



# planting

## FAITH

Newsletter

Issue II - Spring 2011

### Meet a Farmer

Get to know  
Jedidah Njoki  
a farmer in the  
Planting Faith Community  
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### You're Invited

Help us do more by attending  
An Evening to Plant Faith  
June 24th, 6:30pm.  
More information inside.  
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### Latest Project

Our farming experience is  
improving the food and  
nutrition and the Namrata  
Shah children's home.  
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### Our Mission

Planting Faith spreads the  
good news of Jesus Christ  
by empowering farmers  
to reach sustainable  
economic levels.



## Jedidah's Story

Jedidah grew up in the dry, dusty plains of Laikipia, Kenya, where she studied diligently and became an A+ student. She worked hard at school and hoped to attend University. However, at 14 during her first year of high school, Jedidah's life changed forever. A tragedy struck her family and her parents could no longer afford her school fees. With great sadness, Jedidah left school and starting working.

Jedidah thought her life was falling apart, but four hours south in the bustling city of Nairobi, a young man dreamed of marrying her. John grew up with Jedidah but moved to Nairobi to find a better job. He was becoming tired of the single life in the city and was wanting to settle down and start a family back in their village. A year later, at 15, Jedidah was married to John and pregnant with their son.

Shortly after their son's birth, the Anglican Church asked John to serve as an evangelist--a job that took him to small parishes in rural villages. While John was gone, Jedidah persevered at home and raised their children.



Horace Jr., Jedidah Njoki & her husband, John

For years, Jedidah and John diligently scrimped and saved. Eventually, they built their own home and Jedidah began to farm the surrounding land to feed their family. At first she grew the food they ate: corn, beans and potatoes. These crops fed her family, but Jedidah realized she could make money by growing more expensive crops and selling them at the local market. While this was a good opportunity for her family, she could not find a way to finance the start-up cost.

Jedidah continued to farm corn, beans and potatoes until Planting Faith taught local farmers to establish a finance organization, known as a production development institution (PDI).

Jedidah reports, "In those days [before the PDI] we were scared to plant crops like onions, because we did not have money to grow the crop the right way, but now the finance money is secured through the PDI."

## ...Jedidah

While starting the PDI, Jedidah demonstrated great leadership and common sense. Her co-workers entrusted her with organizing and maintaining the PDI and elected her chairperson of the Planting Faith farming group in her village (Ngarendare).

The Ngarendare farming group tried many crops including mobyduck flowers and butternut squash. They have settled on red onions. Jedidah says, "before we organized the group, each farmer would get €.08 for two pounds of onions. Now we work as a group and have negotiated €.55 for two pounds," a seven fold increase!

Immediately after selling the crop, farmers pay down the loan received from the PDI. Profits are generally used to pay children's school fees, which are \$300/year for high school. This seems like a small amount of money, but for the average Kenyan farmer who is used to earning a dollar a day, three hundred dollars is insurmountable.

The money Jedidah earned helped pay to educate her three children, who are currently starting careers. Jedidah's perseverance carried her a long way from the 14 year old forced to drop out of high school. Her hard work and faith in the Lord are an inspiration.



A farmer harvesting the aloe vera off-shoots (also called suckers)

## CHILDREN'S HOME UPDATE



Rebecca Wanjohe with some of the children from Namrata Shah.

Our demonstration farm is loaned to us by the Namrata Shah children's home and the Anglican Church of Kenya. In turn, all the proceeds from the farm go to raising the 34 children orphaned by AIDS. Planting Faith and the ACK have committed to supporting these children through University.

Most Kenyan orphans exist on an unbalanced diet: corn porridge for

breakfast and ugali [oo-gaul-ee] (overcooked, unsalted grits) for lunch and dinner.

The home always needs money, so it is a benefit to grow food for the children. To help, Planting Faith installed irrigation in the home's garden and sent the staff for nutritional training. Rebecca Wanjohe, matron and head cook, and Paul Wanyoike, gardener and

dairy operator, were trained by Real Impact (a Kenyan non-profit) to operate an institutional garden and kitchen.

Rebecca took a course for large kitchen cooks. She mastered nutritionally packed meal design and has implemented a 14 day rotational menu at Namrata Shah. Infused with more knowledge of nutrients, their affect on the body, and common health issues in Kenya (malnutrition, diabetes, high blood pressure, and



Paul Wanyoike, gardener and dairy operator at Namrata Shah.