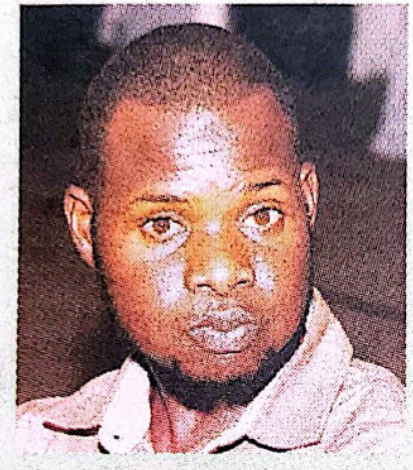
Best farmer to share tips from the Netherlands

By Joshua Kato

Between June 17 – 24, Bashir Mayiga, together with 12 other farmers toured the Netherlands, as part of the 2016 Vision Group Best Farmers competition. He is now set to share his experience with fellow farmers when he hosts them at his farm in Kalungu district on August 5.

"I am going to tell them the experiences I have adopted from my recent trip to the Netherlands," Mayiga said. The training will largely focus on how farmers can make a profit from passion fruits.

Mayiga, who is also the third overall Vision Group best farmer, will host other farmers on his farm in Bwasandeku. The



Mayiga

Vision Group Best Farmers competition is organised by Vision Group, with support from the Royal Netherlands Embassy, dfcu Bank and KLM Airlines. It is currently running for the fourth year.

"Beyond just growing the crops or keeping animals, Dutch farmers have got clear management systems of their farms, and thus they last for generations. I will explain all this to the visiting farmers," Bashir said.

Before he planted them, Mayiga had always got a passion for growing passion fruits to earn a living. So, even as he toiled around Kampala, doing odd jobs, including riding a bodaboda, his main objective was to get money to set up a passion fruit farm. Four years down the road, the venture has turned him into a celebrity, given the number of people who visit his farm every day.

Born 30 years ago at Bwasandeku in Kalungu district, Mayiga attended Kyato Primary School, Kyato Secondary School for O' level and Kawanda Secondary School for A' level.

He dropped out of school after Senior Six when he failed to raise money to further his education. He joined the bodaboda business, but after three years, he ventured into growing passion fruits.

"After realising that the bodaboda business was no longer lucrative, I got my savings and started growing passion fruits on a three-acre piece of family land," he said. This was around 2012.

He has since expanded it to six acres, in three different blocks. Mayiga picked passion fruits because he did a survey around the country and realised that a lot of it came from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

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