

WHY ONLY 7 AFRICAN FARMERS WILL BENEFIT FROM *GREEN VALLEY* IN 2021?



"Elevate trust, and you elevated prosperity."

In my articles, I address general phenomena. Mention of a country/continent is for illustration purposes only.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

I wish to start by wishing all of us a ***HAPPY, HEALTHY, and PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR 2021.***

This is a personal thank you to; those who sent me their wishes, to those who are taking the time to read this weekly blog, which sometimes may be complicated, non-conformist, and kicking in the stomach, to those who comment, sharing their thoughts and opinions with me. THANK YOU ALL.

I cherish your wishes, value your feedback, and appreciate your persistence; it means the world to me!

PREFACE (AND APOLOGY)

In the past year, I wrote many blogs about the huge progress that we made in creating a prosperous future in reach of many farmers in emerging economies.

In this article, I want to apologize in advance if I will disappoint some of you when saying that in 2021 we will be working in only 1 or 2 African countries and with only 2-3 mango growers in each country. That is it.

Why?

Because it is the right thing to do and most responsible when you apply long-term thinking.

Because mango export to premium markets from Africa (and Asia) is dying, and we aim to do the impossible and revive it. That is the focus of our activity and the reason for it.

We aim to revive mango export by exporting the tastiest mangoes to the best importers, the best premium supply chains.

In previous blogs, I mentioned our branding strategy, which is focused on Taste and Values (Health, Environment, and Social).

Our goal is to have **CONSUMERS asking specifically for those tasty mangoes.**

To that end, we will re-brand the mangoes and sell them in premium markets for a premium price. Premium price means more income to the value chain and farmers.



In business, like it is in life, *"There Is No Second Chance For First Impression."*

To reach the goal of satisfied and pleased consumers, asking for our brand, and paying a premium price, we need to make sure everything is perfect, from the field to the shelf.

There is no place for error or second attempt.

2021 MUST BE SUCCESSFUL, OR THE ECONOMIC SITUATION OF THE FARMERS WILL CONTINUE AS IS, OR EVEN DETERIORATE.

Hence, we will focus on the best farmers, the ones who want to change, wish to lead by example, and are able to supply premium mangoes.

They will also need to stand up to the new higher standards as set by *the Green Valley* concept and described in detail in my previous blog.

2021 is the first year of our broad activity of implementation of the *Green Valley* in Africa, and therefore I will personally oversee all activities and each step.

For me to personally monitoring all activities, it means that I will invest much of my time working with each of the farmers and on each farm.

Such a large investment of my limited time is possible only if we focus on a few highly motivated and suitable farmers.

I believe that by September 2021, we will expand our activity to more farms and farmers.

Following is a more elaborate explanation of the reason for that strategy and its rationality.

POSSIBLE (UNREALIZED) OUTCOME

At the end of 2020, we are finally equipped with all the tools one could hope to launch a successful export campaign of premium mangoes from Africa to the most coveted, premium markets in the world.

Those tools, consolidated in a single package named *Green Valley*, include novel models, protocols, state of the art knowledge, business partnerships, and unprecedented non-spraying fruit fly management technology.

Many managers would probably think that **now** is the best time to make a move, to replicate and spread the field-proven success across the continents, and make the *Green Valley* package accessible to **all farmers**.

After all, one may ask, '*why waiting longer?*'

Green Valley core technology and know-how are field-proven over ten years in thousands of farms and endless crops; basically, it enables farmers to export by typically **reducing fruit fly infestation below 0.1%!**

Just imagine what it means to countless African/Asian farmers who are currently losing 50% to 80% of their yield.

With *the Green Valley* Package of tools, the farmers will increase the marketable fruit quality and quantity, and respectively also export.

The outcome will be increased income and profit by tens of percent – the impact is easy to foresee; it will improve farmers' life quality, lifestyle, living standards, self-worth, respect, and dignity.

THE HARSH REALITY

The "*possible unrealized outcome*" described above can become a reality for all farmers in emerging economies.

To achieve it, we first need to understand why it had not happened so far.

Is it just because of the absence of certain technologies, absence of a tool Package (such as *Green Valley*), unprepared business/political environment? What is the reason?

Intuitively you already know the answer – NO!

There are other fundamental factors that are not enabling the farmers of emerging economies to develop as fast as they could have.

Surprisingly, those factors have nothing to do with technology. However, ignoring them will slow down or even completely stop any attempt to develop, improve, and progress.

