



Model Farmer in Sustainable Organic Agriculture

Successful transition from smallholding production



Uganda Youths at Risk Development Network (UYDNET) was started in 2015 by farmers who wished to ensure that the poor and vulnerable youths of Buikwe district are able to meet their basic needs to enhance sustainable development through smart agriculture, climate change mitigation and nutrition aspects. UYDNET is providing extension services to the surrounding communities using a model of five farmers per village who duplicate sustainable farming activities at the learning centre by pulling resources to sustain the organisation.

The organisation emphasizes diversity of enterprises on farmers' gardens, and most of the farmers in the organisation produce hibiscus, coffee, bananas, and vegetables like onions, tomatoes, cabbages, pumpkins, and egg plants among others. The gardens of most members are also used as community learning centres.

Mr. Appollo Ddembe

Apollo Ddembe, a visionary farmer from the village of Kizigo-Maggwa in Najjemba Division, Buikwe, has become a true icon of commercial agriculture. What began as a humble 3-acre farm has blossomed into a sprawling 8-acre agricultural enterprise under his skilled stewardship. Equipped with valuable training in enterprise selection, Apollo strategically focused on cultivating bananas, maize, beans, cassava, and vegetables.

**PHYSICAL ADDRESS (OFFICE)**

Kizigo, Najjemba - Buikwe

S/COUNTY/DIVISION:

Najjemba Division

VILLAGE:

Kizigo

DISTRICT:

Buikwe

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Every season, Apollo allocates a substantial portion of his land to maize and bean production, which have emerged as the backbone of his agricultural success. With unwavering dedication and careful farming practices, he consistently harvests over 12 tonnes of high-quality maize and 4 tonnes of beans per season. This impressive yield translates into gross seasonal incomes of over UGX 20 million, earning Apollo the well-deserved reputation as one of the most successful farmers in the whole of Buikwe district.



Apollo Ddembe's farmland for maize and bean production

However, Apollo's achievements go beyond impressive harvests. His refusal to embrace commercial sugarcane cultivation stands as a testimony to his leadership and vision. Recognizing the challenges and losses incurred by smallholder farmers in sugarcane production, he made a bold move to cut down 4 acres of sugarcane and replace them with beans and maize. This decision not only improved his own farm's productivity but also sparked a wave of change in the community.

Apollo has taken it upon himself to educate and advocate for alternative, diversified farming practices. Through various media channels, he tirelessly encourages his fellow farmers to integrate sugarcane cultivation with other profitable enterprises. His efforts have transformed the lives of many families in Buikwe and neighboring districts, ensuring food security and providing sustained incomes for countless households.



Left: Apollo showcasing his banana plantations **Right:** During the set-up of an irrigation system

Moreover, Apollo's commitment to innovation and sustainable farming practices is evident in his recent acquisition of an irrigation system. This valuable asset is envisaged to enhance production during periods of water scarcity, further boosting his farm's productivity and resilience. Apollo Ddembe's remarkable journey serves as an inspiration to farmers and communities alike. His unwavering determination, strategic enterprise selection, and refusal to succumb to conventional norms of commercial sugarcane production have propelled him to great heights of success.

MR. APOLLO DDEMBE

Gender: Male
Village: Kizigo - Maggwa
Sub County: Najjemba Division

District: Buikwe
Contact: (+256) 771840920

About ACSA

Advocacy Coalition for Sustainable Agriculture (ACSA) is a legally registered national network of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), which work with small holder farmers (SHFs) and promote Sustainable Agriculture, Agricultural market development, Environmental conservation, Research and Advocacy. This is aimed at increasing farmer's understanding of policy issues affecting small holder farmers in Uganda. ACSA's mandate is "Advocating for the agrarian policy environment for small holder farmers in Uganda". Currently, ACSA has membership of 29 CSOs (8 Caritas organizations, 3 Networks, 5 Farmers' Associations and 13 Non-Government Organizations - NGOs) spread country wide in 41 districts with a Mission "to Empower civil society organizations working with small holder farmers to advocate for favourable agrarian Policy environment for sustainable communities" and a Vision of "Smallholder farmers living in a Sustainable Environment".

ACSA's focus areas are; Advocacy and Lobbying, Research and documentation, Capacity building of member Organisations, Capacity building of ACSA secretariat, Networking and partnership Building, which are undertaken under the overall Goal of: "Relevant agriculture policies and services for Small Holder Farmers (SHFs) are implemented to foster profitable sustainable agriculture enterprises.

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