



Mount Kenya Growers, Making a Difference

Kenyan Growers are situated throughout the country, as they make the most of natural environs best suited to a sensational variety of flowers. From the Foothills of Mount Kenya, the most known shores of Lake Naivasha and the Plains of Athi; they are making Kenya proud by producing world class goods.

The common soil in the area are mostly Lithosols, histosols, nitisols and andosols which are shallow to moderately deep and on slightly lower areas, soil of moderate of high fertility occur. The locale is dry (600mm of rainfall) but very productive with altitude of average 2550m; very best suited for sensational variety of flowers and vegetables.

Horfresh Crew visited the slopes of Mt. Kenya to view the beauty of the slant and had the pleasure visiting flower farms which had an exceptional difference compared to other portion of the country.

In the northern foothills of the majestic Mt Kenya, Buuri District, twenty minutes from sleepy but colourful town of Nanyuki, growers are giving a pat on the back to their source of existence. The horticultural farms are appreciating their employees, giving back to the environment and the community even as they make the dry land a picturesque.

The farms which include Timaflor Ltd, Agrifresh Ltd, Batian Flowers Ltd, Uhuru Flowers, Kisima Farm, Homegrown (Siraji Farm), Lobelia Farms Ltd and others are involved in activities that are ensuring the environment within the farms and the neighboring areas is protected from degradation.

These growers have known the secret: Roses do not just grow; they need good environment, healthy soil and clean water. "We collect and store rainwater from the greenhouses roofs to use during the dry season. We monitor our daily use of water, not using more than water abstraction permit allows thus the local people continue to have full access to the river and ground water". Says Mr. Julius Riungu, Timaflor farm Manager.

Every year growers plant trees, collect all plastic and take to a recycling factory, burn pesticide containers, compose all leftover plant material and actively support local communities.

Farms in the area are protecting the fauna and flora, since they are of inestimable economic, socio-cultural, aesthetic and scientific value and where possible they allow the fauna to interact with farm activities especially those which rarely interfere with farm

activities. The animals & birds along Timau River buffer Zone and the animal corridor include bees, birds, monkeys, few leopards & on rare occasions buffalos.

Farms participate in community wildlife conservation programmes e.g. Lewa Marathon; an annual marathon aimed at raisings funds for conserving threatened species. They are also involved in wildlife conservation in cooperation with the Laikipia Wildlife Trust fund & Ngare Ndare Forest Trust Fund.

Most of the farms border the Timau forest and they are involved in the forest protection programmes. They carry out tree planting exercises on parts of their farms and they have also grown tree nurseries. They plant indigenous trees such as Olive trees, Cabbage trees, Dandonia, Red cedar, Rose wood, Black wattle etc.

In supporting the community, the farms provides piped water, sponsor sports activities a good example being football and also form membership of Timau Community Policy whereby they have bought a 4 wheel drive Land Rover which is used to facilitate police mobility and random security spot checks.

One of the farms in the area whose best result is their number one priority as they adhere to quality for life is Timaflor Ltd which was started in 2006. Timaflor, is a member of Kenya Flower Council where they are Silver certified; an achievement they got through implementing strict measures in environmental protection, adherence to labour laws, workers rights and waste disposal among others.

They have 70 hectares under production of roses with about 14 varieties of roses in total. According to Julius, the farm has a workforce of 1050 employees. Their success is they believe in people and simplicity.

They ensure workers are cholinesterase tested and that the spray team is rotated after every three months from active spraying to other duties not involving chemicals.

The staffs go through in-house trainings in all aspects of producing environmentally friendly flowers and it is mandatory for the employees to use the right protective clothing when working. They are committed to protection, health and safety of the employees and the surrounding communities.

This is a testimony that Mount Kenya growers are always the peak.

