

Farm For the Future Tanzania

# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Dear Readers,

The start of a new farming season always brings a quiet intensity, and a reminder that once the rains arrive, there is no time to overthink. For **Farm For the Future**, January–February marked the true beginning of the 2025/26 season, where planning quickly turned into action and early decisions began shaping the months ahead. Block by block, teams moved into the fields, laying the foundation for seed maize production, long-term macadamia growth, and expanded services for smallholder farmers.

This edition captures that transition from planning to execution and shows how early investments in water infrastructure, modern machinery, and people are positioning Farm For the Future for a productive and resilient season ahead.

Thank you for continuing this journey with us.

## Seed Maize Production: 180 Hectares Fully Planted

All seed maize for the 2025/26 season has now been successfully planted across **180 hectares**. Due to delayed rainfall, planting commenced in late December; however, the operation was deliberately staggered block by block at five-day intervals. This strategy allows a fixed, trained crew to carry out the critical de-tasseling process sequentially, ensuring quality control and operational efficiency.

Current growing conditions are favorable, with consistent rainfall and high temperatures supporting strong crop development. Field assessments show healthy plant establishment, effective weed control, and uniform crop performance. Our off-taker, Seed Co Tanzania, has expressed satisfaction with crop development to date.

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The farm is now entering preparations for the intensive de-tasseling phase, a key determinant of final seed quality and yield. This season's execution reinforces FFF's capacity to manage climate variability while maintaining commercial production standards.



## Macadamia Pilot Block Begins Early Production



The macadamia pilot block, planted in September 2022 with **412 trees**, has entered its first production phase, with initial nut formation observed. While macadamia trees typically reach full commercial production after seven years, yields of approximately four kilograms per tree are expected from year four onward, with productivity continuing to increase as trees mature.

This early performance confirms macadamia as a long-term strategic asset for Farm For the Future. Over time, macadamia is expected to become the farm's highest-value crop, providing stable and diversified income.

Currently, the pilot block is irrigated manually using a 10,000-litre water tank and a five-person team. To fully unlock the value of this investment and improve labor efficiency, the installation of a drip irrigation system is planned within the next two years. Adequate water supply and effective insect control remain the key success factors for scaling this value chain.

## Water Infrastructure: Strengthening Climate Resilience and Growth

Water security remains the single most critical success factor across all FFF operations. The farm's main dam is designed to be fully replenished by May 1 each year to support dry-season irrigation. While the dam benefits from a large rainwater catchment area, additional measures have been implemented to increase water reliability.

A gravity pipeline has been installed from a neighboring valley to expand the catchment area, and during periods of heavy rainfall, a mobile pump is now used to transfer water from a seasonal river into the dam. These interventions have already contributed to rising water levels.

On February 6, the FFF Board approved a **USD 150,000** investment in a new water project. This includes five high-capacity boreholes pumping water into an elevated tower dam, enabling gravity-fed irrigation across the farm.

When operated continuously, the new system can irrigate 15 hectares of seed potatoes throughout a full winter season or supply sufficient water for all 22,000 macadamia trees. Excess water can also be directed to the main dam when irrigation demand is managed.



This investment significantly strengthens FFF's long-term climate resilience and production capacity.

## Mechanization for Smallholder Farmers: Modern Technology Access

Farm For the Future is expanding beyond primary crop production into agricultural technology access for smallholder farmers. In January, FFF hosted 45 representatives from farmer organizations, government advisory offices, and private sector partners to demonstrate modern farm equipment now available for purchase or lease directly from the farm.

Participants included representatives from AMCOS (Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Societies), Regional and District Agricultural Advisors, potential dealers, and partners from Mbeya, Njombe, Iringa, and Morogoro regions. Attendees were introduced to proven mechanization solutions and encouraged to act as ambassadors, promoting these technologies within their networks.

The showcased equipment included:

- Farm preparation equipment such as rippers and disc harrows from Kverneland.
- Potato planters and harvesters from Underhaug As
- Stone rakes and stone collectors for soil improvement from Underhaug As



To ensure affordability, FFF is offering flexible payment options, including **partial upfront payments with balance on delivery**, **loan facilitation through Tanzania's four largest banks**, and **leasing arrangements supported by PASS**. Through Memoranda of Understanding with Underhaug and Kverneland, FFF earns a commission on equipment sales, while also sharing margins with dealers and individuals who market on behalf of the farm.

Combined with FFF's role as an agro-dealer for quality seed and fertilizer, this model strengthens farm profitability while enabling farmers to increase productivity and reduce labor constraints.

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## AGCOT MD congratulated FFF for new business

Farm For the Future has been a member of **AGCOT** since 2019 and maintains active engagement to align with national agricultural development priorities.

On February 2, AGCOT Managing Director **Mr. Geoffrey Kirenga** and his team visited FFF to review farm operations and the newly established machinery facility. During the visit, FFF presented its modern technology package now available to farmers through purchase or lease.



AGCOT is supporting FFF by facilitating outreach to AMCOS and potential equipment dealers, and by strengthening visibility of the mechanization initiative. FFF also requested AGCOT's participation in promoting these solutions nationally as part of broader agricultural modernization efforts.

## Children's Farm Integrated into School Curriculum in Ilula



After nearly a decade of vision and partnership development, the **Children's Farm** has received final **Government approval** and is now formally integrated into the school curriculum across Ilula.

The program operates three days per week, engaging approximately **40 students per day** from participating schools. Students learn through hands-on experience, planting crops, caring for animals, cooking, and exploring the links between nutrition, sustainable food production, and personal health. Feedback from both students and teachers is collected systematically during each Children's Farm day. Teachers consistently report strong student engagement and improved understanding of agriculture and nutrition. The program's growing scale and institutional integration mark a major milestone in FFF's education and community impact agenda.

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## Goat Milk Dairy Facility, Nearing Completion



The **Goat Milk Program** continues to deliver tangible economic benefits to participating households. Forty vulnerable families currently produce approximately 200 litres of goat milk per day, with a target of 240 litres. This will enable regular deliveries to **ASAS Dairy**, creating a reliable and inclusive value chain for Ilula.

The new Goat Milk Dairy facility at FFF will serve as a centralized collection point for ASAS, replacing the originally planned roadside collection tank and significantly improving efficiency and hygiene.

Construction of the facility has been sponsored by **Oslo Rotary Club**, whose representatives will visit FFF on February 25 to mark the project's completion. The event will include the participating goat milk farmers and celebrate the success of the program.

## Young Mothers in program get new knowledge



Between December and January, the **Women for the Future Program** supported young mothers through income-generating activities and skills development. Three out of four participant groups successfully sold stored crops, generating a combined income of **TZS 1,394,200**. These earnings are being reinvested into second-season farming and small business activities.

In parallel, participants completed a four-week digital business training program focused on entrepreneurship and financial management. The training was sponsored by **DOT** and **Mastercard**, implemented by **IDYDC**, with **IOP** providing the training venue.

As a result, **55%** of participants have adopted digital platforms for their small businesses, while others have applied the skills gained to strengthen their farming activities. Participant feedback highlights improved financial discipline, confidence, and long-term planning capacity.

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*Thank you for reading. See you next Month.*