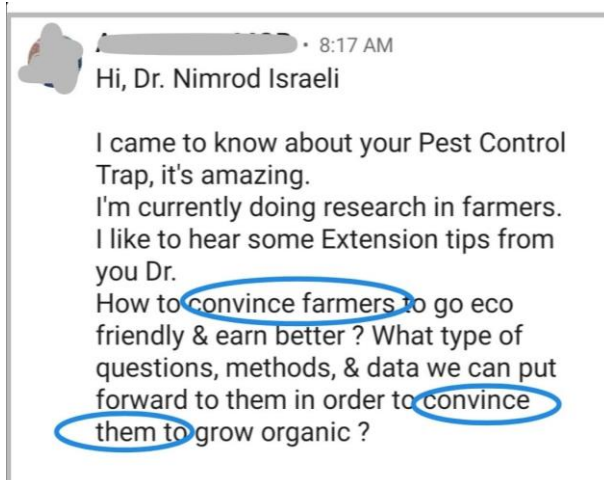
What could slow and even stop people from changing themselves and the way they work as Farmers?

ATTITUDE.

To be specific, our attitude, including (until recently) mine as well. Our attitude is focused all on us and nothing on the farmers. Here is how I used to think, and many more still think that way -

"I arrived, I met the farmers, I spoke with experts, I saw the current situation and the results, I understand what and where the professional problem is, I have the answer! If only those farmers listen to me, I can "fix" their problems in a heart bit, and they will have a much better life. Why do they resist my advice?"

This kind of attitude is a very Western one, which is **problem-oriented** - fix the problem, and everything will be OK.



A message from a LinkedIn friend: note the use of the word Convince. While the intentions are good, the attitude reflects, "*I know what is good for you. Why don't you listen to me?*" Try to avoid *Convincing* or *Telling*. Instead, try to ask, listen, understand, suggest, and let the farmer decide.

Taking this path, you focus mainly on the technical aspects while ignoring the most important aspect – the human one.

When taking the problem-oriented approach, you end up telling the farmer what is good for him because **you** are the expert in solving the technological-oriented problems.

Often, in the process of "fixing" the technological-oriented problem, we miss asking the farmer, "*What do you want to achieve?*"

When you skip asking the farmer what he wants, you soon find that you are the only one motivated to accomplish the mission.

MOTIVATION - is a critical success factor.

Motivation, especially self-motivation, is what propels self-change.

When we take the "I know" attitude, the motivation stems from the Expert / Government / NGO / Company, while it should stem from the person who should change, in our case, the farmer.

No motivation, no change.

When our solutions are technological-oriented, and we come with the "I know" attitude, the farmer's role is passive.

The farmer is required to be present, listen, watch, understand, absorb, and finally, to repeat and perform the task as he was taught, as a student who follows his teacher.

Like some teachers who blame their students for getting low grades, so it is when we blame farmers for not performing as expected.

Too often, we blame farmers for not understanding, not capable of using technologies, stupidity, and even laziness.

All this while we should take the blame on ourselves and our attitude towards managing change and motivation.

The truth is that those processes of changing agriculture along with changing lifestyle, and many other things, are complex and extremely difficult.

No wonder those changes are nearly impossible when the motivation does not stem from the farmer and the "teacher's" attitude is biased, offensive, and wrong.

As we see, a lack of motivation has nothing to do with technology.

Farmers should be motivated because of the "right reasons" and committed to a long-term transformation, which in return will yield long-term positive results, as planned.

That is not easy, to say the least, but that is what is needed.

The farmers should be the ones to trigger and lead the change, while the experts' role is to assist, to introduce new possibilities, and guide in the process of achieving their desired goals.

Trying to push the farmers into something they didn't ask for is like pushing a string up the hill.

Change is never easy, but for sure, it is impossible without motivation.

Hence, to initiate a successful transformation in the agro-industry, we should start by scouting for the "right" farmers, those who want to change, self-motivated, and are mentally ready for it.

Such farmers should enter a life-transforming program, such as offered by *the Green Valley* concept, when they already have the attitude, the passion, the motivation, the commitment, and they meet the program pre-defined requirements.

The above attitude to HOW WE MANAGE A CHANGE is an ***Internal Root Problem***, typical to the agro-sector in the emerging economies.

