



# Pelican News



August 2015 | #114  
Blue Skies Newsletter

## Queen's Award is delivered to Blue Skies HQ

This month Blue Skies hosted a reception at its head office in Pitsford to officially receive its third Queens Award for Enterprise. Blue Skies is one of only a few firms in the country to have won the Queen's Awards on three occasions.

Blue Skies was officially presented with the award - a crystal bowl and a scroll signed by the Queen and UK Prime Minister David Cameron - by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Northamptonshire, David Laing. The award recognises the company's Joint Effort Enterprise model and contribution to sustainable development in Africa and South America by producing fresh-cut fruit and freshly squeezed juice, prepared within the country of origin.

The reception was attended by staff from Blue Skies in Pitsford who were joined by representatives from Ghana and South Africa. Last month Andre Veldsman and Mary Cudjoe met the Queen at a celebration for award winners held at Buckingham Palace.



Carrying the bowl is Emily Boateng with Sombu Nkosi next to Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Northamptonshire, Mr David Laing. Holding the scroll is Reginald Ashietey with Lana Mo.

## Blue Skies featured in Dutch press



Following a press visit to Ghana in July, a number of media houses in the Netherlands have carried stories about Blue Skies, our freshness and our impact on communities.

One journalist also made a video which can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lfbooRtu71c>

## Say cheeeese!



Staff in Egypt from production, technical and stores attend Hygiene training course.



# GlobalGAP success for Blue Skies Senegal



Blue Skies Senegal has once again chalked success having achieved GlobalGAP certification with no major non-conformances. Jonathan Southwood of NSF audited the farms. He was very happy and remarked in the closing meeting that this was one of the best managed and cleanest mango farms he had seen in his long years of auditing.

*By Mark Azaglo, Blue Skies Ghana.*

# Pineapple 'unwrapped'



In August UK TV show 'Food Unwrapped' came to Ghana to reveal how pineapple grows and show how Blue Skies are able to keep it so fresh...



Presenter Kate Quinton supported by her crew of Dan Gilbert, Olly Weaver and Jack visited Zulu Farm to speak to Ernest Abloh about how pineapple grows, and how Blue Skies are able to tell when it is ripe and ready for harvesting.

From here they visited the factory in Nsawam where Alistair explained the importance of sanitation, speed and

temperature in order to maximise the life of cut pineapple, so that it naturally stays fresh for as long as possible. 'Food Unwrapped' is a food science series made for Channel 4. Blue Skies will feature in an episode due to be aired later in the year. Thanks to Kate, Dan, Olly and Jack for coming to see us. We all thoroughly enjoyed the visit and hope you will all come back to see us again soon.

# Our mango is awarded AH Product Hero!



After several rounds of nominations Albert Heijn have selected Blue Skies AH Mango Chunks as their product hero in fresh cut. This is a major achievement and we are all very grateful for the consistent high quality and attention to detail, which does not go unnoticed! From week 37 – 41 AH mango chunks will get the special reward sticker. Translated into English it says 'Everyone Loves It'. By doing this Albert Heijn explain that they are very proud to have this mango on their shelves and they are happy to have so many fans of this product. Many many thanks to all involved and please keep up the good work!

# Name that bird



Well done to Marcio, Marta and our old friend Rafael Zveibil on correctly naming the bird above as the Carcará. It is apparently a powerful hunter but also eats dead animals. The picture was taken by Technical Manager Stephan Morris who spotted the bird at our factory in Brazil.

# **Fresh from Ghana**

## **Blue Skies Sales and Marketing Manager Guy Murfitt reflects on his recent family trip to Ghana...**



Our story is well known and sometimes taken for granted within the Blue Skies family, but for each of our own family members, the achievements and scope of the Blue Skies influence only really sinks in when they visit.

My Mum and 9 year old son visited Ghana in late July and were hugely impressed by everything they saw. The warmth of the people was the first thing that struck home. They were amazed by the size of the Blue Skies operation, and the complexity of the factories, composting and farming operations.

