

Soil Testing

It is important to get your soil tested to check if the nutrients in it are good for growth. Soil testing is like sending your soil to the doctor. It is checked to see if it is healthy and full of the correct nutrients.

Most soil in Kenya is acidic. This means that adding fertiliser does not always work. If soil has a low pH – which means it is acidic - you need to add lime one month before planting to improve the soil and give you good yields. You can also add TSP or DAP fertilizer when planting- about 5 grams – or one bottle cap per hole to make sure the phosphorous levels are good. When this is mixed along with manure the crops will get a good start.

SMS ‘SOIL TESTING to 30606 for more information.



TSP fertiliser is added to either the field or the hole where you are going to plant your crops.

Solar Lamps

At night Gladys likes to use her sewing machine. She uses a kerosene lamp to give her light. This light is bad for her health as it makes her eyes sore and is bad for her lungs.

Instead she can use a d.Light Design solar lamp to give her light. The lamp gets its energy from the sun during the day for free, and then at night gives a brighter light than Kerosene. These lamps are good for your health and are better value as you don’t need to keep buying kerosene for them. They are also safe to have around children and won’t harm them.

The lamps have 4 settings:
Setting 1 lasts for 100 hours (low light)
Setting 2 lasts for 12 hours
Setting 3 lasts for 6 hours
And the brightest, Setting 4 lasts for 4 hours.

SMS ‘SOLAR’ to 30606 for more information.



The d.light Solar Lamp has 4 settings depending on brightness.

Produced by Mediae





Watch us on citizen television on
Saturday 1.30 - 2.00pm (English)
Sunday 1.30 - 2.00pm (Kiswahili)

For another Leaflet or more information SMS 30606



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Series 3: Episode 5

Joseph & Gladys Farm – NAKURU

This leaflet contains information on:
Building animal pens, soil testing, maize groups, rainwater harvesting,
solar lights & growing tomatoes.



Animal Pens

Different animals should not be kept in the same boma. Keeping different animals together means the spread of disease is very high. Never keep chickens above other animals.

Good Animal Management

It is important that the animals have a clean and healthy place to live because disease can kill them. Dung and mud can make animals very sick – clean the animals boma or house often.

The animals also need clean troughs to drink and eat from. Make sure their troughs are big enough for them to reach the food and water easily.

For chickens, it is important that there is good ventilation and a nice place for them to lay their eggs.

Feeding The Correct Food

It is important to feed the animals the right food including fodder, dry feed and supplements. It is very important to not give your animals bad food, such as rotten maize stalks.

Rotten or mouldy maize can contain aflatoxins. Aflatoxins grow on rotten or damp maize and grain. Aflatoxins can kill animals and people, or make them very sick.



Each type of animal needs a special house and cannot all live together.



It is important to feed your animals fresh fodder, rather than rotten fodder

Growing Maize

Maize is a staple crop grown throughout Kenya. Many farmers have trouble finding a good market for their produce. You can join a maize farmer group to get a better market, and help from your neighbours.

Joining A Grain Group

By joining a Grain Group you can get better prices for your produce as well as joining together with other local farmers to learn more about farming in the region. A group can be as little as 5 members or as high as 30.

A Grain Group works by farmers growing the maize on their own farms, but then selling it together in a bigger quantity for a better price to a good buyer.

There are many advantages of joining a maize group – you get help from your members and better strength as a farmer selling to the market.

Storing Your Grain

The farmers group in the episode were making more money by storing their grain in a warehouse storage facility in Nakuru. By storing the grain in a safe and secure place the farmers can then choose to sell the grain whenever they want for a good price instead of quickly for a poor price.

This means they will get a better price for it by selling at a time when the market is better, for example during the winter months.

When the farmers harvested the wheat, they would have sold it at 1000/- for a 90kg bag. However, because they stored it and then sold it at a time when the price was higher they sold it for 3400/- for a 90kg bag. The storage of the grain only cost 200/-.

