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KHS 'Field of Dreams' project 2012

*Innovation through
Demonstration*

*** PARTNER THIS PROJECT ***

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In 2009 - 2010, Kenya Highland Seed (KHS) partnered a pilot programme with the Kenya Horticultural Development Programme (KHDP), funded jointly by USAid and KHS. The project centred around the setting up of 17 demonstration fields which were to be managed by individual farmers, with hybrid seeds given by KHS who would also provide full backing and support, including training by experienced agronomists. The project was deemed to be a runaway success with well over 750 farmers attending the various 'Field Days'

Now, two years on and still running the 17 pilot sites, KHS want to take the initiative further with the **"Field of Dreams"** project.

KHS want to reach the grass roots smallholder farmer and help bring about food security and a substantial increase in income. It is their plan to set up 40 demonstration fields each year and hold field days inviting local farmers, agro dealers, NGO's and extension officers to demonstrate the technology once the crops come to fruition.

The aim is to attract around 500 farmers to each field day where they will be shown the benefits of hybrid field crops together with an innovative way of maximising yields of protected field crops such as tomatoes and peppers. Each site will include an 8 x 15m polythene greenhouse together with a simple locally made drip irrigation system. Hybrid seeds will be supplied together with a tailor made package of fertilisers and other necessary inputs. The farmers will be trained by expert agronomists and will partner with us in providing the land, water and labour.

"The use of greenhouses enables year round production and for example can provide incomes from tomatoes of \$10-20 per metre square of land compared to \$0.30 for other cash crops. It also means that smallholders can continue to produce crops during the rainy season at a time when vegetable prices are high due to a shortage of produce" In the area surrounding the greenhouse other hybrid crops will be grown to show the best varieties for the local area.

The "Field of Dreams" project is an innovative solution to food security and the increasing of farmer education and income and KHS are currently seeking partners to assist with the initiative.