



Beltu Farm

Heidi Brown

Planting in Beltu has not started yet. Only safflower for use as green manure will be planted as the spring crop.

There are test plots on the farm for testing different planting methods, to determine which is the best for water capture, such as dammer dikers, rifts, basins, etc.



Cafe Waallii is up, but not running yet. We are still waiting for someone to run it.



The school project is now in the finishing work stage, and the doors and windows are in.



Bilito-Siraro Farm



Abraham Tadesse

Bilito Farm was one of the state-owned, large scale lands that were managed under the privatization and public enterprises supervising agency of Ethiopia. It is located 311 km from Addis Ababa and 38 km from Awassa. It has a total holding of 3809.16 hectares of land that are divided into two units called Bilito and Siraro. The farm has been producing a large proportion of maize/corn, haricot beans, sunflower, soy beans, and Rhodes grass for several years. The farm recently obtained electric power from the national grid and also has access to mobile telephone and fixed line services. The farm was having low productivity due to the use of old farm machineries, poor input utilization, and erratic distribution of rainfall during cultivation. Even under such circumstances the farm has been profitable for the past five years, with the exception of one year of loss.

MAI has a vision to improve the productivity of the land by using modern machinery that will scale-up efficiency, proper utilization of inputs, and labor productivity.

Most local farmers in Ethiopia lack improved seeds due to shortage of private seed companies that are engaged in the seed business. The improved seed supply covers only 20% of the national demand, which is still being majorly supplied by government owned seed enterprises. MAI intends in the long run to use this land to conduct research activities and introduce new varieties of maize, haricot beans, and sunflower. It will produce and supply hybrid maize and other crop seeds that will help rural farmers to get access to the seeds that will improve their productivity per unit area of land.

MAI Won the Bilito-Siraro Farm Bid in Ethiopia

MAI successfully won the Bilito Siraro Farm Bid. We received the news at a bid opening event on February 23rd. The formal announcement will come in the form of a letter within the next 30 days.

A very special thanks and commendation goes to the Bid Presentation Team of Dr. Abera, Duce, Yared, Abraham, and Riyad. Many other MAI employees assisted as well. We thank you all. This is a great opportunity for MAI and we welcome the challenge.

Additionally, I take this opportunity to speak for each MAI employee, and sincerely say thank you to Paul, for affording each of us a chance to contribute and make a positive difference in the business and agricultural landscape of Ethiopia.

This is exciting!!!!

*Wally Odd,
Morrell Agro Industries
Executive Vice President*

Facilities and Logistics



Mamayenesh Teshome

This month the Logistics Department had to accomplish several different tasks simultaneously. In the Facilities Department some major changes occurred. The decision was made to terminate the lease contracts of the bigger guest house and the CMC guest house, and the lease contracts were amended for the middle and smaller guest houses along with the Mekanissa warehouse. All routine maintenance has been done in all of the guest houses, including the replacement of the broken glass door of the middle guest house.

The faulty water meter for the restaurant is currently being replaced. Thus, a refund of one year's water bill from the restaurant to MAI has been calculated, discussed, and payment has been made accordingly.

In regards to the main office, office reallocation has been performed and furniture has been rearranged. All the necessary keys, furniture, and accessories have been collected from staff whose employment contracts have been terminated. And, all of the monthly facilities purchasing budget has been adjusted according to the current needs. The maintenance person has been on training for awhile, and they have earned the national driving license. They were also given a test by the transport section and passed successfully for ease and fast task accomplishment. Therefore, the routine maintenance works and monthly utility bills have been made for all of facilities.

During the month of February, the following major activities were performed and achieved under the Transport and Logistics Department.

The department provided transportation for MAI staff and rented vehicles to travel from Addis to the Beltu Farm, for surveying other farms, for court cases, and for administration purposes. Vehicle assignment was made for the Toyota Hilux pickup. It was handed over to the Shashamene project manager under Measa. Supervision and management for the rented vehicles and fuel was conducted accordingly. Equipment, materials, seeds, chemicals, and John Deere spare parts purchased from the US were received and transported in turn to the Beltu Farm efficiently and effectively without any damages or shortages. Moreover, the locally purchased grocery items, oxygen cylinders, water tanks, and miscellaneous commodities were also transported to the Beltu Farm without shortage and damage.

In regards to customs clearing and logistics operations, since responsibilities were transferred to the Transportation Department, various clearing operations and related cost savings (due to minimized demurrage, storage, and fair tax valuation) are recorded for MAI. Therefore, we have processed permit support, duty free facilitation, and cleared out from the airport and Kalitti customs the Franco Valuta basis, seed treated, dammer dikers, safflower, chemicals, Dodge truck spares and accessories, display, and John Deere machines spare parts.

