

Ushering Youth into Agri-Business



(L-R) Amiran's Head of Agro Division Yariv Kedar and Managing Director Pinhas Moskovich shake hands with YEDF's CEO Juma Mwatata and the Chairman James Gitau Singh

With the aim of offering the Amiran Farmer's Kit (AFK), which has captured the imagination of so many in Kenya, to the youth, the Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF) has entered into partnership with Amiran Kenya Ltd launching the AgriVijana Loan, which in its first phase has been allocated Ksh 150 million.

At the celebratory MOU signing between the two organizations, Mr. Juma Mwatata, CEO of the Youth Fund said, "The reason for giving these sector specific loans is that despite strides towards industrialization, Kenya is still an agri-based economy".

At the signing, attended by members of the YEDF Board, senior Amiran representatives and representatives of the Media, the Chairman of the Fund Mr. James Gitau told those in attendance: "Starting last year the Fund has focused on providing sector specific loan products to the youth, to enable them take advantage of their talents as well as resources in their locality. To this end the Fund is actively exploring partnerships with likeminded institutions. We are

therefore glad to formalize this partnership with Amiran Kenya Limited. Under this arrangement the Youth Enterprise Development Fund has established a new loan product, AgriVijana Loan."

He revealed that the programme is expected to involve over 5000 youth in the first phase, "This new project will create instant jobs for them and will also improve the country's food security considerably".

The loan will finance two youth groups per constituency to buy a complete AgriVijana Amiran Farmers Kit from Amiran Kenya. "We expect that thousands of youth will be attracted to this cool farming concept and therefore be gainfully engaged", asserted Mr Gitau.

The AgriVijana Amiran Farmer's Kit, contains 2 greenhouses, a drip irrigation system for the greenhouses and 400m of open field, a water tank, plant support system, Gold Medal Seeds to be grown inside the greenhouses and in the open field, high quality fertilizers for one season, crop protection products for one season, a farmer's sprayer, nursery set, health and safety protective gear, training, agro-support, and AFK insurance from CIC Insurance.

In his speech during the celebration to mark the 5th anniversary of the founding of the Youth Enterprise Development Fund, President Mwai Kibaki advised the youth to take advantage of the AgriVijana Loan and to engage



YEDF Chairman James Gitau Singh speaking during the launch of the AgriVijana Loan

agricultural technologies. He added that Amiran will always be ready to work towards ensuring that the country is food secure through agriculture.

The loan allocated by the YEDF to acquire an AgriVijana AFK is Kshs. 358,344. The group is expected to raise 10% of the loan amount. Repayment will start after a 4 month grace period, which is adjustable in the case that the crops planted by the group take longer to mature. The loan shall be repaid in three cycles totaling 3 years. The security of

the loan will be the financed equipment, assignment of sales and personal guarantees by group members.

The groups will be picked through competitive bidding having met a set of conditions like the group's composition must be 70% youth (18-35 years) with the leader being youth and must be registered in the constituency it's applying the loan from. Other qualifications include access to land and water and knowledge or experience in agriculture.

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Most youth perceive farming as something one does to survive or when one retires. As part of the AgriVijana loan, YEDF and Amiran will embark on an advocacy campaign that aims to raise awareness among the youth to the financial opportunities that modern agribusiness offers.

Pinhas Moskovich, Managing Director Amiran Kenya Ltd said, "The average age of farmers

is very high, this is because youth do not see a future in agriculture, they see it as work to do in retirement, yet it's an industry driving other industries." He expounded that technical support is needed to make farming profitable and attractive to the youth. "Using new technologies, we can show how Kenyan youth can make lots of money for themselves from farming. They wouldn't need to move into towns anymore to look for jobs".

Mr Moskovich said that the AFK was created with the aim of allowing small scale farmers affordable access to modern



Amiran's Managing Director Pinhas Moskovich and YEDF CEO Juma Mwatata signing the AgriVijana Loan MoU

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The Amiran Farmers Kit available through the AgriVijana Loan