



# Pelican News



April 2012  
Blue Skies Newsletter

## Blue Skies win Waitrose Way supplier award



Blue Skies has won a Waitrose Way Award for 'treating people fairly'. The award recognises the Blue Skies Joint Effort Enterprise (JEE) model which promotes diversity and a culture of respect as key components for making a sustainable business. The JEE was pioneered by the Founder of the business Anthony Pile. Anthony believes that being sensitive to cultural individuality and creating an environment where people enjoy coming to work has enabled the company to add value to its products in the country of origin, and offer the consumer exceptional quality products that are delivered 'fresh from harvest'.

Managing Director George Hutton who picked up the award said "This award demonstrates that treating people fairly within the supply chain makes commercial sense and helps us to deliver the best quality products. It also helps to create a sense of pride among our stakeholders that they are supporting an innovative and ground breaking model for sustainable development in Africa and South America."

The Waitrose Way is an initiative that has been introduced to promote the philosophy that encompasses the way Waitrose operates. The awards are designed to recognise how suppliers are helping Waitrose to uphold this philosophy and extend its principles within the supply chain. Over 200 suppliers applied under just four different award categories which included 'Championing British', Trading Lightly, Living Well and Treating People Fairly. The entries were judged by an independent panel which included the politician and environmental campaigner Zac Goldsmith.

## Blue Skies finalists for processor of the year



Blue Skies is up for the Processor and Packer of the Year Award after making it through to the 2012 final of the re:refresh awards. The re:refresh awards are considered the 'oscars' of the fresh produce industry in the UK. They are organised by the Fresh Produce Journal (FPJ) and Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC), two organisations which collectively cover the entire spectrum of the fruit, vegetable and flower industries, from seed breeder to supermarket. The winners will be announced on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May and will be presented by the celebrity chef James Martin.



Find us on  
**Facebook**

[www.facebook.com/blueskiesproducts](http://www.facebook.com/blueskiesproducts)

# Blue Skies brings schools together

Two UK primary schools recently held a Foundation Day to further their ties with a school in Ghana that was recently renovated by the fresh-cut fruit company Blue Skies in partnership with Waitrose and Albert Heijn.

Harlestone and Brington Primary Schools in Northamptonshire are located near to the head office of Blue Skies. Blue Skies have partnered a number of local schools with a view to helping them forge links with some of the schools that the company has supported in Ghana through the Blue Skies Foundation. During the day over 100 pupils aged between 4 and 11 took part in a variety of activities to learn about life in Ghana. The activities included African drumming and dancing, cooking Ghanaian cuisine and dressing in traditional African costume. Pupils also made their own African masks and learnt about which foods come from Ghana, including the fresh-cut tropical fruits produced by Blue Skies for Waitrose.

In addition to participating in the activities, pupils collected a number of items including pens, rulers and calculators. These will be donated to Akraman Primary School in Ghana which the schools have partnered to strengthen their international ties. Akraman School was renovated in 2010 by the Blue Skies Foundation. The school had been built in 1998 but had been left unfinished with no windows or doors and without proper flooring. As a result, goats and sheep would enter the classrooms, often during lessons, and leave behind a mess. In addition the unsecured classrooms would attract drug-users during the night. The Foundation responded to the school's plea to make the school fit for purpose and create a safe and attractive environment suitable for the pupils to learn in.

Jan Abrams, Executive Head Teacher of the Althorp Partnership of Primary Schools which includes Harlestone and Brington, said "The day has formed an excellent foundation for our partnership with Akraman School. Feedback from the children and staff has been amazing; everyone had a really good day and the students learnt a lot about how people live in a different part of the world".

Susan Brightwell who coordinates the schools partnership for Blue Skies in the UK said "We are really excited about linking local schools in the UK with some of the schools we have supported in Africa. We believe in using our global connections to help enrich the education of children where ever we work to help in the development of our next generation of leaders"

Harlestone and Brington hope to make Foundation Day an annual event and are planning to introduce a scrapbook exchange scheme later in the year to allow pupils at the schools to swap some of their work with the children at Akraman School in Ghana.



Above: Students take part in African drumming lessons during Foundation Day.

