

MATANEL FOUNDATION ACTIVITY REPORT

Program: Amutat Kaima, Year: August 2015 - July 2016

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 2015 - July 2016

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Program status at date of report (not to exceed 10 lines): Less than four years since our founding, Kaima has demonstrated its capacity to re-engage, empower, and encourage the return to normative society of young Israelis (identified through the Ministry of Welfare) who have dropped out of school. Kaima's model utilizes organic farming and other activities that develop employability skills; offer work experience; teach teamwork; encourage leadership development; build community and important relationships with adults; 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 help fund our educational platform.

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

1. Main Achievements:

1.1 General: We have met many of our goals and exceeded some. For example, we have advanced our year-long initiative by introducing new pedagogic methods to encourage deeper learning, thinking, and action on the part of our young farmers. Much of this is being pursued through continued experimentation with our PBL (Project Based Learning) initiative – an undertaking being supported by the Matanel Foundation through a separate grant, and new vocational course work. Additionally, we have: **a)** scaled up by adding new farms to our growing educational network (also being supported by the Matanel Foundation); **b)** capitalized and built an offsite hydroponic greenhouse (located within Jerusalem's 30-acre Botanical Gardens) enabling us to teach new vocational and social skills, add a new income stream, and play a role in Jerusalem's urban renewal movement; **c)** involved new educational partners; and **d)** gained serious praise from the authorities for our work.

1.2 Financial: We are proud to have been able to cover approximately 50% of our operating costs from the sale of the farm's yield over the course of the grant period. We expect this number to increase to 70% within the next two years based on profits from a growing CSA customer base and revenue from another land parcel recently acquired through the generosity of local families. We will also decrease the need for supplemental purchases from other organic farmers to serve our customers (common within the CSA community based on revenue from two additional sources: **a)** our onsite greenhouse which is enabling us to grow staple crops, such as tomatoes and cucumbers, in harsh weather; and **b)** our new offsite hydroponic greenhouse which enables us to grow dark leafy greens in all seasons.

1.3 Breakthrough with authorities: As discussed with the Matanel 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 was released in 2016.

1.4 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. This process is fully underway. Kaima Be'erotayim and Kaima Hukuk, both new *amutot*, funded by seed money from Matanel, are modeling their own programs 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 2015-2016 academic year, a total of 42 young farmers (workers) took part in Kaima programming and received salaries; 35 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. We are now actively recruiting for Kaima's 2016-2017 yearlong program. A total of NIS 198,000 NIS was paid in salaries to our teen farmers during this period.

3. **Number of events/activities:**

3.1 **On-site:** Activities took place daily, with a one-week break for Pesach.

3.2 **Off-site:**

a. **Vocational courses:** Beyond their work on the farm, this year, with the financial assistance of Bituach Leumi (Israel's National Insurance Institute), Kaima workers participated in external courses of their choice, selected as part of our workforce entry workshop referenced below. The courses enabled our youth to explore potential vocational interests and build new skills. For example:

- 2 teens did a week-long tractor driving course of at the Bambi driving school.
- 1 teen is doing a six-month long airbrush course at the Kitat Oman School in Jerusalem.
- 1 teen is doing a three-month hairdressing course at the Ravit Asaf professional training school.
- 4 teens are doing a 96-hour, three-month carpentry course with Gil Arad a highly recognized woodcrafter, and Shalom Schwartz, an expert welder.
- 1 teen is doing a six-month computer course at Machshava Tova, an NGO providing enhanced technological access and training to underserved populations.
- 1 teen is doing a twice weekly, two-month soundman course at Jerusalem's Yellow Submarine multidisciplinary music center.

b. **Educational tours/activities/workshops:** To build our team and expose youth to industry developments, we introduced them to other agricultural endeavors and outdoor challenges:

- In December 2015, we toured the Rehovot campus of Hebrew University's Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment and observed experiments conducted by professors.
- In January 2016, Kaima organized our annual, three-day trip for the entire team, teens and adults included. This year the focus was to experience and learn about the Arava desert in the south, an incredibly inhospitable region which against all odds is now has some 600 farms supplying more than 60% of Israeli exports of fresh vegetables. One night was spent at a *mehina* facility and one outdoors where the group was able practice survival and self-reliance skills necessary to persevere in the desert's harsh conditions. On the final day we toured the interactive Arava Vidor Center.
- In March 2016: we toured Leket, an NGO whose mission is "to lead the safe, effective and efficient collection and distribution of surplus nutritious food in Israel, to those who need it." Kaima purchases basil plants from the center's organic nursery.
- On May 2016, we participated in an "open day" at Eden Seeds - a company which provides Kaima with *pro bono* support - which included a variety of agriculture workshops.

c. **Workshop on entering the labor force:** Organized by an external facilitator and two Kaima professionals, including our part-time social worker, we offered a ten-meeting workforce entry preparatory course. The workshop focused on self-esteem, decision-making, and assuming responsibility. We also helped identify potential occupational orientation and found a course for each participant, referenced in section 3.2 of this report. Bituach Leumi provided partial funding of the workshop and courses.

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

1. **Methodology:** Evaluation data are culled from participant feedback; staff and psychological evaluation; and observations from parents. Presently, we are interested in assessing the following:
 - 1.1 **Educational:** **a)** Satisfaction and individual attitudinal and behavioral changes; **b)** ability to develop problem solving capacities, follow a plan, and meet expectations of one's self and others; **c)** Readiness to assume new challenges beyond basic requirements.
 - 1.2 **Organizational:** **a)** ability to provide a meaningful training programs for our educational partners; **b)** readiness, aptitude, capacity to scale up by adding new program elements or exporting our programming for use by other professionals.
 - 1.3 **Financial/Business:** **a)** sales relative to costs; **b)** crop quality; **c)** CSA customer satisfaction; **d)** capacity to scale up beyond our first social franchise; **e)** success in reducing dependency on supplemental purchases from other organic farms to meet customer demand.
2. **Results/Comparison:** The vast majority of Kaima workers remain part of the Kaima community - even when they advance to other educational or vocational programs – to either formally on a part-time basis or as volunteers. Approximately 80% of Kaima participants return) either a traditional classroom or night school; or enter rehab for the first time, results attained over the span of three to twelve months. With three years under our belt, we are now seeing deeper results. Youth are taking more responsibility and are moving into higher management positions. One will serve in the coming year as Kaima's Deputy Agricultural Operations Coordinator, another as *Av Bayit* in charge of physical farm maintenance, and a third as head of our offsite hydroponic greenhouse. More positions will soon be filled by other youth workers. We are also getting ready to celebrate an incredible milestone when five participants will begin their army or national service in September. Another group will follow on March. This means that 100% of our young farmers will participate in activities to serve their country and engage in conventional social practices. We couldn't be more proud!
3. **Lessons learned:** One of the primary lessons learned this past year relates to the need to foster relationships with Israel's government authorities operating under authority of Israel's Ministries of Education, Welfare, Finance, and Agriculture. In but one example of how we are seeking to advance this further, in March 2016, we met with key professionals within Jerusalem's Municipality Welfare and Community Services Administration. Impressed by our pedagogic-economic model, they are helping us better understand how local municipal and social services work as week seek to increase the modest government funding we currently receive.
4. **Provisional guidelines for program advancement in the next year:** The primary principle that will guide our work in the coming year relates to Kaima's repeated assertions that employment is a powerful educational tool and that young people want and deserve to be active players in determining their own futures.
 - 4.1 **2016-2017 programming preview:** **a)** Traditional farming – continuing; **b)** PBL - continuing; **c)** hydroponic farming –in the early phase; **d)** livestock farming – potential.
 - 4.2 **Progress towards long-term goals:** After three years, Kaima, having attained proof of concept, will study the possibility of establishing a national “Kaima Training and Educational Center” (Center) to help advance our nascent process of replicating the farm's educational-business model.

This marks the third year and final year of support on the part of the Matanel Foundation of our student stipend project. Were it not for the belief of the Foundation in Kaima's vision, we would not have arrived at this moment. Our pride in our participants should be a source of joy for the Foundation On behalf of all our beneficiaries, we thank the Matanel Foundation for its generosity and readiness to support Kaima financially and with professional guidance. As Winston Churchill was known to say, “*Never, never, never, never give up*”. Thank you for making sure that our Israeli youth know that there are people who believe deeply in their potential.