

DEMONSTRATION FARM

Museveni will plant an assortment of food crops at the Baralege Presidential Demonstration Farm

By Taddeo Bwambale and Patrick Okino

President Yoweri Museveni is set to inaugurate his new private farm in Otuke district to demonstrate prudent best farming practices to locals.

Tomorrow, he will plant an assortment of food crops at the Baralege Presidential Demonstration Farm set up at Baralege State Lodge, the President's press secretary, Linda Nabusayi, said.

The state lodge is located about 5km from Otuke town council and about 10km from Lira town. In its neighbourhood are communities that suffered the brutality of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and Karimojong cattle rustlers. Museveni pitched camp in the area about 15 years ago to fight elusive LRA leader, Joseph Kony.

Baralege becomes one of several demonstration sites the President has set up over the last two years in his campaign to show how farmers can reap big from relatively small tracts of land, using modest irrigation methods.

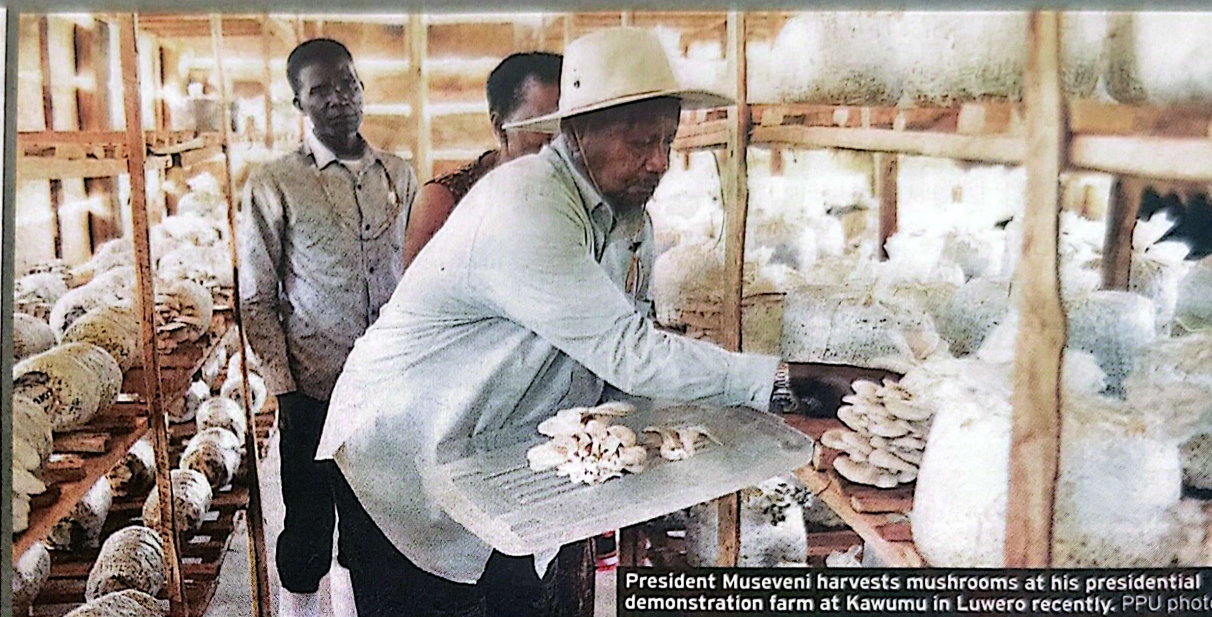
In October 2016, Museveni started a similar demonstration farm in Kawumu village, Makulubita sub-county, Luwero district to showcase his widely publicised four-acre farming model.

The farm sits on 24 acres and aims to demonstrate to small-scale farmers how to maximise output.

Last year, the President set up another farm in Katyerera, Mayuge district, where he regularly showcases farming models to locals and leaders from neighbouring regions.

His use of bottle irrigation, initially chastised by some sections of the public, produced a harvest of tomatoes, passion fruits, mushrooms, pineapples and matooke, as well as fish, chicken and dairy products.

"The coffee is now flowering at 12 months instead of 18 because of drip irrigation,"



President Museveni harvests mushrooms at his presidential demonstration farm at Kawumu in Luwero recently. PPU photo

Museveni to open Otuke model farm

Museveni said during a tour of the farm four months later in February, during which he harvested some crops.

He stressed that his intention of starting the farms was to demonstrate to locals how they can embrace farming to eradicate poverty.

The facilities will serve as government demonstration sites for government agencies and neighbouring communities on productive use of farm land for wealth creation.

The farm was established at a time when the country was grappling with a prolonged dry spell, which the President insisted could be tamed using simple approaches such as drip irrigation by adopting plastic water bottles.

Four-acre model

The four-acre model is a household income formula to eradicate poverty through rational and frugal use of space available for farming

to maximise income.

Under the system, each acre is dedicated to a particular high-value crop or product. For instance, one acre is dedicated to a perennial cash crop like coffee, tea and cocoa; one acre to fruits, one to pasture for dairy cattle for daily income and another to growing food for security and high value crops such as vegetables.

The President also has a farm in Kisozi, Gomba district.