# Blue Skies launches with ICA



Blue Skies have launched three products with a new Swedish customer called ICA. The products include 110g mango, 100g coconut and 130g tropical fruit salad.

ICA is a Swedish retailing group that was started in 1938. It is part owned by the Dutch retailer Ahold after they acquired a 10% stake in 2004. It is the largest retailer in the Nordic countries and has over 1300 stores in Sweden.

## Other new products...



Blue Skies has just launched a clear elderflower jelly with fresh raspberries and blueberries for the Waitrose 'Good to Go' range. The new product serves as a tasty accompaniment to a picnic lunch. The product has already received critical acclaim from consumer panels and journalists.

# Blue Skies Juice goes to Kwahu

Blue Skies Juice recently attended the Kwahu festival in Ghana to showcase its freshly squeezed juice products. Kwahu is in the Eastern Region of Ghana and is known internationally for the Easter festival it hosts every year. The festival has become imprinted in the country's annual entertainment calendar and what makes it so enjoyable and memorable is the entertainment, food, music and dancing. Around ten thousand people attended the festival every day. During the festival a number of different companies attend to sell and advertise their products. This year Blue Skies decided to go in an attempt to drive sales. Sales and Marketing Manager Juliana Agyemang said "The people from Kwahu and Nkawkaw had never seen our product before so we took the opportunity to educate them".



Above: Images of the team showing off our products at Kwahu

# New Takaradi depot opens for business



Above: The new depot and juice bar at Takaradi has been opened increase sales of Blue Skies juice in the Western Region of Ghana.

# A happy meal for BS Brazil



With the trend to encourage consumers to eat healthily, McDonalds have expanded their international strategy to incorporate fruit snacks in their 'Happy Meals' in Brazil, and as the leading fresh cut supplier in Brazil Blue Skies is delighted to be partnering this successful project. Congratulations to the Brazil team for getting this new venture off the ground! Marina's nephew, Dante, is pictured enjoying his Happy Meal with an apple bag at McD restaurant.

# Biogas visit



Anthony and Denzil recently visited a biogas plant in Germany and discussed how Blue Skies might be able to install a similar plant in Ghana. Anthony is pictured above with a team of biogas experts looking at a gas holding tank.

# Meet the farmers

This month Shakespeare Djokoto meets Solomon Wiafe of GRS farm



This month we take a look at one of our most enterprising farmers in the Blue Skies farmer group. Solomon Wiafe is 32 and is married to a nurse. He had his second daughter a couple of days ago (he has two daughters). Golden River Side Ltd is his farm name and he was born into pineapple farming. Solomon is a graduate of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, specializing in Biological Science. He sojourned in the United Kingdom for a couple of months after his National Service and returned home to join his father and uncle who were into commercial pineapple production at Annhunten Farms. Owing to his expertise he took over as the General Manager of the farm until 2008 when he started his own farm – Golden River Side Ltd (GRS).

Currently his total cropped area is close to 20 ha (50 acres) and he plants between 10000- and 20000 suckers weekly. Deliveries of pineapple fruits per week is about 3000. He was persuaded to join our farmer group a year before he registered his farm and has been very consistent. He hopes to plant until all his available land is exhausted.

GRS Farm Ltd was adjudged the best Municipal Farm in Ghana for 2011. He says this has helped him gain national recognition.

*Report by Shakespeare Djokoto, Agronomy Department Blue Skies Ghana*



Meet the Blue Skies farmers at Caretrace.  
[www.caretrace.com](http://www.caretrace.com)



## Joe bakes a boat cake for his birthday!



Cath and Ally are pictured with Joe from the UK office showing off his birthday cake which he baked for UK staff to enjoy. Joe had spent the previous evening baking the cake from the kitchen on his narrow-boat; hence the cake has been named "Joe's birthday boat cake".

## Welcome to Blue Skies!



A very warm welcome to Parlaad Nandhra who has joined the UK OPS team. Parlaad says he is relieved to have survived his first week with Blue Skies! Welcome to the family Parlaad.

## Team to run 'race for life'

This year three people from the UK office are taking part in the race for life to raise money for cancer research. Anabela, Cath and Ally will be running 5k on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June and are looking for sponsorship. If you would like to sponsor the Blue Skies team please go to

<https://www.raceforlifespansome.org/blue-skies>