



HOW TO JUMP-START THE AGRO SECTOR WITHOUT CRUSHING THE NATIONAL ECONOMY, AS SRI LANKA DID?

“There are more ways to destroy the agro sector than to build it.”

A FORETOLD DISASTER

I got a call from a significant Sri Lankan chemical distribution company about a year ago. Following we had a few online meetings. What they shared with me during those meetings left me shocked.

Their basic message was, *“Our government passed a law saying that the import of synthetic pesticides is banned shortly. Only organic fertilizers and pesticides will be permitted. 90% of our portfolio is non-organic. What should we do?”*

I couldn't believe it. I was stunned.

I asked them for the reason for the sudden change in the law. They answered, "*The government said organic is healthier and is the future.*"

Finally, I told them that the non-spray solutions they ask for are possible, BUT it requires planning, a dedicated budget, and much more time than a couple of months.

Then, I asked myself, "*Is Sri Lanka so advanced in using alternatives to conventional pesticides? What is the (real) reason for such a fast and careless transition/change?*"

At the time, I had no answers that satisfied me. Time passed, and I completely forgot about it.

THE REASON IS REVEALED

In March-April 2022, the news from Sri Lanka reported a national economic and food crisis. Some media channels linked this to the transfer of the entire country's agriculture into organic agriculture.

However, the reported macro picture was quite different, presenting a continuous reckless and unprofessional national economy management, with lots of subsidies and governmental corruption.

These and other reasons decreased Sri Lanka's foreign exchange reserves so low that there was no foreign currency to buy gas, chemicals, and food.

"When Sri Lanka's foreign currency shortages became a serious problem in early 2021, the government tried to limit them by banning imports of chemical fertilizer. It told farmers to use locally sourced organic fertilizers instead." [BBC news report](#).

In other words, the goal was to save national expenses in foreign currency, and the rapid transition to organic agriculture was merely a "cover story."

TWISTING HISTORY

Some didn't care about the facts and the chain of events. Those didn't care that organic agriculture did not exist in Sri Lanka, for the farmers who were forced to change due to the new law. They didn't care that the transition was made immediately, without means, and with zero professional preparation and planning.

Some managers in the dying agrochemical industry couldn't resist the temptation of linking the economic crush of Sri Lanka to its "organic transformation" and used the media to spread false claims and theories to advance their business.

The title of an interview with the CEO of Syngenta Group, Mr. Erik Fyrwald, was, "[*Organic is harmful to the climate and promotes land use.*](#)"

In this interview and following post on the LinkedIn social platform, he stated that world hunger and many other global troubles are due to Organic Agriculture, so it should be banned. Hence, “the solution” for the world is to **increase** the use of chemical pesticides.

Mr. Fyrwald “forgot” to mention the fact that despite the use of pesticides and seeds produced by his company, over 550 million (!) farmers, who feed around 2.2 (!) billion people, live for decades in poverty, including the farmers of Sri Lanka.

He also “forgot” the example of the failing results of AGRA (Africa) and [India](#).

In 2006, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi promised to double farmers' income by 2022, from its starting point of a bit over 80\$ a month per agricultural household.

To achieve that goal, the Indian government subsidizes seeds, fertilizers, and chemical pesticides, for a total of \$ billion. Syngenta (and other suppliers) enjoyed those subsidies.

Seven years later, once again, 7 years later, the average monthly income increased to ≈\$130. Note that out of the 59% increase, only 37% is associated with increased agricultural production.

In such a way, it may take **decades** to achieve Modi’s goal. Meanwhile, the world economy is changing fast; hence farmers remain poor.

More on what Mr. Erik Fyrwald, the CEO of Syngenta Group, “forgot” to say, you can find in those 1 to 2 minutes of [YouTube videos](#) I prepared for you.

CONCLUSIONS

The agro sector's overall grave life and economic situation in 175 (!) non-developed countries, inhabiting most of the 8 billion people walking our planet, is much due to the agrochemical industry.

The agrochemical industry is deeply responsible for deepening global poverty and the current food shortage, i.e., hunger and malnutrition.

Who wants to remain with something that is not working well and enables farmers a meager monthly income of \$ 83, as Sri Lanka’s farmers earn!?

Our goal should not be feeding hungry farmers their next meal but enabling their decent livelihood, a safe transition from poverty to prosperity, and the ability to be the ones who provide food for others.

Mr. Fyrwald, eighty-three dollars (\$ 83) a month can't be regarded as a "decent livelihood."

Continuing with commercial agrochemicals is a sort of a “life sentence” to poverty for hundreds of millions of farmers and the billions dependent on them for livelihood.

Hence, it makes sense to quit that poverty/hunger-related approach as soon as possible.

You may ask, “*If not agrochemicals, then what?*”

In the past, I practiced conventional and organic agriculture. Some think that these are all the options. Fortunately, there are more options.

Organic agriculture is NOT the only alternative to conventional, chemical-based agriculture. There are several more alternatives, e.g., the regenerative and the Dream Valley approaches.

We should also consider options of continuing using chemicals, as “support” for eco-friendly approaches, for a limited period and in limited quantities, e.g., a 90% chemical use decrease.

Even if the existing regime is terrible and deadly, the transition period between the agricultural regimes should be over several years, not weeks or months. This is evident in the Sri Lanka case study as well.

A transition between regimes should also be supported by experienced field professionals and a dedicated, well-planned, long-term budget. The whole process should be well managed and controlled with periodic advancement analysis.