This means that the farmers made an extra 2200/- per 90kg bag of grain in profit. What could you do with 2200/-??

For any extra information on starting a Grain Group, talk to the East Africa Grain Council.

Farming & Banking

KCB can offer advice to Grain Groups and can even offer them special accounts. KCB can offer the loans to the farmers to grow their business by using the stored grain as ‘collateral’ or security. The more they have stored, the more they can borrow.

The Tuungane Account has many advantages that make it more likely that as a group farmers are more likely to succeed. The bank can also give out insurance again crop failure. This means that if your crops fail, the bank will help you by moving the loan payment to help you survive until the next harvest.



When a farmer joins a Grain Group he can expect to get better prices for his crop.



Storing grain means you can sell it when the prices are higher so you get more money for your crop.



The Tuungane account at KCB is good for Grain groups.

Growing Tomatoes

There are many ways which can lead to failure in tomato planting, including the wrong type of soil, disease, pests and lack of the right seeds.

Stopping Diseases

Using good seeds is important as these can be the very first reason why the crops fail. You must choose varieties which suit the area that you are in, including weather conditions and types of pests. There are many types of diseases and pests that can ruin a tomato crop. Nodes on the roots mean you have pests in the soil which can kill the plant.

Blight is also a problem for tomatoes. Early and Late Blight can cause growth problems and can also kill the plant. Early Blight comes in the first 3 of weeks of the plant’s life, while Late Blight comes when it is mature. Blight is recognised by dry, dead leaves. Without good leaves, the plants will not make tomatoes.

Another problem are Boll Worms. Boll Worms are a type of caterpillar that eat tomatoes. Use sprays made for Boll Worms to kill these pests – Boll Worms ruin tomatoes so you cannot sell any.

Hybrid Seed Varieties

To stop diseases, Joseph plants a new type of seed variety, call **Kilele F1**. Kilele F1 is a hybrid variety that is pest and disease tolerant and will give high yields. With one acre you can harvest about 30,000 kilos of tomatoes. Kilele F1 will also harvest after only 10 weeks, instead of 12-16, meaning a quicker profit to the farmer and a good yield even with a drier season.

Planting Tomatoes

- To plant your seed correctly, start by planting in a nursery.
- Dig shallow trenches 6 inches apart, add manure and then add the seeds,
- Spread dry mulch (dry grass) over the top, avoiding green mulch which brings insects and mould. Sprinkle with lots of water.
- After 30 days, move your seedlings to the field. Make sure the field is weed free. Make each hole 2 feet by 2 feet apart and mix the soil with manure and 2 caps/10g of TSP/DAP fertiliser. Water again.
- Finally add a drench of ACTARA. This drench will protect the tomatoes against all types of insects and disease such as aphids and whitefly. ACTARA comes in a pre-measured packet, which you mix with 20 litres of water. This will protect the plants for 42 days.

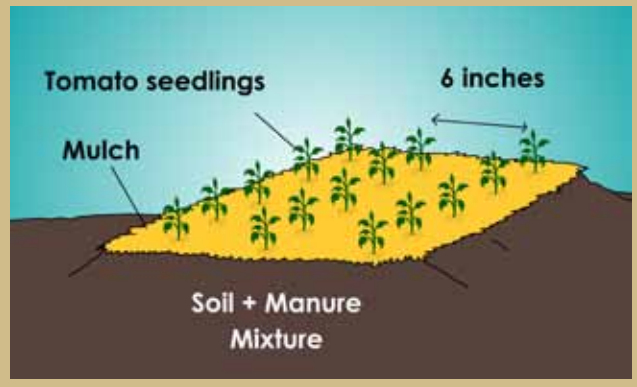
SMS ‘TOMATOES’ to 30606 for more information



Boll Worms can destroy an entire tomato crop.



Kilele F1 seeds are a hybrid variety that is disease and pest tolerant.



Planting your seeds correctly is important to them growing up strong.