A good way to assure we are not forcing a farmer into a change, which he does not want or is not yet ready to accept, is by asking him, "*WHAT IS YOUR GOAL, AND WHY?*"

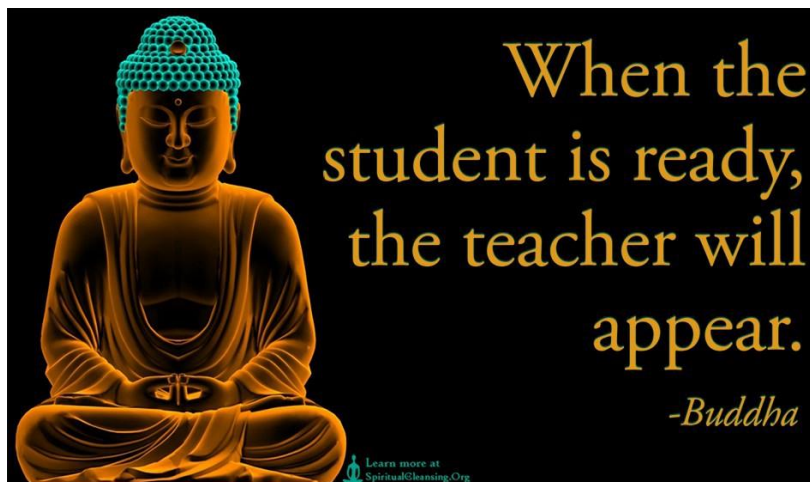
Yes, it is that easy; after all, it is similar to how we had decided what we want to do in life?

We ask ourselves that question, and only then do we decide on a series of steps and actions to achieve that goal. Those planned steps and actions are the HOW.

Note that "*what is your goal, and why?*" is very different from asking, "*what do you need?*"

The second question is short-term-oriented and focused on the **means** (e.g., tools, technologies, resources) to achieve the set goal.

Unfortunately, we tend to focus on the second question, sometimes completely skipping the critical first one.



If Farmers are the Students and we are the Teachers, then we should be patient – guide the farmers until they are self-motivated and ready to move. Never force a change.

A SECOND ROOT PROBLEM

Forcing a change on someone who doesn't want it or is not yet ready causes other problems. In times, those problems may develop and become Root Problems by themselves.

This is the case of - **MISTRUST**.

A huge economic, business-oriented, Root Problem!

For this discussion and to be specific, I refer to the mistrust between fresh produce value chains in emerging economies and their trading partners in the premium export markets.

Let's understand why MISTRUST with export trading partners is a Root Problem for emerging economies.

Emerging economies rely on importing or getting from outside the country goods, technologies, knowledge, etc., for their development.

To purchase the above, they need foreign currency.

The best and most sustainable and reliable way of having a continuous influx of foreign currency is by exporting.

What can you export?

When 50%, and even more, of your labor force is engaged in agriculture, it only makes sense that you will export agricultural produce and goods.

That is what you would normally do, unless quarantine authorities, importers, retail food chains, and consumers in the most lucrative markets mistrust your ability to provide what they expect and what you promised.

Then they refuse to buy from you, and you can't export.

Is there a trust today?

Most mango producing countries in Africa and Asia are under export bans and ever-tougher export restrictions. Only 1%-5% of produce (if any) is exported. These are clear signs of deep mistrust.

Why do they mistrust you?

Because farmers and the value chain are not able to produce and ship their products according to the regulations, restrictions, and at the desired quality level.

Over and over again, they fail to apply the required quality assurance and then fail to admit, cope with, and report the problems.

The result is that quarantine authorities, importers, retail food chains, and consumers "trust" farmers and value chains in emerging economies to produce and export only the simplest low added-value products.

For example, in the mango industry, most export from emerging economies is of low added-value products, such as juice, dry fruits, and fresh-cut salads, while export of high added value fresh (whole) fruits is **very** limited.

FIVE-YEAR PROGRAM

Now, what are those *Root Problems* got to do with our plans for the coming years?

I described above two of the major reasons that caused other projects, programs, and companies active in the agro-industry in emerging economies, to fail:

(1) Improper attitude to managing a change –leading to impaired motivation.

(2) Mistrust – leading to an inability to export.

As you already know, I wish to succeed by avoiding failure.

It took many years to develop the *Green Valle* package and equip it with the proper tools.

Now it is time to **IMPLEMENT** it, which is as important as the tools and the package itself.

Applying the *Green Valley* package in the wrong place or in the wrong way will cause it to fail, which is bad for everyone.

While considering the described Root Problems, with our desire to produce a permanent and sustainable economic change, let us ask (and answer) some decision-supporting (eye-opening) questions.

Those questions may lead us to the five-year plan and even answer why only a few farmers can enjoy the plenty that *Green Valley* (GV) brings in 2021.

How can we bring more foreign currency to emerging economies?