No one said **success** is easy to achieve under such conditions, but when properly managed, it is possible. I did it, I know. Is "not doing" a better option, or are we ready to carry the consequences of "doing nothing" or "more of the same"?

GLOBAL EXPECTATIONS

The world is fed-up with poverty, growing hunger, and the promises of the agrochemical companies to fix it.

Data shows that those companies do not improve the situation but worsen it and farmers’ dependency on chemicals.

The agrochemical companies failed to “deliver” what they promised, other than making a lot of money!

Hence, they should move aside and give place for other options, better quality, and results, and more eco-friendly.

The “*UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) data show global pesticide use per unit of crop soil **increased 75%** between 1990 and 2016.*” ([Time.com](#)).

Do you think the food production per crop soil also increases by 75%? I believe you know the answer. It is NO, in capital letters, and often decreased, as recent reports show.

The public sentiment and global demands are slowly but steadily changing in favor of eco-friendly, zero-spray, and zero ecocide solutions.

This is not the time to run fast; on the contrary, it is time to change the agro sector **slowly, accurately, professionally, and skillfully.**

Positive change will restore belief in the leadership and grow public TRUST in the new path we must take to grow more food and transfer farmers and nations from poverty to prosperity.

Changing the growing agriculture regime is a historical change and must be carried out with the utmost historical responsibility.

CHANGE BY EXAMPLE

It is visible and clear to all that we have no choice but to change the global agro sector. This can't be soon enough for the 175 non-developed economies.

No country can declare a complete transformation of its economy while its agro sector is not advanced and prepared to support the country's economy and its population's food needs. But that is not all, it must transform itself from net food importer to net food exporter, so it can feed others and improve its economy.

Adjusting a national economy to the 21st-century demands, e.g., SDGs and ESG, industrialization, export, etc., is possible as soon as today.

This requires leadership, vision, hope, recognition, and changes at a historical scale, together with the solid support of leading visionary investors, developed economies, and industrial leadership.

It is the responsibility of each of us to ensure the future we leave our children is safer and better with less poverty, hunger, and less severe danger of climate change impact.

My contribution to this is to establish the foundation for such a change.

It should be based on the three pillars of The Israeli Model:

(1) Technology – I founded Biofeed, a powerhouse of technologies and solutions to replace the need for sprays. Biofeed's GCFR technology enables crop protection free of sprays to control fruit flies (the #1 pests for many fruit/vegetable crops). Upon need, we can extend and apply this technology to other pests.

(2) Business models - I Chair the [*International Conference On Business Models In Agriculture 2023 \(IBMA\)*](#), designed to help leaders, decision-makers, CEOs, and high officials, conduct a smoother transition from the current agriculture of the poor to a prosperous and thriving agro sector.

(3) Ecosystem – I founded [Dream Valley](#) to provide non-developed economies with a complete solution at regional and national levels.

Dream Valley comprises a dedicated tailor-made Package with the three pillars of the Israeli Model: Technology, Business model, and ecosystem. It is made for nations to increase food production and exports and helps individual farmers to increase their income at a rapid pace of well over 50% income increase per year. Dream Valley makes state-of-the-art technologies and services available and accessible to all farmers. It assures that no nation will ever go through and suffer like the people of Sri Lanka did.

The ONLY barrier to prosperity and change is you and your [mental barriers](#).

Remember, the future is greener and better. The hard times we experience now are no more than an introduction to the good that is about to come.

PERSONAL

People, human beings, make changes, not machines, technology, models, etc.

As such, I am aware that without the support of my immediate human environment, I would not have reached the achievements I have achieved so far and would not have had the power to create, change, and help others.



On July 29, 2022, I celebrated, with the love of my life, Dganit, our 25th anniversary.

I mention this because as we move forward in life, we must remember that we could not have done this without a giant mosaic of people who helped and supported us.

Those people jointly create our "ecosystem" within, and thanks to it, we can grow, develop, thrive, and eventually help others instead of being a burden on society.

Today, I thank my life companion, my love and lover, and the mother of my five perfect children, Dganit, for the minutes, hours, months, years, and decades you are by my side, supporting and helping me to be a better person than I would be without you.

In personal life, business, and among nations, ECOSYSTEM is something we don't see and can't touch, but we are strongly affected and feel it when **it is not** or **is** at its best.

TAKEAWAYS

- **PUBLIC SENTIMENT** favors eco-friendly agro changes and opposes ecocide solutions.
- **CHANGING** the agricultural regime is a historical change. Conduct it with care and plenty of accurate, professional (experienced) planning.
- **THE BEGINNING** is always the riskiest part. Title the first stages as “Must-not-fail” and act with results-proven specialists.
- **SAVING** in the planning and QA of a new project will turn out to be your most costly decision. Don't save on the early stages; learn from others' mistakes.
- **A COMPLETE** change in the agro sector requires advancing in line with the three pillars of The Israeli Model, field, and results proven for over 60 years.

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**** Mental and Economic Freedom Are Interconnected ****

See you soon,

Nimrod



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P.S.

If you missed it, here is a link to last week's blog, "[Should I Be A Farmer? Do We Need More Farmers?](#)"

Link to [recent articles](#).

P.P.S.

Please look at the video series, "[The Agricultural Gap](#)." With short videos, mostly 2 to 4 minutes long, I explain the historical roots of the agricultural gap between Africa and Western countries.

I see this video series as "uncompleted," as I am waiting to gain more confidence before completing the chapters with The Solution, as I perceive it.

If you like it, don't forget to **share** it with those who need to see it and **Subscribe**.

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