



## **I NEED YOUR HELP AND YOUR “2 CENTS” INPUT IN THIS ISSUE**

*"At a conference, participants invest the most important resource they have – time, and as an ROI, they expect tangible and useful impact."*

I wish to share with you a problem I encountered earlier this week, and for which I would love to get your “2 cents” of advice.

Conference organizers, who are genuinely interested in promoting the agro-sector in Africa, asked me to chair the conference that they are organizing.

I still didn't give them my approval yet; this week, we held our first e-meeting, where we got to know each other and discussed the purpose and content of the conference.

I used the opportunity to raise a concern that the conference, like many before it, would be a friendly and pleasant meeting place, with many exciting speeches delivered.

Yet, when the dust settles after the conference, it will be "just another conference," and like its predecessors, it will pay lip service while creating zero tangible and practical impact.

The above concern is not an act of paranoia. It is enough to look at the last one or two decades, to see the considerable number of conferences on this topic and ask, "*What was the progress and practical contribution resulting from these conferences?*"

I am afraid that the answer is easy to see and measure in every village, in every country across Africa, and it is unflattering evidence.

## "THE IMMEDIATE SUSPECT"

Interestingly, when we ask ourselves, "*How should we promote agriculture in emerging economies?*" the nearly automatic answer is; through intensifying the introduction of **technologies**.

That is precisely my fear. As a technological entrepreneur and the CEO of a leading technology-oriented company, I am well aware of the limitations of technologies, regardless of how advance and good they are.

I wish to avoid once again falling for the trap of focusing on the convenient and easy answer for all the sicknesses of Africa's agro-sector - **technology**.

Remember, technology per se is insufficient to make a change. It requires training, education, service, skills, investment... and the belief and trust that it will bring the expected results later.

In addition, I ask myself, "*Is the introduction of advanced technologies **the key factor** for the progress in the agro-sector, or is it the other way around?*"

Ask yourself, "*Today, do farmers in emerging economies have less access to technology than Western farmers had 70 years ago when great progress took place in those economies?*"

What is your answer to those questions?

## A STRAIGHT-FORWARD APPROACH

When I encounter a problem, I do not tend to go around the bush but rather to set clear goals, even if the required results are not easy to achieve.

In the case of the agro-sector, I believe that the GOAL should be; "**To improving farmers' livelihood by creating prosperity.**"

To this end, we will need to set the TARGETS of; ***“To improve the quality and yield parameters, to enable access to the best global (export) markets, to fetch the best price for the quality produce.”***

The best prices for our produce we can fetch in the premium export markets. However, reaching the export markets poses many challenges to the farmer and the value chain.

Would you change the Goal or Targets?

## PUBLIC OPINION

I was looking to understand better what people involved in the agro-sector in emerging economies see as the main obstacles to progress.

So I reached out to those people through the social nets and asked them for their opinion – below are the answers (presented in random order).

### Why the agro-sector in emerging economies lag?

- Bad leadership.
- The missing Know-how.
- Low-income and low profitability per hectare.
- Involved companies Cartels.
- Corruption (repeatedly mentioned)
- Poor planning.
- Lack of sound agricultural policy.
- Dependency on the world food program.
- Dependency on Western governments (support).
- Lack of capital support to Farmers.
- Nepotism.
- Favoritism.
- Farm ownership size (meaning, small size farms).
- Practicing conventional tillage.
- Lack of accountability (corruption).
- Missing the mix of: land, technology, financial tools and ‘good down to earth farmers’.
- Lack of proper education.
- Lack of trust.
- Cultural differences.
- Political (in)stability.
- Crude implements.
- Lack of sustainable agricultural practice.
- Wars.
- Lack of infrastructure (such as roads and electricity).
- Research.
- Knowledge of what to do with the produce (marketing).
- Agricultural skills.
- Business skills.
- Start-up capital.
- Operation capital.
- An administration that does not care about the farmers.
- Land ownership.
- Distance to market.
- Not understanding the value chain.
- Lack of consistent policy.
- The young generation does not want to work in agriculture.
- Locking agriculture mobility (a valiant form of an older feudal system).
- Agriculture is not taken seriously.
- Low financial and technological investment.
- Dwindling soil.
- Poor quality inputs.
- Poor operational systems and procedures.
- Lack of technology.
- Low level of acceptance of new information and technology by the farmers.



The response was overwhelming, with many answers pointing to many directions.

Overall, I noted that:

1. There were many reasons that the respondents raised.

2. There was no agreement on a single reason.

3. “*Technology*” or “*Access to Technology*” was among the reasons but not the only or the most frequent reason the respondents pointed out.

