

MATANEL FOUNDATION ACTIVITY REPORT

Program: Amutat Kaima

Year: August 2014 - July 2015

Please present your activity report (as WORD document) not to exceed 2 or 3 pages:

Name of the Program: Kaima Organic Farm (Beit Zayit)

Year of activity: August 2014 - July 2015

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Function of the report's writer: Founding Director

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Program status at the date of the activity report, not to exceed 10 lines: Less than three years since our founding, Kaima has demonstrated itself as an effective means of re-engaging and empowering the growing number of young Israelis (identified through the Ministry of Welfare) who have dropped out of school, helping them to return to normative society. Kaima's model utilizes organic farming and other environmental activities that develop employability skills; offer work experience; teach teamwork; encourage leadership development; build a sense of community; cultivate personal accountability; and foster environmental stewardship. The farm's produce is grown, harvested and sold to the public by our young farmers (who receive a salary for their work on the farm) according to the internationally recognized CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) model, thus creating additional social benefit to those who sign up for weekly food baskets and a critical income stream to fund our educational platform.

Review of main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.:

1. Main Achievements:

- a. General:** We have met many of our goals and even exceeded some. For example, we have advanced our year-long initiative by increasing participation and introducing new pedagogic methods to encourage deeper learning, thinking, and action on the part of our young farmers, particularly through continued experimentation with our PBL (Project Based Learning) model. We have built our CSA customer base beyond our initial projections, added acreage to the farm, involved new educational partners and gained serious praise from the authorities for our work.
- b. Financial:** We are proud that our model has enabled us to cover 48% of our operating costs from the sale of the farm's yield. We expect this number to increase to 70% within the next two years based on the following: i) profits from current acreage and projected expansion; ii) yield from our newly constructed onsite greenhouse now enabling us to grow staple crops (tomatoes and cucumbers) in harsh weather, thus decreasing the need to purchase supplemental vegetables from other organic farmers to serve our customer base (common within the CSA community); and iii) yield from proposed new offsite hydroponic greenhouse (in the capitalization phase) to be located on the grounds of Jerusalem's 30-acre Botanic Gardens, providing a constant income stream and increasing our annual revenue by 5%.

- c. Breakthrough with authorities:** As discussed with the Mantanel Foundation on previous occasions, one of our ongoing challenges has been to compel government and quasi-government stakeholders to increase their financial participation. After considerable effort to engage the authorities, modest but previously unavailable funding from the Ministry of Welfare and Bituach Leumi will be released in 2016.
- d. Replication of model:** From the outset, Kaima has sought to replicate the farm's model beyond our Beit Zayit location, either by managing additional Kaima farms or by franchising the concept. Ahead of our projections, thanks to the generosity of the Matanel Foundation, we are now beginning the process. Kaima Be'erotayim, a new *amuta*, located near Netanya, funded by seed money from Matanel, is modeling its own program on Kaima Beit Zayit's pedagogic methods and the CSA economic model. Kaima Beit Zayit is currently and will continue to provide training and ongoing supervision with the assistance of the Matanel Foundation.
- 2. Number of Participants:** During the 2014-2015 academic year, a total of 52 young farmers (workers) took part in Kaima programming and received salaries; 38 were classified as "long-term," meaning they participated for a minimum of three months, 2-5 times weekly, from 7:30 - 2:30 in different shifts. This number is up from 25 workers who took part in the 2013-2014 academic year and represents a slight increase over our current target of 35 workers. We are now immersed in year three of our summer session (14 current workers) and are actively recruiting for Kaima's 2015-2016 yearlong program for which we seek to involve 40 workers. *Note: Hundreds of others also worked on the farm throughout the year as part of our shorter-term project on a volunteer basis.*
- 3. Number of activities:** Activities with our young farmers took place daily. Throughout the year, we also organized permaculture lectures, visits to other agricultural operations, and open-day activities for both our workers and the public at large.

Evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons to prior year, conclusions for future):

- 1. Methodology:** Evaluation data are culled from participant feedback; ongoing staff and psychological evaluation; and, with increasing frequency, observations from parents. Presently, we are interested in assessing the following:
- a. Educational:**
- Satisfaction and individual attitudinal and behavioral changes
 - Ability to develop problem solving capacities, follow a plan, and meet expectations of one's self and others
 - Readiness to assume new challenges beyond basic requirements
- b. Organizational:**
- Ability to provide a meaningful training programs for our educational partners
 - Readiness, aptitude, capacity to scale up by adding new program elements or exporting our programming for use by other social businesses
- c. Financial/Business:**
- Sales relative to costs
 - Crop quality
 - CSA customer satisfaction
 - Capacity to scale up beyond our first social franchise

- 2. Results/Comparison:** Of the 63 youth who have participated in the long-term program (25 in 2013-2014 and 38 in 2014-2015), the vast majority remain part of the Kaima community - even when they advance to other educational or vocational programs - either formally on a part-time basis or as volunteers. Approximately 80% of Kaima participants return: a) either a traditional classroom or night school; or b) enter rehab for the first time, results attained over the span of three months to one year.
- 3. Lessons learned:** The main things we learned relate to our pedagogic outputs and our volunteer programming. Regarding the former, while our short-term summer session (two months) has shown itself to be a very strong program, we have determined a greater need to invest more time in expanding the options for our full-time, year-long participants. To this end, we piloted a new initiative – PBL – and hope, with the right financial resources, to add another component: wood and metal work. Regarding the latter, we learned that the value of bringing large number of volunteers to work with us, not only adds important manpower to the farm, but exposes Kaima youth to a variety of people, opens their minds and improves their communication skills as they learn to relate to others. Having said that, it challenges our limited human resources to manage and provide meaningful endeavor when large numbers of volunteers wish to help.

Provisional guidelines for the advancement of the program in the next year: The primary principle that will guide our work in the coming year relates to Kaima’s repeated assertion that employment (in this case, working on the farm) is a powerful educational tool. By clearly delineating expectations regarding the imperative to arrive at the farm on time; follow a daily work plan which may include shifting priorities; prepare a full lunch for the team using fresh produce from the farm; turn out a quality product; and interact with the public, participants learn to trust themselves and others – key to our overarching aims.

1. 2015-2016 programming preview:

- a. Traditional farming - current
- b. Hydroponic farming - pending
- c. Livestock farming - potential
- d. PBL - continuing
- e. Wood and metal work - potential

2. Progress towards long-term goals:

- a. 70 – 100 youth/year
- b. 80% to perform army or national service
- c. 50% to finish high school
- d. 50% to continue to volunteer

On behalf of all our beneficiaries, we thank the Matanel Foundation for its generosity and readiness to support Kaima financially and with professional guidance.