

BEST FARMERS FLAGGED OFF FOR NETHERLANDS TRIP

BY HERBERT MUSOKE

The best farmers were told to go out and see, learn and share knowledge when they return from the Netherlands.

The farmers were flagged off on Thursday during an evening function at dfcu Bank headquarters in Kampala.

The function was attended by the Netherlands Ambassador to Uganda, Frederieke Quispel, Vision Group chief executive officer Don Wanyama, KLM country manager Lukia Otema, Koudijs technical manager Dr Geoffrey Mukama and the dfcu Bank retail manager, Annette Kiconco.

Several previous best farmers, including Isaac Malinga, the MP of Soy County in Kween district, also attended the event.

The 13 travelling winners include Hood Kiwana Kasirye, Pison Busingye, Dr Richard Wemesa, Nelly Turyahebwa, Joan Kantu, Zubairi Mukaaya, Ann Hope Anguyo, Alfred Ojok, Patrick Olobo, Charles Oyuk; Daniel Kiragga, the manager Kibinge Coffee Farmers' Co-operative; Grace Natukunda of Dem Farm and Christopher Okwang of Alito Joint Co-operative.

The Best Farmers Competition is organised by Vision Group through the New Vision Foundation under the Vision Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture in partnership with the Netherlands Embassy, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, dfcu Bank and Koudijs BV.

While addressing the



PHOTO BY RICHARD SANYA

From left: dfcu Bank chief retail banking officer Annette Kiconco; the Ambassador of Netherlands to Uganda, Frederieke Quispel and the KLM Royal Dutch Airlines country manager, Lukia Otema, with other guests during the flag off of the 2025 Best Farmers Competition winners to the Netherlands at the dfcu Bank headquarters in Kampala on Thursday (Scan picture using the Vision Digital Experience to watch video)

participants, Ambassador Quispel requested the farmers to learn, pick experiences and share them when they return.

"You are Uganda's ambassadors. When you return, share what you have seen. Encourage others. More importantly, grow your enterprises so you can compete to not only be the best farmers in Uganda, but one of the best farmers worldwide," she said.

In his message during the event, Wanyama reiterated that the Best Farmers Competition has, over the years, changed lives.



Vision Group CEO Don Wanyama

"Through these 12 years, this competition has changed not only the lives of individuals, but also

societies and the country at large. Some previous winners have transitioned from selling locally to exporting their products. These include David Wamai from Bugisu, who is exporting coffee to the Netherlands now, and Johnson Basangwa, who is importing poultry products. We have more partnerships in dairy and poultry equipment, too," he said.

On the other hand, Mukama recommitted the company's continued support to the farmers, saying Koudijs has existed since 1717 when it was established and

continues to grow bigger.

KLM's Otema reaffirmed the airline's commitment to sustainable and agricultural development as farmers play a vital role in feeding communities and driving economic growth.

On behalf of dfcu Bank, Kiconco said the bank plays a key role in the social-economic development of Uganda and they need to avail partnerships, solutions, products, services and facilities that support the agriculture sector and its participants to achieve visible and long-term success.