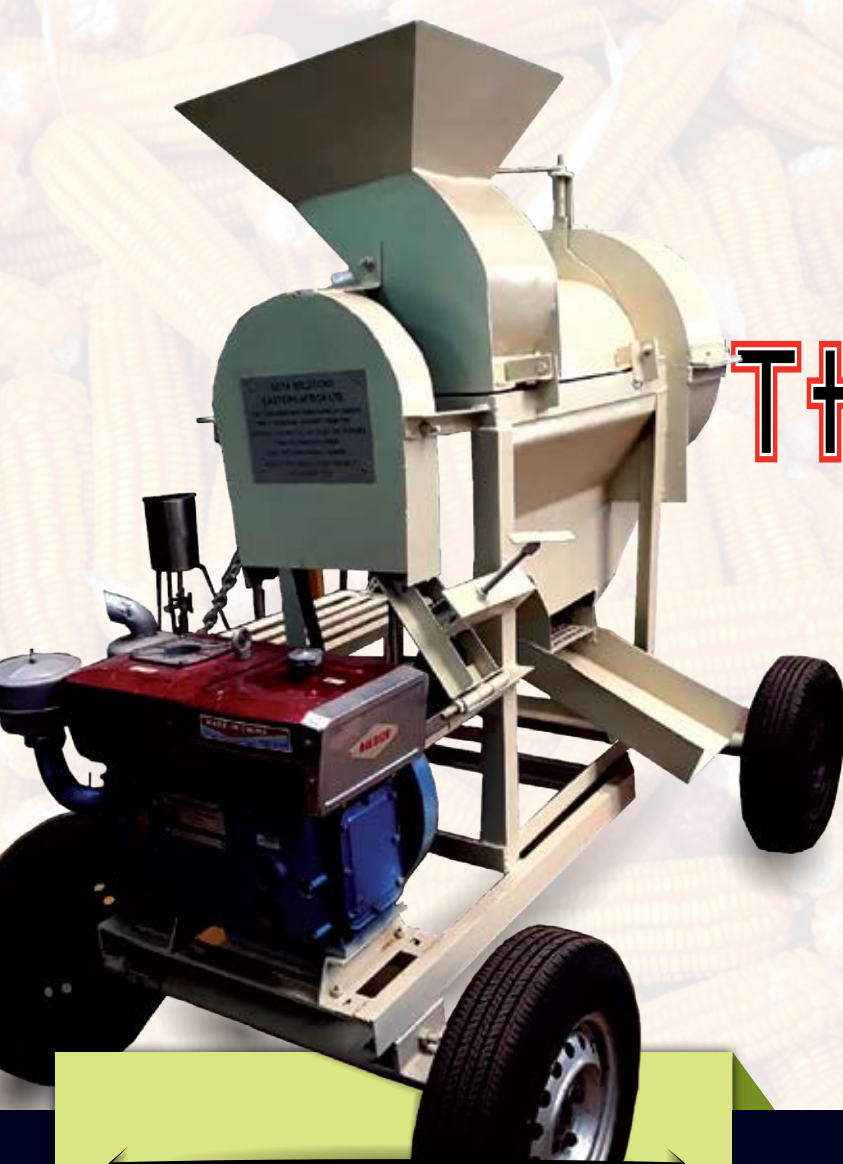
## Training young farmers to become future farmer leaders

The WFO Gymnasium Programme is a high-level capacity building programme aimed at training young farmers to become future leaders in the agricultural sector: and also, to gain exposure to the reality of the global negotiations on agriculture. Today's young farmers play a critical role for the achievement of global food security, tackling climate change while improving the viability level on the farm.

During each edition of the programme which lasts for 30 months, 20 young farmers from WFO member organisations worldwide meet at least twice per year on the occasion of international conferences related to agriculture; young farmers receive lessons from international leaders who work in the various policy areas at global level.

Our CEO, Mr. Kabiito Denis was part of the first edition of the programme which started in October 2017 and ended in February 2020 with a graduation ceremony at WFO headquarters in Rome.





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# DISTRICT YOUNG FARMERS' ASSOCIATION - DYFA

## VERMICULTURE AGRI-BUSINESS VILLAGE MODEL

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Vermiculture is the rearing of worms for resale. Vermiculture unlike other bio-science innovations that tend to require a lot of initial startup capital can be carried out at a shoe string budget; it is a low hanging fruit that can benefit the millions of resource poor farmers leading to spin off and business incubation along the value chain. Earthworm is rich in nutrients such as protein, magnese, zinc and many others, whereas true insects falls under phylum anthropoda earthworm belongs to phylum Annelida.

Anywalonino Earthworm Farmers' Co-operative Society Ltd is a legal farmers institution which was registered in 2019 under CAP.112 of the co-operative societies Act in Uganda under the Ministry of trade, industry and co-operatives and are also registered members of Young Farmers Federation of Uganda. The co-operative is located 03 km Lira Kampala road, Adyel Division in Lira Municipality with over 60 members.

The goal of the cooperative is to evolve an inclusive development strategy using Vermiculture to stir up growth using bio-based business incubation in Lango Sub-region leading to improved livelihoods and promote self-employment for youth, women, elderly and persons with disability.

