

# Blue Skies PELICAN NEWS

Blue Skies Newsletter | October 2020 | Issue 170 | [www.blueskies.com](http://www.blueskies.com) |

## “This award is for all our Blue Skies heroes of fresh”



Blue Skies has been given a Heroes of Fresh Produce Award at the 2020 FPJ Live conference, which was hosted online.

The award recognises the extraordinary lengths people at Blue Skies have gone over the past nine months, to keep the business going in the face of an incredibly challenging environment due to the impact of Covid-19. With logistics in turmoil and declining sales, people across Blue Skies pulled out all the stops to find new ways to get our products to market and keep our customers supplied.

This award is dedicated to our amazing, heroic Blue Skies team. You are truly all heroes! CEO, Hugh Pile, is pictured below accepting the award on video. You can see all the videos at: <https://fpjlive2020.com/videos/index.html>



## Blue Skies named a finalist in Weetabix Sustainability Award

Blue Skies has been named a finalist in the Weetabix Sustainability Award as part of the 2020 Northamptonshire Food and Drink Awards. The awards recognise the achievements of local food and drink companies in Northamptonshire in 12 different categories. The winners will be announced during a virtual ceremony on the 12th of November.

## 2020 School Farm Winners Announced

The winners of the 2020 School Farm Competition have been announced during a part-virtual ceremony in Ghana. You can find out all the details and information on how to start your own school farm competition on page 5.



## INSIDE THIS MONTH:

- P2** Blue Skies meets in Ghana to compile 2021 plans
- P5** School Farm Competition Toolkit is launched

## A perfect result to end a tough season



In September, Blue Skies Senegal passed a GlobalGAP surveillance audit with zero non-conformances - a perfect result.

This was the first remote GlobalGAP audit carried out at any Blue Skies business since the pandemic emerged earlier this year. Many congratulations to Gloria and her brilliant team. The result was a positive end to what has been a very tough season in Senegal.

Gloria and her team are pictured above celebrating the end of their season.

## Coming together to explore fresh ideas for 2021



People from across Blue Skies came together in October to formulate their budget plans for 2021. Through a mixture of virtual meetings and site visits, some interesting new plans and ideas were discussed and built in to an exciting plan for the year ahead. Pictured above are some of the scenes from the various site visits in the UK, Ghana and Benin.

## Photo of the Month



Pictured: the lawnmower at Blue Skies Benin requires a minor adjustment.

## Blue Skies Ghana host LEAF virtual farm tour



In September, Blue Skies hosted an online tour of its Zulu pineapple farm in Ghana as part of LEAF Open Farm Sunday, which this year went virtual. The twenty minute tour was broadcast live on Facebook and showed viewers how pineapple is planted, grown and harvested. You can watch the video at: <https://farmsunday.org/online-farm-sunday/lives>



# BLUEPRINT 2020

## MONTHLY CAMPAIGN UPDATE



Our October theme is...  
**Energy conservation**

### Our Impact:

- We use around 63,000 Gigajoules each year which equates to around 0.8 kwh per kilogram of product we make
- Around 40% of our energy comes from renewable sources (based on 2020 data).

### Blueprint Commitment

We are committed to using as little energy as possible and ensuring that as much of it as possible comes from renewable sources.

### What we've been doing

- Our refrigeration system in Egypt uses high efficiency scroll compressors and inverter controls. It is expected to save over 400,000 KWh of energy per year.
- In Egypt and Ghana, we've installed heat recovery systems to capture the heat generated from refrigeration to use to heat water for showers and laundry.
- We've worked with UNIDO and the Government of Japan to install solar panels on the roof of our factory in Egypt with the aim of saving 70,000 KWh of energy per year
- We're embarking on an ambitious five year plan to source more energy from renewable sources across the group.

For more information, visit our Blueprint special reports at:  
[www.blueskies.com/blueprint](http://www.blueskies.com/blueprint)



## Celebrating our Diversity



It was an exciting moment when prize winners of the cultural diversity competition were presented with their prizes on Friday 23 October in Ghana. Our HR team took staff by surprise when they presented them with their cash prizes. Mabel, the overall winner took home the sum of GH¢200 while the second winner Kate and Bismarck, the third prize winner were also glad to have gone home with GH¢150 and GH¢100 respectively. The three lucky winners were among our numerous staff who took part in the fun and engaging competition. During this year's diversity month in February, our people from different ethnic groups gave astonishing representations of their cultural backgrounds through the display of rich cultural outfits.

The event which was well organized by the Human Resource and Public Affairs Department sought to promote diversity in all areas such as food, culture and language as one main tool for organizational development and growth.

As one of the leading organizations in Ghana, we find ourselves in a country dominated by different yet unique ethnic groups, cultures and languages where ethnic diversity plays an important role in work force management. At Blue Skies, diversity remains our culture and one of the defining elements of our business model. Our diversified culture is a reflection of our commitment to break down barriers that seek to divide us. We are vehemently committed to providing equal opportunity for all without bias, be it age, gender, race, background or ethnicity.

Our diversity at Blue Skies serves as a means for cultivating new and innovative ideas and encouraging the transfer of knowledge and skills. In all, we thank Blue Skies for creating the right atmosphere for our people from across all walks of life. *By Winnie, Blue Skies Ghana*

### How can we do better?

Send us your ideas for how we can do ever better to meet our Blueprint Commitments.

You can submit them at:  
<http://www.blueskies.com/ideas/>



## 2020 Blueprint Awards ceremony to go virtual



Thank you to everyone who has submitted nominations for this year's Blueprint Awards. The deadline for submissions has now passed. The winners will be announced during a virtual ceremony on the 16th of November as part of the Blue Skies annual conference.



