



Pelican News



March 2017 | #132
Blue Skies Newsletter

8 Miles buys a minority stake in Blue Skies

UK Private Equity firm '8-Miles', which is chaired by Sir Bob Geldof and focuses on investments in Africa, has bought a minority stake in Blue Skies. Anthony Pile said:

"Blue Skies is pleased that 8 Miles has taken a minority stake in the company. We have an interesting business and one that sets out to do more than making a profit from our bases in Africa, Europe and South America. 8 Miles shares our vision for improving the lives of people, protecting the environment and making enough money at source to advance our objective to supply best quality products to the people of the World."

Doug Agble, partner at 8 Miles said: "This is an exciting opportunity to partner with a highly successful founder and a top-quality management team who have built a business based on solid and unique foundations."



Pictured: Bob Geldof with Anthony Pile during a visit to Blue Skies in 2015.

Blue Skies finalists at FPC Fresh Awards



Blue Skies are finalists again at the FPC Fresh Awards, this year making it through in the Supermarket Supplier of the Year and CSR Excellence categories, and with our very own Marta Gozdzik in the Manager of Year category!

The winners will be announced at an Awards Dinner on the 8th of June in London.



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Production starts at new factories



March 2017 saw two new factories starting production for Blue Skies.

In South Africa everyone pulled out all the stops to be able to finally move in to the new facility on the 6th of March (pictured top).

Meanwhile in the UK work was underway to move production up to a new facility in Corby. Production started on 29th March (pictured below).



In both South Africa and the UK a monumental effort was made to get both facilities up and running on time and in the true Blue Skies spirit that has succeeded.

These new facilities will enable Blue Skies to increase its capacity so that it may meet growing orders and develop new and exciting products.

Long walk to an astonishing triumph - 6 March 2017

It was not a plain sailing journey. Everything was not looking possible and yet we have made it. Under extreme pressure our new Factory Two was finally completed and our first production commenced on the 6th of March 2017. What an amazing moment! Siyabonga ma Blue Skies Amahle.

Looking back thirteen years to when the first factory opened with just 35 people and seeing where we are now with 718 staff, it is clear to see the impact that the business will have on reducing unemployment in Dipaleseng and transforming lives.

To our board of directors, CEO, GM, managers and entire staff the future of this delightful company and its success depends upon all our hands. When reading papers, watching the news it is shocking to see big companies like Eskom and Great Basin Gold closing down, but we are still standing. We are blessed that when companies are closing and liquidated, we are still growing.

By Waydu Nhlapo. Blue Skies South Africa.

Blue Skies welcomes Alma to UK



Our Italian customer Alma visited the UK on 28th and 29th March for a sales and NPD meeting and to look at some of the latest trends in London. They are pictured on their Food trends walk.' In the Pictured above during their London Food Trends Walk are Gianna, Simone, Paul, John and Sarah.

Air France takes off in Ghana



The Blue Skies team recently met AirFrance/KLM CEO Jean-Marc Janaillac during their inaugural flight from Paris to Accra.

Pictured on from left to right is Philippe Gindrat, Director (Guinean Gulf AirFrance/KLM), Ruth Adjei General Manager (Blue Skies Ghana), Sowah Okpoti-Mensah, General Manager (AirFrance/KLM Cargo Ghana), Monsieur Jean-Marc Janaillac, CEO (AirFrance/KLM), John Gadzi, Director (Blue Skies), Mary Cudjoe Movements Manager, (Blue Skies Ghana).

Brazil marks International Women's Day

On the 8th March Blue Skies Brazil celebrated "International Women's Day" by giving every woman a rose. This was paid for through the sale of recycling materials by the factory. They were all impressed commenting that not even their husbands had offered them any "Congratulations" and the event has had a positive effect in the morale of the team.

By Flavia Mometti. General Manager, Blue Skies Brazil.



Egypt celebrates Mother's Day



On the 21st of March Blue Skies Egypt celebrated Mother's Day by presenting the Mums at the factory with gifts to express their gratitude for all that they have done.

AH Fresh team visit Blue Skies Schiphol

On 28th February the Albert Heijn Fresh Team visited our facilities at Schiphol in The Netherlands.

This was an excellent opportunity to demonstrate our cold chains from Ghana, RSA and Egypt which supports our Fresh from Harvest model.

The improvements made in reducing the weight of carton flown and the increase in fruit being packed in AKE's during the past years were highlighted to the team. The improvements are the result of close cooperation between Albert Heijn and Blue Skies for which we are grateful.

It was a very useful visit which contributes to a better understanding of our business.

By Paul Van Breukelen.



Picture: from left to right: Sjoerd van de Ouw (BS), Joost Cleassens (AH Sourcing Manager), Annie Schelling (Management Trainee), Paul van Breukelen (BS), Jurian Simons (Merchandising), Stefan Kastanja (Sr Category Manager), Diederick Olijve (BS)

2017 Foundation Projects started

On Friday 25th March the Blue Skies Foundation held the first of its 2017 Ground Breaking ceremonies to formally start this year's projects. It began with a durbar at the village of Esikabew where the Foundation is constructing a six classroom Primary School block. This was attended by the Director of Education at the Ghana Education Service and the Coordinating Director at the Municipal Assembly along with Chiefs, heads of educational institutions and other representatives from the community and surrounding. From there a ceremony was held at Kwakwakrom where work officially started on the construction of the twelve seater KVIP (compost toilet) for the pineapple growing community.



Maartenscollege donates to School Farm project

Maartenscollege a school in the Netherlands that recently visited Blue Skies Ghana (pictured), have donated 3,000 Euros to the Blue Skies 2017 School Farm of the Year Competition. A group of sixteen students and their teachers visited Ghana in February having raised at least half of the money for the trip themselves by organizing three musical events. The four teachers who visited also founded Both Sides Now, a platform which stimulates young people to become more knowledgeable about developing countries and get more involved in social activities to create a better understanding of the problems and how to find the solutions. Find out more about Both Sides Now at <http://www.bothsidesnow.nl>



Above: Students at Maartenscollege with the Blue Skies volleyball team.

Life After Blue Skies

Group Technical Manager Stephan Morris recently caught up with a few familiar faces who used to work at Blue Skies Ghana; Mawunyo, Jolene, and Eunice.

All of these ladies worked in the technical department at Blue Skies Ghana. Mawunyo was actually General Manager before she left (Ruth's immediate predecessor). Jolene was Technical Manager, and Eunice was NPD manager.

All the ladies were in high spirits and proud to talk of their families and their work and their Christianity; and their enthusiasm for me to convert was undimmed!

Mawunyo now manages a business selling fertilisers, Jolene runs a laundry in between publishing CDs of her beautiful voice singing Christian music, and Eunice is a researcher for a professor and studying for a doctorate herself.

Who would have thought that there is life after Blue Skies?



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