



# PELICAN NEWS

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## FRESHPPACT LAUNCH GROUNDBREAKING AGRICULTURAL MULCH TRIALS IN GHANA

FRESHPPACT

MULCH TRIALS

This month Blue Skies and the FRESHPPACT team commenced trials of alternative solutions to plastic mulch used on pineapple farms.

Led by the [University of Northampton](#), we are testing farm mulch made from coconut coir by Coco360, biodegradable mulch from CSIR South Africa and an approach that uses no mulch at all.

We are also working with Data Solutions Hub to test a new mechanical mulch lifter which could potentially remove plastic film from soils so that it can be recycled. If successful, these solutions could have a significant impact in mitigating plastic pollution from agricultural mulch used across the industry.

Thanks to support from [The SMEP Programme](#) and funding from UK International Development, we have been able to initiate this project through [The Fresh Produce Impact Hub \(FRESHPPACT\)](#).

To learn more check out the updates on page 8, or follow the stories on LinkedIn here: <https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/freshppact>





# BLUE SKIES CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On the 8th March, Blue Skies celebrated International Women's Day. This was celebrated across many sites, including Blue Skies Benin who created posters and awareness to accelerate women's equality. Attached are some images from across our sites of the women of Blue Skies.

Congratulations to the magnificent performance by our Blue Skies Women. In celebration of you all!



On International Women's Day, Anthony Pile addressed a community durbar at a school built by the Foundation at Ahwerease Damang Community near the factory.





## ALBERT HEIJN CELEBRATED IN GHANA

FOUNDATION

GHANA

During the week of 4th March, Dutch retail giant Albert Heijn Foundation Executives were honoured during a visit to Blue Skies. The visit, which showcased the unique partnership between the two organisations, underscored Albert Heijn's commitment to sustainability and ethical sourcing practices. Director of the Foundation Erik Vorenkamp and Dominique Hendriksen (Sourcing Manager) who was visiting Ghana for the first time was given a first hand look at Blue Skies' operations in Ghana, where they witnessed the company's innovative approach to fruit processing and its dedication to supporting local communities.



Dominique of Albert Heijn received the gratitude of the chief of Darmang and his community for the Foundation's gift of a block of class rooms for the school pictured below.

## INDEPENDENCE DAY KEEP FIT EVENT

Blue Skies Keep Fit Club's Independence Day Fitness Event which was dubbed "Fit Focus With Samrobics" was a tremendous success, with over 200 participants joining together to celebrate health, wellness, and Ghana's Independence Day. Through a combination of engaging fitness activities, fun games, and patriotic celebrations, the event exemplified the club's commitment to promoting physical activity and fostering a sense of unity within the community. The event served as a platform for fostering community engagement and unity, bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds to celebrate a shared sense of national pride. Participants bonded over their mutual love for fitness and Ghanaian culture, forming new connections and strengthening existing friendships in the process. As the day concluded, participants departed with renewed inspiration to continue their fitness journey and uphold the values of health and wellness in their daily lives.



# PROMOTIONS IN GHANA



## ERNEST ASARE

### Head of Procurement (Non-Fruit)

Ernest, formally of Fiat, has been promoted to lead the Procurement non-fruit team. He comes in with very relevant qualifications and 10 years+ experience with the fruit procurement team in BS.



Congratulations to both Ernest and Alfred!

## ALFRED DARKWAH-Deputy Chief Engineer II

Alfred of Engineering, has been promoted to Deputy Chief Engineer II, supporting Papa Kusi and Donne. As the ref lead on site looking after factories 1, 2 and 3, we have seen Alfred grow in his role, and he will no doubt be a great support for the engineering headship, with their ever-growing needs.



# MONTHLY UPDATES IN BRAZIL



## WELCOME TO DANIEL

In a bid to drive greater control of its raw material, Brazil is looking to augment its Agronomy Department. We are pleased therefore to announce that Daniel Petrovitch, an agronomist residing in Petrolina, has joined us in March. Daniel has 7 years' experience in Agronomy, having worked with big mango growers in the Northeast. Together with Caio, Daniel will support us with one of our largest and most challenging direct costs - raw material. Daniel and Caio will work together, with some responsibilities shared. Caio will be more focused and dedicated to monitoring the regions of São Paulo and Minas Gerais, due diligence work (documentation and certification of suppliers), NPD (pricing, samples, availability and seasonality calendars) and Daniel will lead the monitoring of growers in the São Francisco Valley. Please join me in welcoming Daniel to the Blue Skies family, and wishing him great success! - Flavia Mometti, Brazil General Manager.



# BENIN CELEBRATE 4TH ANNIVERSARY



Blue Skies Benin recently enjoyed celebrations of the 4th anniversary of Blue Skies Benin first export. Benin exported its first AKE on Air France, on 23rd February 2020. This year, the day was celebrated on Tuesday 27th February 2024. The team enjoyed a full day programme consisting of various sporting activities, which encouraged lots of participation and competition!



VICTOIRE FC (in Blue), PHENIX FC (in yellow), and TIGRE NOIR FC (in green) celebrating the end of the league season together.



