President's Message

As spring arrives on PEI with all of the colours of optimism and hope, there is reason to be optimistic for Farmers Helping Farmers and for our partners in Kenya. We continue to receive great support from individuals and organizations, including another major unsolicited donation from the Pindoff Foundation. Our wonderful team in Kenya continues to inspire us with their dedication and creativity through trying times.

In Kenya, farmers anxiously wait for rain but many who are connected with women’s groups, supported currently or previously by FHF, are equipped to make the most of whatever rain falls. FHF has supplied many households with water tanks, grow bags, seeds, solar lights, stoves and other items to improve time and resource efficiency and to assist in the slow climb from poverty. Many school children also continue to benefit from the cookhouses and gardens established and supported by FHF. Work continues as well with the dairies that partner with FHF, delivering training and other supports.

Our reach may soon increase to include more women farmers in drier areas of Meru County, Kenya, if we are successful with funding applications. We are developing a concept note for Global Affairs Canada on adaptation to climate change by women farmers, as well as partnering in another recently submitted concept note for funding under GAC’s One Health initiative. Although we cannot expect success with every application, we know that GAC continues to be interested in our approaches and capabilities as we progress through the current GAC-supported project, receiving positive feedback and encouragement to continue seeking their support.

Thinking about what the future holds for FHF and changes that may require us to adapt, we have embarked on a Strategic Planning process with a committee consisting of a mixture of long-time and new Island-based members and three long term Kenyan staff.

*Continued on next page...*
The process is ably facilitated through morning Zoom meetings twice each month. The committee’s work is building on the survey, interviews and workshop in which many members participated during 2021. Steps in the process to build the 10-year plan include: formulating Vision and Mission statements, conducting a gap analysis to identify where current status or practice differs from the vision and/or mission, developing SMART goals, determining how to monitor the plan, disseminating the draft plan to members and other stakeholders seeking feedback, modifying and finalizing the plan. The committee aims to complete the draft Strategic Plan by November 1. Stay tuned for opportunities to provide feedback.

Judy Loo, FHF President

2022 Farmers Helping Farmers Award Nominations

Annually Farmers Helping Farmers shines a light on volunteer excellence recognizing the contributions of our members, supporters and community through the presentation of four awards: Volunteer of the Year Award; Honorary Life Member; Farmers Helping Farmers Youth Award; and Friend of Farmers Helping Farmers Award.

A nomination for these awards can be made by completing appropriate forms available on our website: Award Nominations | Farmers Helping Farmers

The deadline for submission is Saturday, May 27.

The awards will be presented during the Farmers Helping Farmers AGM July 14 2022.

2021 Volunteer of the Year winner Patsy Dingwell
Empowering women is one of the key goals that Farmers Helping Farmers looks forward to accomplishing with its projects. Among the vital factors that contribute to the empowerment and well-being of girls and women globally is access to sanitary pads and menstrual hygiene.

FHF’s goal through this project was to ensure that school-going children could attend school when menstruating. With hygienic pads, the girls would also feel confident and comfortable in their learning environment.

READ MORE: Female hygiene kits help girls stay in school in Kenya
Broken Crayons nominated for 2022 PEI Book Award

Congratulations to Patsy Dingwell on her nomination for a PEI Book Award in the category of Children’s Literature.

Broken Crayons tells the real-life story of Ms. Gillis, a preservice teacher at the University of Prince Edward Island, and her experiences in Kenya with Farmers Helping Farmers.

READ MORE: Broken Crayons

Canadian Partners Forum

Salome Ntinyari, who works with Farmers Helping Farmers, and Harriet Gauku, Chairperson of the Gatima Women’s Group, represented Farmers Helping Farmers in Nairobi at a Canadian Partners Forum organized by the Canadian High Commission.

Salome made a presentation on the More Food, Better Food project.
FHF Volunteer brings Safety Around Animals program to primary schools in Mukurwe-ini Kenya

Dr. Shauna Richards recently traveled to Kenya to conduct a workshop on ‘Safety Around Animals’ with 78 attendees.

Together, with a team from the Wakulima Dairy, FHF, and the Ministry of Education, a workshop was designed to invite one teacher from each of the 71 primary schools in the Mukurwe-ini area. This way, the information would reach every school in the district and thousands of children.

READ MORE here on the successful Safety Around Animals workshop

Dr. Shauna Richards with Member of Parliament Anthony Githiaka for Mukurwe-ini

'Epitome' of a mentor wins Rotary award

On November 10, 2021, Dr. John VanLeeuwen was honoured as the 2021 winner of the Mentor Award from the Rotary Club of Charlottetown Royalty.

Dr. John, as many of us call him, is a professor at the AVC in Charlottetown.

He has led scientific research and international development projects worth more than $23 million.

And, most importantly, he has made a difference in the lives of thousands of farm families in rural Kenya, through his work on improving the health of dairy cows on small farms.

Asante Murithi and congratulations!!

READ MORE: Dr. John VanLeeuwen honoured with Rotary mentor award
Education Committee of FHF promotes bonds between schools in Kenya and Canada

More than 250 letters were sent to Kenya in February.

Here’s what it looked like at West Kent Elementary School in Charlottetown when the letters from Kenya arrived.

READ MORE: Letter exchange continues in 2022 between Canada and Kenya twinned schools

New chicken project will add nutrition for Kenyan children

FHF has started demonstrating the value of improved, well-managed hens as way to improve the diet of Kenyan children.

FHF is supplying 80 families with ten of these improved egg layers and providing a demonstration housing coop to one member in each of the eight women’s groups in the project.

READ MORE: Eggs for Nutrition

Connect with Us!

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After school nutrition clubs growing knowledge about healthy eating

Brian Mutuma, the associate community nutritionist with the More Food, Better Food project, has worked with the Murinya Primary school to set up a nutrition club with standard 6 and 7 students. The students meet after school to plant their own garden. They tend the garden and eat the vegetables during the school meal program.

READ MORE: New nutrition clubs

Village Feast fundraiser continues to support projects in Kenya

The good work of the organizers and volunteers with the Village Feast in Souris, Prince Edward Island continues, despite the COVID-19 pandemic cancelling the event for two years in a row.

Alan MacPhee, representing the Village Feast, presented a cheque for more than $9,000 to the president of Farmers Helping Farmers, Judy Loo.

This donation will be used to pay the salaries of the school gardeners at 15 schools in Meru County for the next 10 months.

READ MORE: Village Feast continues to support Kenyan school lunch feeding program
Generous donations top $95,000 in successful Farmers Helping Farmers holiday fundraiser

Once again, our Holiday Campaign was very successful, thanks to your generosity!

More than half of the rural people living in Meru County, Kenya, the area where Farmers Helping Farmers works, continue to suffer high levels of poverty and food insecurity. The campaign raised more than $95,000 which will be put to good use, supplying women’s groups, schools and dairy farmers with materials and support in their quest to improve families’ well-being. Much of the money raised will directly support better nutrition for households and especially children.

READ MORE: Holiday Campaign success benefits families in Kenya