Yet, we always focus on “*Technology*” as the leading solution to promote and advance the agro-sector in emerging economies, as if it was a magic potion.

Is it because we believe that what works well for advanced Western farmers must bring the same results to farmers in the emerging economies?

From this questionnaire, many meetings, field trips, and other studies, I have concluded the following; (1) the failure of the agro-sector in emerging economies stems from multiple factors, (2) any suggested solution should take this into account, (3) “technology” is NOT the solution for this multi-system failure, but rather an element in a future solution.

## **THE LOGICAL DIRECTION**

As the result of decades of broad field experience, I outline the *Green Valley* concept.

I later developed the concept and content of the *Green Valley Package*, which addresses the full scope of issues related to the transition from *Agriculture* to *Agro-industry* (picture below).

## The 'Green Valley Package'



to increase \$/Ha, and \$/Kg

**Regulations** (Agricultural, growing, export, marketing...) , Varieties, Soil, Water, Fertilizer, **Management**, Labor, Trade Agreements, Knowledge and Experts' Import, Land Regulation, Demonstration Farms, **Universities**, Center of Excellence (COE), **Pest Control**, Diseases, Pests, Herbage, **Laboratories**, Plots, Varieties, Dedicated **R&D** (per crop/region), Growing, PR, Harvest/Picking, Cold chain, Refrigeration Lab, Refrigeration, **Export**, Export Lab, Sorting, Packaging, Field training, Investment Encouragement, **Reliability**, Legislation, **Investment** Encouragement, Professional Certifications, Process Control, **Quality Control**, Monitoring, Inputs, **Financing**, Logistics, Vocational Training, **Standards**, Community Relations, Extension services, Foreign Currency Regulation, International and local Agreements, **Know-how**, Training, Sales, Machinery, **Marketing**, Agricultural Organizations, **Branding**, Customer service, Nurseries, **Traceability**, Database, etc.

For many reasons, which I discussed in previous articles, *Green Valley* chose "mango" as its "model crop."

This strategic decision is supported by the unparalleled ability to control fruit flies, at export quality standards, without sprays. This is possible thanks to the *FreeDome* breaking through fruit fly control technology and the complementary novel *Fruit Fly Certified Trade Zone* (FFCTZ) protocol.

Although the ability to effectively control fruit flies is a game-changer to mango growers and exporters, the *Green Valley Package* relates to the broad range of needs of the fresh mango export value chain.

In short, although I view myself as a very technological-oriented person, note how many times the word "technology" repeats in the text below describing the *Green Valley* approach.

**ATTITUDE:** to jump-starting the agro-industry and transfer it from "Agriculture" to "Agro-industry" is a multidisciplinary approach designed to apply fully and simultaneously as a Vision2Market Solution.

**PILLARS:** Land, Technology, Capital, Education, and Culture.

**FOCUS:** Export crops, High-value crops, and Nurturing farmers.

**METHODS OF DELIVERING KNOW-HOW:** Capacity Building, Demo Farms, and Center of Excellence.

This brings me back to my request from you at the beginning of the column; please share with me your opinion and advice.

What do you think should be the focal point of a conference interested in advancing the issue of the agro-sector in Africa and emerging economies, and what should be the indicators for the success of such a conference?

I am looking forward to your ideas, suggestions, and proposals!

*Please, if you found value in this article, it would mean a lot to me if you send me a comment and share it with your friends.*

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**\*\*\* *Mental and Economic Freedom Are Interconnected.* \*\*\***

See you soon,  
Nimrod



Text me: +972-54-2523425 (WhatsApp), or [e-mail nisraely@biofeed.co.il](mailto:nisraely@biofeed.co.il)

**P.S.**

In case you missed it, here is a link to last week's blog, [Innovation Is Salvation \[For Emerging Economies Too\]](#).

**P.P.S.**

Please take a look at this recent video series, "[DEAR FARMER](#)." Along with describing my life journey and challenges, you will get a glance at the world of an entrepreneur, the global challenges, emerging economies' problems, the WHYs, and the possible solutions. Please subscribe and share with friends who may find it interesting and valuable.

**P.P.P.S.**

COVID-19 changes people's eating habits and raises awareness of several issues, including biosecurity, environment, fresh food, health, and chemical overuse.

[Green Valley Package](#) is made to support your efforts to overcome those challenges and take advantage of the latest 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, enabling customization and, when needed, 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 365 (FFCTZ-365)* 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 (Green Valley)* is based on an Israeli fresh produce export model. It is designed for governments interested in adapting their country's agriculture to the 21st Century requirements and demands.
- 4) *Green Valley Fruits Branding* – designated fruit certification label of **quality assurance**.

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