AGODJIE FC celebrating.

Congratulations to Blue Skies Benin on celebrating their 4th Anniversary.

# BLUE SKIES FRANCE ATTEND TRADE EVENT



TRADE EVENT

Our French team recently attended a regional trade exhibition, showcasing the Blue Skies product range. The team had a great set up and we are delighted that the feedback has been really positive. A big thank you and congratulations to Franck, Sophie, and Cecile for all of their hard work in making this event a success.



## APPRECIATION FOR THE BLUE SKIES FOUNDATION

On the 14th March, Blue Skies received a letter of appreciation from the department of Education in MPUMALANGA PROVINCE for their work in the Foundation and their support during the awards ceremony held on the 1st March 2024.

Blue Skies has supported the education department by providing essential tools such as laptops which were awarded to the top achieving students, which have greatly assisted the students in their studies at universities.

The department of education recognises the crucial support Blue Skies Foundation offers, and looks forward to a long standing partnership. To the right is the certificate of appreciation being presented to the Blue Skies Foundation at the awards ceremony. Congratulations to all!



## WELCOME TO GERRY!



Blue Skies Field QC and Packhouse Inspector

A little bit about me. I have always been a jock in a nerd's world and a nerd in a jock's world.

I played professional rugby which taught me most of life's lessons. I consider myself a committed Christian and progressive capitalist. My hobbies are history, religion, politics and being a secret food chef.

Sometimes I would play Rugby for my City when I am in the Western Cape.

I also love doing speeches, presentations or stand-up comedy in front of crowds.

As the oldest of the cousins, I involve myself with their lives in almost all aspects. Very proud, as they are overachievers, giants among men and god-fearing Christians. Lastly, I was diagnosed with the same condition/advantage as Elon Musk, at the age of 12, High Functioning Aspergers Syndrome.







## FLEUR'S TOUR OF EGYPTIAN BLUEPRINT PROJECTS

BLUEPRINT

EGYPT

In mid-March, there was the opportunity for a Blueprint visit to Egypt. Fleur visited the site to meet the Blueprint team in person and understand the current activities, future goals and any challenges better. During the visit, we dedicated time to sustainability training, which was met with enthusiastic participation and energy from the teams. Everyone was motivated to learn more about the subject, and ideas for future projects started flowing. Additionally, the visit included tours of two foundational projects, Lamset Khair Charitable Society and Al-Rashad Charitable Society. There we could see first hand the positive impact these initiatives have on local communities, and great to see our foundation playing a role in that. The journey didn't end in Egypt; it extended to South Africa and Brazil. Details of these Blueprint visits will be shared in our next newsletter! The hospitality at each site was extraordinary, with the teams in Egypt, South Africa, and Brazil offering a warm welcome. A heartfelt thank you to everyone involved for making this visit both memorable and productive.



## RAMADAN IN EGYPT

Blue Skies Egypt welcomed the month of Ramadan with wonderful Ramadan decorations, lanterns and cheerful lighting to spread happiness and joy among people during this month.



EGYPT

RAMADAN CELEBRATIONS





# FRESHPPACT: MULCH TRIALS

On the 18th March, the trials began which involves testing innovative agricultural mulch materials as alternatives to plastic at one of our pineapple farms in Ghana. The first being coconut coir mulch being laid alongside plastic mulch, in addition to an approach that doesn't use mulch at all. This significant event marks a historic step towards reducing the use of plastic mulch.

During this week, several media talks took place. On Monday, Simon Derrick and Ebenezer from the University of Northampton appeared live on GBC TV and Radio breakfast shows to discuss the project. The following day, Tuesday, marked the beginning of planting at Zulu farm. On Wednesday, stakeholder roundtable meetings took place and a farm visit. The visit was attended by representatives from our grant funders, including UNCTAD, SSN (the grant managers), Pegasys (representing FCDO), and the British High Commission. Members of the press were also present and conducted interviews with Ebenezer and Alistair.

During this trip, the team were joined by Davood Sabaei from Data Solutions Hub, who has built a mechanical mulch remover. His invention, which has undergone testing in Scotland and with VR technology, is hoped to be brought to Ghana in December to test on the farms. While he was in Ghana, he visited some local workshops with Mawuli and Alistair to assess the potential for manufacturing the machine locally. He was impressed by what he saw.

Moving forward, we will establish additional monitoring and protocols for the ongoing trials. Ebenezer and Seyi from the University of Northampton stayed later in Ghana until Friday for a meeting with the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation to discuss Ghanaian policy and legislation. All activities have been documented by Max MacGillivray and can be accessed on LinkedIn. We extend our deepest gratitude to the team in Ghana for their unwavering support throughout the week. We also appreciate Hella's support during this visit. Special recognition goes to Dorothy and Eric for their relentless efforts in helping to launch this project.



## NEXT MONTH

Fairmiles are holding an EU Stakeholder Roundtable Event on 30th April. Register to attend in-person or online via the link below:  
<https://lnkd.in/eea8iUSH>