MAI-LOGISTICS

We have added some new members to our team:

I Am delighted to announce:



RAHEL ALEMAYEHU - Logistics Facilitator

Rahel an MBA graduate in International Business from Anglia Ruskin University, UK and has an extensive experience in custom coordination and support at different departments levels including the

Deputy General Director of Ethiopian Revenue & Customs Authority. She is currently based in Addis Ababa Head Office and can be reached at 0911-37-37-97.



ALEMAYEHU REFERA – Project Manager

Alemayehu Refera has a M.Sc from Alemaya University of Agriculture and a B.Sc from Addis Ababa University in Plant Science and has been to several international trainings in the USA, Israel, India, and Kenya. He has exten-

sive experience of more than 26 years in agricultural research and 4 years as a National Consultant. He speaks fluent English, Oromifa, and Amharic. He is currently based in Beltu and can be contacted at 0911-63-49-51.



DABA FEYISA – Sr. Agronomist

Daba Feyisa has a M.Sc in Agronomy from the University of the Free State of South Africa and a B.Sc in Plant Science from Alamaya University in Ethiopia. He has experience in conducting research for more than

17 years in different areas and capacities. He speaks fluent English, Oromifa, and Ahmaric. He is currently based in Beltu and can be contacted at 0911-38-52-19 and/or 0922-48-76-27.



HAILEMARIYAM DAGNE – Assist. Agronomist

Hailemariam Dagne is a graduate of Forestry (B.Sc) from Hawassa University. He has experience working in agronomy in different private and government offices.

He speaks fluent English, Oromifa, and Amharic. He is currently based in Beltu and can be contacted at 0911-79-71-25.

Please join me in extending a heartfelt welcome to all our new employees of MAI.

Joe Morrell

Contribution of Mamayenesh Teshome

Fire roars across Kokosa farm... saved by the bull

Lonny Ward, Consultant/Abera Chala, Farm Manager

At the Kokosa farm a controlled burn got out of hand in mid-March. About half of the farm was on fire. Fortunately, no people, animals, or structures were damaged. The fire raced across the farm and started onto the neighboring community property. Abera, the farm manager, responded quickly to get and keep the situation under control.

There were a few false banana trees that were damaged in addition to the loss of many acres of pasture. Abera is assessing the total damage.

During all of the commotion, there were a few less reputable citizens that tried to come in and steal cattle. The guards were able to protect the cattle and keep the thieves away.

Fires during the dry season in Ethiopia are a very scary thing, because the people there do not have the resources needed to fight fire as people do in the United States. This fire burned over 100 acres, so it really stirred up the community. In order to calm the tension, Abera invited the neighboring community officials and villagers to an “apology ceremony” where a formal apology was made for the fire, and fattened bull was killed to feast on as part of the ceremony. Abera did a great job of quickly handling the situation and calming the tensions in the village.

Fortunately, there are still some good grasses left on the farm, and what was burned will be beneficial for good pasture improvement in the future.



Seed Certification

Dr. Aberra Deressa

On March 16, 2012, the Ethiopian National Variety Committee approved the registration of the Jefferson wheat variety and three barely varieties, namely, Walker, Goldeneye, and Aquila. MAI can now officially produce and sell these seed varieties to anyone in the country.

Congratulations and thanks to all involved for their efforts.

Kokosa Dairy Farm

Abera Chala, Kokosa Project Director

The following is the progress made on the MAI Livestock and Dairy project in Kokosa.

- Staff worked on data collection regarding marketing research.
- Staff purchased 103 local (Arsi) breed bulls for the fattening program from the Arbe Gona, Gata, and Negele Mitema cattle markets. The current total number of bulls purchased has reached 225.
- Two horses were purchased for internal farm patrol and for transporting to cattle markets where there are no roads suitable for cars.
- Construction materials for the a new cattle barn were purchased. Beside this material, tree logs were split for side pole by daily laborers.
- Two new herd keepers, one milking man, and two barn cleaners were hired to facilitate the fattening program quickly and for health control.
- Fresh milk is being sold to the surrounding restaurants every morning. The afternoon milk is left for the calves. The milk for each cow is recorded and registered by the farm supervisor.
- Staff purchased DAP for use on the farm. They also purchased salt with a high iodine content for cattle that will solve the deficiency of minerals in the feed concentrate that was already purchased.
- Treatments were given to the bulls in order to remove internal and external parasites.
- The working condition of the guards was arranged so that they can easily secure the project area.
- Staff talked with experts and mechanics that will be able to repair the generators and to install the electric and water lines.
- For better management of cross breed bulls from the Debre Ziet Research Center, the managerial decision was made to feed those bulls together with the Holstein Friesian cows. They are now starting improve in body condition. However, one of them did die yesterday night.

Total Farm Animal Population

- 225 local bulls (50 bulls have reached market size)
- 4 Holstein Friesian cows (2 cows are milking cows, 1 pregnant, and 1 dry cow)
- 2 cross breed calves (less than six months old)
- 23 Borana heifers calves (2 heifers are pregnant)
- 12 Borana bulls calves
- 10 Cross breed bulls
- 2 horses
- 1 donkey