The positive impact of the business in the local community was seen when we visited Doboro school and travelled through Nsawam and the local neighbourhood. It seemed that everybody knew "Blue Skies" including the ladies at the Volta Dam ticket office who wondered if we could bring some of our pineapple and ginger juice next time we visited. William didn't manage to bring a Ghanaian lizard home with him but he learnt a lot and I'm certain he will be back to visit Ghana when he is a bit older. A big thank you to Ruth, Benedicta, Pep, Juliana, Elizabeth, Victoria, the transport department and the team at Zulu farm for looking after us so well.



*Above: William Murfitt at the Volta Dam, Ghana.*

## **Five audits in a month!**



*Pictured: the audit team following a successful ISO 22000 and OHSAS 18001*



*Pictured: following an unannounced ethical audit for ASDA*



*Pictured: following the Fairtrade audit of the Pomegranate Association*



*Pictured: following a successful Fairtrade factory audit*

Another month and another five audits successfully passed by Blue Skies Egypt! This time its ISO 22000 and OHSAS 18001, an unannounced ASDA ethical audit, a Fairtrade audit for the Pomegranate Association in Assuit and a Fairtrade audit for the factory! Congratulations and very well done to Blue Skies Egypt on maintaining their exceptionally high standards.

# Yolisa wins 'Best Female Worker' at DAFF Female Entrepreneur Awards



Yolisa Mbie, Hygiene Manager at Blue Skies South Africa believed in herself and made Blue Skies proud by taking part in Female Entrepreneur Awards Programme being run by DAFF (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) in Mpumalanga province.

The major thrust of the programme is to underline the fact that women play a significant role in food security, job creation, economic growth and poverty alleviation. Also this seeks to acknowledge, encourage and increase the participation of young women and women with disabilities in the sector.

The DAFF Female Entrepreneur Awards started in the provinces where potential winners for different categories go through a rigorous adjudication process. The programme has nine categories. The first category being Best Female Worker in the Sector, Yolisa held position 1 outdoing other nominees on this category. As a winner in this category for the Mpumalanga province she will compete at national level and will be awarded for her contribution at ICC Durban on the 27<sup>th</sup> August 2015.

## Motivation from Yolisa

Us woman always associate working in some areas e.g. Agriculture, forestry and fisheries as being areas where male have power and influence. Don't limit yourselves. We limit ourselves to what we think we can do. We can go as far as our minds let us. What we believe, we can achieve through hard work, dedication to the job at hand, and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand.

*Report by Sombu Nkosi, Blue Skies South Africa*

# 10 tips for safe exercise

This month we start our new series on tips to ease you in to exercise safely, courtesy of Blue Skies Health and Fitness instructor Sampson Kwawukumey. Here's tip number one...

**10 tips for safe and healthy exercise**

**1. Start off slowly**  
Simple stretching exercises or a short walk around your house will do at first. Set small goals that are reasonable and achievable. Don't try to do too much too soon.

Keep up to date with all the tips on our Facebook, Twitter or Instagram pages.

**Facebook:** @blueskiesafrica **Twitter:** @blueskiesfruit **Instagram:** @blueskiesproducts

# Birthdays



Happy birthday to Cilia Veldsman, Yolisa Mbie, Justice Vilakazi and Lucia Mashinini who all celebrated birthdays in August. On the 21 August 2015 we were celebrating Justice's birthday with his family, friends and colleagues. He made a party at his place in the location and the theme was "black and bling".

*By Lucia Mashinini, Blue Skies SA*

# Blue Skies weddings



I want to use this platform to let all know of my wedding which occurred on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 2015. This important event happened at the Pentecost Church of Ghana, Pokuase-North, near Nsawam.

To all who made it to the event, and even those who couldn't, I say God bless everybody.

Long live our marriage!  
Long live Ghana!!  
Long live Blue Skies!!!

*By Edward Antwi, Blue Skies Ghana*



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