



Bigot Flowers Kenya Ltd, team

Bigot Flowers Ltd, grows nearby community besides flowers

The corporate world has moved from just money making endeavor to the improvement of the labour welfare and assisting of their neighboring society, in order to have a better yield of produce and a friendly environment to undertake production.

Bigot Flowers Kenya Limited, one of the Fair-trade certified farms in the region, has initiated a fair trade premium program for workers empowerment and community development within Naivasha region.

The Fairtrade venture aims to protect and benefit workers on flowers farms by working with certified farms to ensure decent working conditions for their employees and protecting workers' rights. These rights encompass economic, environmental and social dimensions of working conditions but also aim to amplify and strengthen the voice and choices of workers' themselves.

According to Bigot Flowers Kenya Limited General Manager Jagtap KT, "Fairtrade sales help generate an additional Fairtrade premium for workers to invest in projects of their choice."

Some of the projects they have undertaken include, home improvement loans to workers, bursaries, construction of classrooms within Naivasha and donation of water tanks to the community around. This is geared towards helping the people living within the vicinities of the flower farms improve their livelihood.

Bigot Flowers usually offers an opportunity of 80% bursary support for a maximum of two students in a family. The money is usually oversighted by a Fairtrade premiums committee that ensures that the premium funds are properly utilized. The first beneficiaries of the project are joining university this year as Bigot Flower Kenya Limited

Human resource Manager Charity Opon notes, "We are proud to have the first bunch of the students we sponsored since secondary school join campus this year."

The firm also bestows bursary of upto 60% to its employees who cannot make it to college or university while offering technical skills, training in mechanics and hairdressing so that when one leaves the corporation there is value added in him or her. "We aim at having a workforce that is equipped in all aspects of life not only flower growing." The Human resource Manager notes.

The Fairtrade Premium Funds project has also been able to donate desks in the neighbouring primary schools. There is also a children centre built in the region to rehabilitate kids in the vicinities who have had a fair share of challenges in life. There is training on driving for the workers and funding for the construction of their houses.



Mr. Jagtap KT, Bigot Flowers Kenya Limited General Manager

On the part of growing flowers, the Company grows intermediate flowers 4-5cm size. "This is because the flowers have a wide market segment in France, Germany, Switzerland and a host of European countries." Mr. Jagtap points out. The firm sends overseas a total of 60 to 70 million stems annually. The people in these countries are mostly interested in the colour (Pink) as their preferred dye for flowers.

The corporation has initiated new varieties of flowers such as T-hybrid which is 6cm head size and Sweetheart. This is all intended at improving the quality of Bigot flowers. "We keep on improving the quality of flowers that we sell abroad in order to meet our consumers tastes and preferences." Mr. Jagtap indicated.

The flower farm mainly practices organic farming method with a great reduction in the use of chemicals. They use phytosilus and scouting to control mites that could be injurious to the plants. "We normally use compost manure which has micro and macro nutrients that

increases organic matter in the soil. Through this kind of farming, the cost of fertilizer is reduced by 20% which is profitable to the company." Mr. Jagtap affirms.

The corporation has a program of industrial relations training for the workers, health & safety training and safe use of pesticides aimed at helping the workers familiarize with how best they can use different farm inputs without harming themselves.

"There is usually a big change in the workers after the training. The training helps the workers become more productive and familiar with the workings in the farm." The General Manager asserts.

Bigot Flowers Kenya Limited intends to expand its acreage of land in the near future, innovating more and more flower varieties, and continuous quality treatment of workers and helping the neighbouring community.