## Blue Skies UK Hero of the month

The Blue Skies UK "Hero of the month" for September is Teleaga Bogdan Julian. All Blue Skies people appreciate Bogdan help and support in the Production area. He is a true Hero every day!

## South Africa celebrates Heritage Day



Blue Skies South Africa celebrated Heritage Day on the 24th of September. Heritage brings to mind different ideas for different people. Heritage is a person's unique, inherited sense of family identity, the values, morals, traditions and culture. Celebrating heritage it is a very important aspect of our lives as it reminds us who we are, where we come from and encourages Ubuntu. It helps overcome stereotypes, builds culture and awareness, discourage racism and encourages unity. Happy Heritage Day. By Waydu Nhlapo.

## EDITORIAL

## It's time to change our perception of Africa



With COVID-19 and US presidential elections dominating global headlines, it's easy not to notice what else is happening in the world. October has seen a number of other noteworthy events including violent protests in Nigeria, militant attacks in Ethiopia and a school shooting in Cameroon. But there have also been some good news. Fortune magazine reported that six of the world's 10 fastest-growing economies are located in Africa and there have been a number of reports that South Africa may have developed a degree of herd immunity against Covid-19

Africa has news too, and yet rather ironically, the main headline to gain traction in the UK, is a charity's decision to stop sending white comedians on aid missions to Africa for fear of perpetuating the notion of the 'white saviour'.

When will we start taking Africa seriously and stop characterising it as a continent beset by poverty, corruption, war and famine?

There are of course many challenges, just like there are challenges in North America and Europe, and Governments and businesses must all be held accountable for where there is wrong-doing. But so must news organisations and journalists claiming to give a voice to the people they report on. They too have a responsibility to tell the truth and represent a balanced view of Africa, and not simply reinforce the negative picture that the continent is now utterly fed up with.

Africa is not a playground for activists to try and save the world. Nor is it a haven for journalists to pursue preconceived ideas in order to gain the attention of headline hungry editors. Africa is a continent with the most diverse variety of countries, cultures, peoples and landscapes on this planet. Blue Skies is proud to have operations in six African nations; Ghana, Egypt, South Africa, Benin, Senegal and Ivory Coast. We're present here because we believe in 'adding value at source', that means putting the factory where the fruit is and giving local people the opportunity to start businesses, develop skills and adopt new technologies, rather than just taking the raw material and keeping all the profits in the West.

The countries where Blue Skies operates are all good countries with decent people who seek to stand on their own feet and be taken seriously as global players. And yet they, like many countries in the continent, are constantly held back by those who claim to be doing good, but are in fact doing more harm.

It's time to change our perception of Africa. It's time to tell the truth.

## Blue Skies SA helps rebuild lives affected by house fire



Blue Skies South Africa recently helped to rebuild the house of one of its team who lost their house in a fire. Fikile (pictured) who works at Blue Skies SA wanted us to publish the following remarks in the newsletter...

I am humbled and Grateful for what you did. Thank you for being there for me when I was at my worst. Thank you for all your contributions from your hearts, your hugs, your words of encouragement. For being the soldiers on the front line of this fight, I have nothing to give for your Kindness you have showed me, But I pray Almighty God Bless each and every one of you.





# FOUNDATION FOCUS

## AN UPDATE ON OUR LATEST PROJECTS

## 2020 School Farm Award Winners Announced

Congratulations to everyone who took part in our 2020 School Farm Competition in Ghana. The competition culminated on the 30th of October with an awards ceremony that saw the winning schools presented with prizes in a range of categories, including the most prestigious best Junior High School and best Senior High School awards. This year's ceremony was smaller than usual because of COVID-19 restrictions, however for the first time the ceremony was livestreamed both on Facebook and the fresh produce media group, Beanstalk.Global. Saint Joseph's SHS won best Senior High School and Kwakyeekrom M/A Basic School won Best Junior High School. The winners walked away with prizes including desktop computers and laptops for their schools. The full list of winners will be published at [www.blueskies.com/schoolfarm](http://www.blueskies.com/schoolfarm).



## Another hero of the month!



Gerald Valkema is another one of our heroes this month. With his voluntary fire-fighting team in the Netherlands, he recently performed CPR on someone who was found lying in a ditch. After some quick life saving action, the patient was rushed to hospital and has now fully recovered. Well done Gerald!



## Toolkit launched to Start your own School Farm Competition



START YOUR OWN

SCHOOL FARM OF THE YEAR COMPETITION



The Blue Skies Foundation has launched a new toolkit to help businesses and organisations start their own School Farm of the Year Competition. Victoria Asamoah who runs the Blue Skies School Farm Competition said "This competition has had a big impact on how our young people perceive agriculture. They now have a new respect for our farmers and can see just how rewarding and lucrative it can be if it is done well. We need a new crop of farmers to keep our country fed. The Blue Skies School Farm competition is helping to find them"

The toolkit has been produced to enable other companies to copy the Blue Skies model and introduce their own competition that will raise the profile of agriculture within their area and help find the farmers of the future. The toolkit can be downloaded from: [www.blueskies.com/schoolfarm](http://www.blueskies.com/schoolfarm)

## THANK YOU!

### FutureFresh appeal brings hope for children's charity

Thank you to everyone who has donated to our FutureFresh appeal for Functional Works, a charity in Ghana that supports disabled children. Thanks to your donations, we have managed to collect over 20 learning aids for the charity. A special thank you also to our supplier, Enviropax, who donated £500 to the charity. These generous contributions will go a long way to helping Functional Works support disabled children in Ghana during these exceptionally tough times.



## NEXT MONTH...

- We reveal our Blueprint 2020 Award winners!
- We unveil our plans for 2021