After conduction a feasibility study, Anywalonino Earthworm Farmers' Co-operative Society Ltd realized the gap is nutrition for poultry and animals. Majority of feeds producing companies rely heavily on silver fish as a source of protein. Silver fish is not only a source of protein for animals but also for human beings and so indirectly affects the price of poultry feeds. Worm village has introduced a genetic breeding and multiplication process of specifically red worm species (*Esenia Foetida*) found abundantly in most wetlands around the country using standard vermicomposting system, feeding them with local available bio-degradable agro waste (bio-waste conversion) to produce number of products such as;

- worm meal for formulating poultry feeds
- fish feeds
- vermicompost tea (organic pesticide)
- vermicompost rich organic fertilizer (has micro and macro-nutrients that plants need)

- IMO (Indigenous Micro-Organism) used as appetite booster for pigs, poultry and other livestock, it also helps in repelling smelly organic waste.

We are also involved in fish farming using best management practice, poultry rearing, bottle gardening, mount sack gardening here we are managing tomatoes farm (Padma F1) for St Kizito Nursery and Primary School located in Lira municipality.



Some of the products of Anywalonino Earthworm Farmers' Co-operative Society Ltd

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

##### Emmanuel Odur

Board Chairman - Anywalonino Earthworm Farmers' Co-operative Society.

Bachelor - Development Studies, Gulu University

Diploma - Business Administration, Makerere University Business School.

##### Formerly

Chairman of Lira Municipal Youth Council | Senior Bio Gas Technician of Crestanks Ltd | Marketing Manager Bio-Agro Consult LLP | Managing partner Fortress Farm Kayunga | Bio-science researche on earthworm, | Bio gas researche with National Water and Sewerage Co-operation





# OPPORTUNITIES

## INTERNATIONAL YOUNG FARMERS' EXCHANGE PROGRAM

### HARBERT MAWEJJE; FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE ON A GERMAN FARM

I was very excited when I got the news that I had made it to the final list of the first cohort of the International Young Farmers' Exchange Program. I was hosted on Hofladen Coenen, a 30- hectare farm located in Kaarst, Driescherfeld Dusseldorf. The farm is mainly known for growing winter crops such as Grunkohl and Kartoffeln (Irish potatoes). The farm also had a farm shop where they sold their products directly.

My first impression when I got to my host farm was how welcoming they were; Mr. Rainer, my host who knew very little English tried to speak some English on my arrival just to make me feel welcome. His children went an extra mile

to always use google translator so that we were able to communicate.

What impressed me most about this farm was the level of mechanization on the farm which exceeded my expectation in that every little work was mechanized. We had been briefed about the high level of mechanization on German farms but this was beyond what I expected. Every task on the farm is timed to determine how much in profits can be gained from the task. Doing a given task should be relative to the returns from it.

The most memorable and life changing experience for me was learning to work with over 15 people, none of which spoke English for 3 months. My worst experience was having to work in the cold since it was winter time and what shocked me most was eating popcorn with sugar!

I am grateful to UNYFA for this great opportunity which has opened up more doors for me.

## ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL YOUNG FARMERS' EXCHANGE PROGRAM (IYFEP)

The International Young Farmers' Exchange Program is a 3 months internship program for all young farmers in Uganda who would want to have exposure and further understanding of Global Farms and Food Systems especially in Germany. German Farmers also come and are hosted on the Ugandan farms to learn about tropical agriculture. The qualifying Ugandan participants have an all-expenses paid 3 months stay in German by

Schorlermer Foundation of the German Farmers' Association (DBV) with special support from the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

## OPPORTUNITIES



### Youth Agribusiness Tours

The Youth Agribusiness tours which takes place twice a year in June and in November has a diversity of participants; from all regions in Uganda and also International participants. With a subsidized fee of only ugx250,000/-, participants get an opportunity to learn, share experiences, knowledge and skills from peers but also seasoned farmers, expose participants to farming system diversities, techniques and methods across the various Agricultural value chains.

### Farmer to Farmer exchange visits at district level

Similar to the National Youth Agri-business Tour, these tours happen at district level where District Young Farmers' Associations organize visits to various agri-enterprises within and out-side district. Through this, they are able to share their experiences and challenges and come up with solutions.

### National Agricultural Show

In July every year, the biggest agricultural show in Uganda where farmers and stakeholders in the farming fraternity show-case the best innovations, ideas, skills and opportunities in the sector takes place in Jinja. Members of UNYFA have opportunity to be sponsored to access the show grounds and also have free exhibition space during the trade show.

### Youth Agribusiness Symposium

The largest national event that brings together youth involved in farming, Agricultural scholars / researchers, development partners and other key players in the sector, to table challenges and engage in constructive dialogue that aim at exchanging of ideas, innovations and opportunities to foster youth participation in the green gold sector (Agriculture).

### Internship at the Young Farmers' Federation of Uganda Coordination Office

Get an opportunity to get practical hands on experience working in a farmer organization. Through this internship, you will be exposed to working in farmer communities and also with international interns.

### Agribusiness video Competition

Make a 3-5minute video on your farm, capturing your story as a young farmer on your phone smart phone

### Young Farmers' Champion

FAO in partnership with young farmer organizations will select the most inspiring youth farmers from every region. Do have what it takes!





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