



Vincent Mayiga the Pokino of Masaka attends to his coffee crop. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL J. SSALI

Mixed farming keeps Mayiga picking money

Vincent Mayiga is reaping a rich harvest since he ventured into enterprises such as poultry, agro forestry, bananas, livestock and coffee, writes Michael Ssali.

4000

NUMBER OF BIRDS ON MAYIGA'S FARM



Vincent Mayiga attends to his sorts out an issue in his poultry house.

At a time when there is a strong perception that farming especially on a large scale is a profitable venture, retired civil servant Vincent Mayiga has created waves by earning millions from his mixed farm.

Armed with a measurable retirement package, Mayiga opted to pursue his farming passion venturing in several enterprises such as poultry, agro-forestry, bananas, coffee and livestock.

It is his drive to innovate and constant experimentation with multi-cropping methods that have helped the 67-year-old, who is also the traditional chief for Buddu County, to reap a rich harvest.

The farm

The farm which he named Musajja Awaza Mixed Farm is located in Kisunku Village, near Kalisizo Town, in Rakai Districts. He reveals that the farm sits on 60 acres of land and is

jointly run with his wife Rosemary Mayiga. His main enterprises are poultry, livestock, coffee and banana farming. Mayiga's farm sits on more than 60 acres.

He cultivates nearly 30 varieties of crop on his land, including pumpkins, fruits and several African vegetables such as nakati (*solanum macrocarpon*) which rake in more than Shs20m per season.

Coffee

Of the 60 acres, Mayiga cultivates 14

Bananas

His banana garden occupies two acres. He uses only organic manure comprising poultry droppings, grass and cow dung from the livestock.

"We get the manure from the cowdung and occasionally it is applied in the banana garden," says

acres of Robusta coffee. The coffee has been intercropped with other crops which provide ample shade and organic fertilisers.

He grows clonal Robusta coffee because it is high yielding and he encourages all coffee farmers under his leadership to do the same.

"I have discovered from experience that clonal Robusta coffee grows faster and is more yielding than the so-called 'elite Robusta coffee' whose seedlings are prepared by germination of coffee berries and then potted."

Mayiga has devoted about half an acre to the 'elite' coffee type whose

the former civil servant.

Upon maturity, Mayiga reveals he sells a truck full of banana to his clients mainly from Masaka Market.

"We sell most of the bananas and the other food crops that we produce in this garden as we cannot consume all

poor results compared to those of clonal coffee are quite noticeable.

By the time *Seeds of Gold* visited some of the coffee was beginning to ripen but he was not in a hurry to have it harvested.

"I always prefer to give it time to ripen further since I always insist on my workers picking red ripe coffee," he explained.

He believes in good post-harvest-handling and wants all coffee farmers to do the same—picking only ripe coffee, drying it on clean mats or tarpaulin and ensuring that it is really dry before they sell it.

the food," he revealed.

Poultry

Currently Mayiga keeps 4,000 birds which give him more than 10,000 eggs generating Shs3.2m per week.

He prefers to prepare chicken feed for his poultry project by purchasing

Profits

Thanks to intensive manure use, he gets over 90 gunny bags of Robusta coffee in the main coffee harvest season from one of his coffee gardens measuring about four acres and located at Kyango village.

Mayiga has ready market for his products especially coffee. That is, he is reticent about how much he earns from his farming activities. Mayiga reveals he sells to a local cooperative society known as Lihwa Obwavu at Shs5,800 per kilogram of coffee. His eggs are bought by traders from Kalisizo and Masaka towns.

His larger coffee garden located at Kaswa along Lusaka-Kyannamukwesi road is equally productive and since it is close to a swamp, Mayiga is not so worried about prolonged droughts.

Trees

Mayiga has planted 20 acres of eucalyptus trees. He has some useful advice on the importance of tree farming.

"As elderly people a eucalyptus forest is an easy enterprise to depend on as long as it is well protected from bush fire. It does not require a lot of labour beyond what it takes for pruning and one does not have to worry really about such issues as pests and fertiliser application," he says.

The trees at Musajja Awaza Mixed Farm are normally harvested in bulk and the income is quite sizeable. Each mature tree sells at Shs100,000 while the damaged and pruned trees go for Shs3000.

Employment

Mayiga employs more than 10 workers on the farm including the farm manager who is the overall administrator. "All the workers here are highly trained and they do understand their jobs. This farm also contributes to the economy through paying taxes and producing food which feeds the people," he said.

Benefits

Mayiga has been able to invest into several businesses using the money he gets from selling his farm products. "I have become a landlord in Kalisizo Town thanks to the proceeds that I get from my coffee. I also managed to open up the only active drycleaning business," he revealed.

Mayiga has also bought himself a truck which transports his farm products to the market.

Future

Mayiga has big plans for the future in poultry farming, bananas and agro-forestry. "I intend to install an irrigation plant and also expand the tree project. I want to become the biggest supplier of eggs in the region," he says.

the ingredients locally which he says reduces overhead costs.

Fruits

He has planted about 1000 trees of avocado, guava, lemon, mangoes, apples and pawpaw. He earns about Shs10m from his fruits per year.