AGRIBUSINESS YIELDS SH72M MONTHLY FOR STATE MINISTER

By Andrew Musinguzi

Transport state minister Fred Byamukama has tasked Kyenjojo district leaders with sensitising the community about wealth creation initiatives, including the four-acre model farming system.

He urged them to focus on measures for improving the economic welfare of their people instead of giving them handouts, which cannot get them out of poverty.

"You should help your people to create sustainable wealth through four acre-model farming systems like coffee, pineapple, banana growing and rearing of domestic animals such as dairy cattle, piggery and poultry, which generate higher and quick income," Byamukama advised.

The minister asked his fellow leaders to emulate him, saying he earns over sh72m monthly from all his agricultural enterprises established on a four-acre piece of land with projects of piggery, pineapple, poultry, dairy cattle and bananas mixed with coffee.

He was speaking last week while hosting over 100 Kyenjojo leaders who went on a study tour of Karoli Kamanyire Demonstration farm in Kikwaya village, Kakumiro district.

Providing more details about his agribusiness enterprises, the minister said he earns sh55m net profit from poultry per month, sh6m net profit from the six dairy cows for zero grazing, sh4.5m from half an acre of pineapple per year, and sh18m from one acre of coffee per month

"I employ 26 workers on 4 acres, each earning about sh250,000 monthly in addition to feeding and accommodation. It is only the manager and the supervisor who earn sh1.5m because they are graduates. Other workers are school dropouts," the minister said.

He asked leaders to spearhead wealth creation activities, including the Parish Development Model, Youth livelihood Programme and Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme, four-acre model farming and the Generating Growth Opportunities and Productivity for Women Enterprises Project. Byamukama said they are vital for enhancement of household income and eventual poverty eradication.

He blamed agriculture extension workers over inefficiencies and district service commissions for fuelling corruption tendencies through recruitment of incompetent district civil servants.

Byamukama thanked the Kyenjojo Woman MP, Seperanza Baguma Muhenda, for sponsoring her political taskforce to come and learn better methods of farming and using small pieces of land to generate money.

The Kyenjojo leaders also raised farming challenges such as dry spell, coffee wilt disease, fake drugs in the market, swine fever, expensive co-funding, lack of finances for expansion, poor infrastructure, corruption and lack of electricity.

Responding to the issues, Byamukama said he would push for Government interventions such as helping farmers with minimal co-funding, micro-irrigation, tractors for mechanisation, extension of electricity to rural areas and importation of recommended drugs.

The Kyenjojo leaders, who included politicians and civil servants led by Baguma, commended the hard work and exemplary leadership of the minister and promised to emulate his example.

LEADERS SPEAK OUT

Talking about the study trip, Baguma said: "I decided to sponsor my taskforce from Kyenjojo district, who include local council officials, retired civil servants and youth, to come to Kamanyire demonstration farm to learn how to use a small piece of land to establish profitable enterprises. As leaders, we need to sensitise the local people on how to create sustainable household income."

Alice Sabiiti, a councillor for Katooke town council, said: "As leaders, we should be exemplary. I am also a farmer, but on a small scale. I have learnt how to manage zero grazing, poultry farming and piggery. I will sensitise my people on how possible it is to establish many enterprises on

PHOTO BY ANDREW MUSINGUZI



Byamukama (centre) with Kyenjojo local leaders holding trays of eggs from Karoli Kamanyire four-acre model farm in Kikwaya village, Kakumiro district

BENEFICIARY SPEAKS OUT

SOLOMON SABIITI FROM MABIRA TOWN COUNCIL

"I want to thank our beloved Woman MP, Seperanza Baguma, for sponsoring our tour. I have learnt that you can use cheap local materials to establish piggery and poultry projects on a small piece of land. I used to fear starting such projects thinking they are expensive."



TIP

100 LEADERS WERE ASKED TO ADOPT FOUR-ACRE MODEL FARMING