

# MIGS VEGETABLE FARM UPDATE



The year 2016 was a very busy year for us on all fronts. It was the year that the dream for our farm began to materialize.

The highlights of the year have to be the fact that we have been able to:-

1. Complete the installation of both greenhouse and Net-house.
2. Erect a pump room and connected the central irrigation pump that can pump water to our current installed capacity and future expansions of up to 5 hectares of production capacity.
3. We have also installed all the water supply pipelines from the pump room to the Greenhouse, Net-house and open fields.
4. We have been able to carry out a second and third tomato production pilot projects. While our major crop is the tomato for now, we have undertaken to pilot some other crops (like Lettuce, watermelons and Broccoli) that are in demand to help enrich our knowledge and enhance our marketing strategy. These pilots affords us the opportunity to train the workers, learn some basic techniques and test the market.
5. The most encouraging thing about all these is that we did all the installations ourselves with the guidance of the Israeli consultant, helping us to both cut cost and also increase our knowledge of the processes. This will be useful for future expansion.
6. We have also sank 2 additional boreholes and install a solar pump to one of the boreholes and have also connected all the boreholes to our 40,000 liters water storage tanks. This has enhanced our ability to pump and store water for farm use.

The completion of these installations means that we are able to commence production in all the facilities and even on the open field this year.

To this end we have planted a nursery of over 3000 tomato seedlings and have now transplanted them into the Nethouse. We have also planted 1000 cucumbers, 1000 chilli peppers, 500 lettuce, and some broccoli in the Nethouse, along with 100 watermelons, and 1000sq meters of okra on open field.

The plan is for these crops to fruit and be ripe for harvest from around March to September. We also plan to plant another Nursery batch In February 2017 to enable us keep the production cycle all year round.

As we do all these, we are building a staff team that are both learning on the job and growing in their understanding of team-work and the vision of the farm. Currently the farm employs 8 staff (2 security men, 4 farm hands, one production supervisor and a technical supervisor who doubles as the driver).

### **Focus for 2017**

Our focus for 2017 will therefore be production, marketing and customer development. We therefore plan to focus on only the activities that help us attain these goals. We have identified our major needs for the year to include

1. Expanding our water reservoir capacity.
  - through an earth Dam,
  - additional borehole and plastic Tanks
  - Or irrigation pump and with a suitable filter to enable us utilize the water from the adjoining river.

We will have to decide on the most economical option.

2. In a bid to pursue the marketing as a priority, our strategy is to build a critical market base that will ensure that our overheads and production costs are guaranteed. We plan to do this by raising a customer base from our primary target market: working class women within the FCT. Our goal is to raise 100 women who will pay upfront and collect at least 5kg of tomatoes weekly for 52 weeks at about 250 naira (\$0.8) per kg all year round through our "Fresh vegetable basket" value proposition.  
Right now we already have 15 women subscribers and are hoping to reach our target before the end of the second quarter of the year.  
We also hope to add other veggies other than tomatoes into the basket as time goes by.
3. We intend to use a special delivery crate that will not only make distribution convenient, but also set us apart in a competitive market.
4. The last priority is to get more farm hands resident within the farm estate as a community, increasing security, proximity to the farm and ensuring closer supervision of farm produce. To this end we plan to build more staff housing units this year.

Although these needs mean we still need to make some capital injection into the farm, our plan is to try and execute these projects as time goes by and we begin to enjoy more cash flow.

The New Year 2017 promises to be eventful, but we hope sincerely that this is the year we begin to see more production related activities and begin to have reasonable cash flow.

Thanks

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