Simply by increasing the agri-exports.

How do we increase agri-exports in a short time?

By working with "elite farmers" who are ready for it, striving to move forward, and just need the right support, as offered by GV.

How do we provide and make accessible the "right support" that "elite farmers" need?

By allowing them full access to the tools available in the *GV* package, i.e., business model, technologies, professional protocols, financing, marketing, methods, access to premium export markets, the *Fruit Fly Certified Trade Zone* (FFCTZ) protocol, etc.

What is *the Green Valley* business model?

Like any off-taker, GV's income is a result of a commission it gets from selling the produce. This way, GV keeps its interest aligned with that of the farmer; the higher the selling price, the quality, and the quantity, the more both parties gain. Hence, GV is taking a risk in the case that export quantity or price is low, and hence it will take longer to return its investment, or risk of losing.

Who is financing all those goodies?

Part of the *Green Valley* package is a business model for supporting the farmer to finance activities required for his professional-business success, ahead of the season, and providing a line of credit. Typically credit will cover about 50% or more of the essential inputs.

How do you make sure the farmer will make the best from taking part in the *Green Valley* program?

For **each farmer**, we tailor a specific professional development program. This program is based on HIS goals, targets, needs, and tools available in the *Green Valley* package.

Business-wise, what is the up-side that farmers can expect?

Increasing the profit of farmers is one of our most important goals. Hence, we want to see that farmers increase their **profit**, and not only the income. Because the yield, the varieties, the quality, etc., vary between farmers, it is impossible to give a precise prediction. However, imagine what happened to your business and profit when you decrease fruit fly infestation by 99% without sprays, increase the marketable produce by two digits' number, prolong the harvest season, export to better premium markets, etc.? Do you see the potential?

And what is the down-side that farmers can expect?

Probably the worst scenario is ending up with the current results; 50% fruit fly infestation, a small portion of marketable produce, harvest season only until the rainy

season, the continuous threat of an export ban, etc. By the way, in the past 20 years, none of the above happened to us. It is my task to make sure it will continue this way.

Is there a way I can know the projected income and profit before I enter *Green Valley*?

Yes, Sure! Any farmer chosen to participate in GV is entitled to get a free of charge financial analysis of his business performance before GV versus a prediction with it. This way, the farmer can make the best business decision. It is also important to the GV team in order to avoid involving farmers, which the program is not suitable for them and hence will not help them as it can help others.

Is there a threshold for entering *Green Valley*?

GV is most appropriate for mango growers with a current income of 5,000€ to 20,000€ per hectare. We would like to see them reaching 30,000€ to 40,000€ per hectare with the support of GV. However, we keep aware of the general situation, and in some cases, we may start working with farmers having lower income per hectare as well.

I understand that farmers joining *Green Valley* can expect a sharp increase in income and profit. Can they expect anything else strategic on their side?

Yes, there are TWO strategic benefits they will get. In every country GV is active, we will work together with the local authorities to -

(1) Exclude GV farmers from any risk of future *Export Ban*, which may be imposed on all other farmers. This will be a result of GV's expertise, protocol, management, and the stringent measures it will take to keep its high standards.

(2) Access to the best experts, protocols, models, and technologies, all for the purpose of helping them to increase their yield to above 30 tons per hectare, with 65% of the produce (or more) at export quality, and ability to freely harvest even during the rainy season.

Is there a special demand from farmers taking part in *Green Valley*?

Yes, of course. A farmer taking part in GV will have to meet the business and professional requirements and obligations upon which he will agree before entering the program. In my view, every farmer participating in the program is a "leader." We will therefore invest heavily in each farmer, including many hours of my personal time.

Hence, we expect every GV farmer to share his knowledge and the experience he gathered and set a good example and “instructor” to other farmers. Furthermore, we view farms working under GV as *Center of Excellence*.

What happens if a farmer doesn't stand up to your high standards and demands?

It is normal and expected that not all farmers would stand up to the high expectations and demands of GV protocols. Inability to work according to protocols and methods of GV will end our relationship with such farmers according to GV management decisions.

Will ALL "elite farmers" in the country be able to take part in *Green Valley*?

That is our ultimate goal. But in the beginning, we will start with just a handful of farms. Once we see that the operation is progressing as planned, including the local supply value chain, then we will gradually add more farmers to the program.

I do not understand why it is not possible for anyone who wishes and have the financial resources and professional ability to take part in *Green Valley*, starting in 2021?

