



## LIVING BY FAITH



Ms. Kasaiya at her nursery in Navua.

Faith, what is faith? Ms. Kasaiya Naisowalu from Lomati, Matuku in Lau knows a thing or two about it.

She has lived by it for a majority of her life. Her family operate a quaint farm in Narara settlement in Navua and for the 47-year-old Lauan native, it's faith that does it for her.

"As a woman I leapt into the unknown, took the risk of farming in a flood prone area, and I was determined to succeed at all costs, and I made use of the resources around me to provide for my family."

This is how she described her beginnings in agriculture, as a farmer. "Before I dedicated my time on the

farm, I used to work at Ben's Trading in Navua town and before my resignation, I learnt a great deal of lessons and it motivated me to become a farmer and to supply," she said.

"It would replay in my head, the possibilities of planting and supplying and it challenged me that if others could do it, so can we," said Kasaiya.

After her 6 years of employment with Ben's Trading, the Lomati lady resigned and committed herself to the full utilization of the 5 acres piece of land.

"The piece of land was already bought when we were still in Calia, Navua in 2010 and erected on it was

a lean-to house, just for temporary shelter," she said.

"In 2014 we decided to permanently move to the farm to make use of the land, we were planting, but it was not on a full time basis as my husband and I were both working, only tending to the garden on our days off."

"This would bother me every-time and apart from the ideas that I would come up with at work, the possibilities and potential of our 5-acre land were endless and I would think about this as I lay down to sleep every night."

With her ideas and dreams being put into action, the farm produces assorted vegetables and is also supplying dalo and cassava to the market.

"My husband who is originally from Vunibau in Serua is home because of the pandemic and we are fortunate to have him with us on the farm on a full-time basis together with my children and relatives."

"We also grow cucumbers, beans, tomatoes, capsicum, eggplants, some that are potted for sale and we have customers that come to buy from our nursery," she said.

The Ministry of Agriculture under the Agriculture Extension Services Program in the 2019-2020 financial year assisted Kasaiya with a green-house for their vegetable seedlings.

"We are thankful for this as we often experienced rainfall that sometimes led to flooding, in the process our seedlings and crops were often destroyed," she

said.

"Through all that we are never disheartened, we started all over again and over time calculated the rainy days and mastered what to do and how to do it before the rainy season," said Kasaiya.

"The assistance of the green-house has also given us rest as our seedlings are well-kept and safe."

The family became creative making use of surrounding resources such as bamboo for green-house posts.

"We knew we couldn't wait for long for the posts to arrive and because we are surrounded by bamboo trees, we took the initiative to make use of the available resources to have our green-house with bamboo posts," she said.

"Sale from the vegetables in a week would approximately be \$200.00 and that is sufficient for us to live on," said Kasaiya.

"Cassava and dalo are our long-term crops and we have also been selling planting materials at \$20 per 100 cuttings."

Markets are always the Navua market, the Arts Village in Deuba and customers that drive through to the farm gate on a daily basis.

"Ideas of what to plant keep coming up and one that we have long planned is to plant the orange kumala, a rare variety which is also in demand," she said.

They've endured over the years, bearing in mind the unfavorable weather

condition, but that has done little to deter them as the family loves creating an atmosphere of togetherness which will help them achieve great things.

"Over the years we would build our house from the farm money and transform it into a home and I thank my family for being there."

From the simple lean-to house, the farm gave them the opportunity to extend their home, which is now a double story house. They are also preparing to send off one of their daughters, who has enlisted in the British Army, whereas their other two girls are still in school, with proceeds from their farm catering mainly to their family's welfare.

"As Fijians, especially the iTaukei, we have the land and there is wealth in it, let us not dependent on others to supply what is needed in the market, we can do that too, you will not be a slave to anyone and you will be surprised at what you can earn from it," said Kasaiya.

"I also attribute my success to God, when you serve a living God, everything will fall into place, your plans will unfold at the right time with the right people," she testifies.

## DISASTER HIVE MANAGEMENT



### Flood can reach unexpected levels

- Move hives from low lying areas to flood free heights.
- Watch out for other drains, creeks and water ways that might flood the beew location.
- Landslides could also happen so select sites that are safer.

- Move the hives to safer areas before disaster happens.

### Protect from strong winds

As cyclone season approaches, fasten the hives firmly with ropes or belts to prevent from capsized or blowing out into pieces. Ensure

hive stands are firmly anchored in the ground.

### Moving the hives

- Fasten hives properly before moving.
- Move hives early in the morning or late in the afternoon to reduce loss of field bees.

### Method of moving hives

- Use wheel barrows, one hive at a time
- Use stretches
- Use trailers or pickup trucks if road access is good.
- Handle the hives gently and work smartly.
- Prevent hive from dropping, bangs or accidents

### Feed the colonies

- Continuous rain normally exhausts the production of nectars.
- Less flowering leads to lack of feed for bees.
- The reserve honey in the hive is ultimately used.

### How to survive the colonies

- Dry sugar feeding
- Sugar syrup feeding
- Sugar candy feeding

### Don't let the bees starve to death

Ensure there is enough feed in the hive to take through the bad

weather.

Check and top up feed every 3 days.

Survive your bees for the next production season.