As you can see from the previous answers, we invest a lot of effort and resources on each farm and farmer who will enter the GV program. Because it is the beginning of the implementation, I will be personally involved in every farm several times throughout the year. Our professional staff will often be visiting, sometimes even weekly. Whenever needed, we will invite Israeli and other experts to support our on-going efforts. Due to the fact that my time and GV resources are limited, currently, it is simply impossible to implement the GV initiative while keeping our high standards, with more farms than we already plan.

Why do you (Dr. Nimrod) need to visits each farm several times?

As we know, there are endless ways to fail, while success is the result of doing everything perfectly, in a certain way. Hence, farmers accepted this year to participate in the GV program will receive my personal accompaniment for more hours than ever before. My personal support is limited to this year only, and only because it is the first year of complicated implementation. This is the level of importance and commitment I give to assuring that 2021 will become a milestone in the history of Africa's agriculture, turning into a leading high-value fresh produce exporter.

2021 FOCUS:

Based on the Root Problems, we set clear goals–

(1) to work only with motivated farmers that are ready to carry their task, and to

(2) restore trust with premium export markets.

As Biofeed's CEO and *Green Valley* initiative leader, it is my pleasure and duty to make sure that all will be done and fulfilled according to the detailed plans, nothing will go wrong on either topic and that by the end of 2021, we will achieve the expected goals.

MORE QUESTIONS

What about most farmers, those who are not " elite"?

The main portion of farmers in emerging economies is not yet ready to export. They will be able to see, learn by example, and be inspired by the "elite farmers."

Will they ever be able to join *Green Valley*?

Yes. There are two options;

(1) either by learning and observing the activity at the *Center of Excellence*- until they improve to the level of becoming "elite farmers" themselves, or

(2) by joining GV when we finish developing a special package for the less-professional farmers.

When can we see *Green Valley* working with "advanced farmers" in many more countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America?

In the next two years, we will focus on further developing and perfecting the model. Once this is over, we will be aiming to expand our activity to 1-2 additional countries every year. This is when we will be able to add many more farmers in countries where we are active.

You still have unanswered questions, or is there something you just must share? Great, send me in short, and maybe I will even share the answer in a future article.

My contact details: nisraely@biofeed.co.il or text +972-5423425 (WhatsApp).

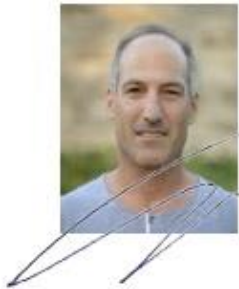
Let's talk and see how we can make one plus one much more than two to create a win-win.

If you find this article interesting, share it with someone who should see it and benefit from it!

Join and receive future articles directly to your inbox - [press here](#).

*For a greener world
Free of sprays
Full of joy*

See you soon,
Nimrod



P.S.

Recently I started a new video series where I share the story of how I got to be active in Africa (as well as other places). A new chapter is posted almost every day, so make sure to *Subscribe* to get early alerts. Here is a link in case you find it interesting [[>><<](#)].

P.P.S.

Note, within the next few weeks, I plan a trip to Africa, visiting Senegal and Ghana. The date is not yet final, so keep following.

P.P.P.S.

COVID-19 changes people's eating habits and raises awareness of health, chemical usage, and quarantine pests. *Green Valley* Package is here to support your effort to overcome those challenges and take advantage of the new and promising open opportunities for those who seize the moment and wish to utilize the situation to improve their future [[>><<](#)].

P.P.P.P.S.

Green Valley Package is adaptive and enabling customization and further content development [[>><<](#)].

The key elements of *Green Valley* are:

1) *FreeDome* – the **core technology** for fruit fly control, which enables export quality. It is used as part of the FFCTZ (see below).

2) *Fruit Fly Certified Trade Zone (FFCTZ)* is a protocol and action model to enable regulators, exporters, importers, and farmers to conform with premium markets export requirements.

3) *Green Valley National Export Project* – this **protocol** is based on an Israeli model. It is designed for governments interested in adapting their country's agriculture to the 21st Century.

4) *Green Valley Fruits* – designated fruit certification label of **quality assurance**.

P.P.P.P.S.

Who is qualified to use the FFCTZ?

It can be a proper local partner with a particular focus on mangoes, e.g., fruit growers' organizations, fruit traders, exporters/importers, governments, businesspersons, food chains, etc.

IMPORTANT NOTE!

Our investment in each project is enormous. Thus, we must carefully select the most likely projects to bring about the desired results for all involved.

*Change Begins With A Decision
That The Existing Reality Is A Choice
And Not A Decree Of Fate*