



## Aumtat Kaima

Planting Hope, Harvesting Opportunity

### 2022 Activity Report

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#### We're ten!

It began a decade ago with a wild dream shared by a group of passionate, young agriculturalists, educators, and social activists. Our idea--to revive a neglected, thicket-strewn parcel of land, on the outskirts of Jerusalem, and turn it into a non-profit farm aimed at engaging young people unable to relate to mainstream educational and social structures. We would use the land as our outdoor classroom; nature would serve as our teacher; and we would help sustain our efforts through the sale of our harvest.

Fittingly, we chose "Kaima" (sustainability in Aramaic) to honor the link between human and environmental stewardship.

Our original operating model was based on sourcing government and philanthropic support, with one-third of our needs covered through self-generated income. To get to this threshold we had to convince the local community of the value of the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) social sales platform. In exchange for membership, families receive a pesticide-free, well-balanced veggie basket delivered directly to their homes each week; in return, the farm can rely on a steady income flow. Today, CSA is a growing trend; a decade ago it was a novel concept in Israel.

We extend our gratitude to our neighbors who so generously donated their land, our young farmers, adult staff, volunteers, local partners, financial supporters, and each visitor who spent even an hour with us. As we enter our second decade, we reflect on the year that was--2022. Enjoy our report below.

Kaima tinkered around and created a new iteration of the concept--**Youth Community Supported Agriculture (YCSA)**, an educational method that places the young person front and center as decision-makers on the farm. As equal partners, youth earn a **fair salary**--incentive which helps them learn teamwork and encourage personal initiative; work **alongside adults** in an undertaking of true value and consequence; and develop **compassion for others**.

Admittedly, our initial dream was a bit wild. While the land had been farmed in past centuries, it was far from arable when we found it. However, with the help of countless volunteers, early supporters, and sheer determination, we soon found our footing and exceeded our initial goals, ultimately sustaining some **60%** of our needs through sales of our fantastic veggies.

Today, we run an international YCSA network with farms in [Beit Zayit](#) (lovingly referred to as our "mother" farm), [Hukuk](#), [Nahalal](#), and even faraway [Tanzania](#). All embrace our multi-generational farming model; provide a safe place for young people to heal from trauma and secure meaningful vocational and life skills; and demonstrate that the renewal of the land and people are intertwined.

*Yoni*

Yoni Yefet Reich  
Amutat Kaima  
Co-Founder & CEO





## At our mother farm

The year began with a reignited sense of purpose as the world began to cautiously awake from the chaos and loss of the pandemic.

### Impact on the individual

#### 1. Quick stats

- 64 youth (ages 15-18) and young adults (ages 18-21) participated in our full-time farm employment program
- ~50% assumed more than one position on the farm, including leadership roles.
- ~85% returned to normative educational/social settings within six months.
- ~95% left at the age of 18 to perform military/national service or enter the workforce.

*In summary, we invested 128 hours per month in each young person through a variety of activities, including farm employment, offsite certified vocational training programming, Project Based Learning, daily enrichment (music, sports), and more.*

#### 2. Details

- Provided each participant with a minimum of 7.0 hours of daily farm employment and complementary educational programming, on average, four days weekly, amounting to 89,600 hours annually.
- Facilitated offsite certification courses for 25 young people (19 alumni and six current participants). Courses focused on subjects such as permaculture, welding, blacksmithing, carpentry, product design, jewelry making, tractor driving, and English-language development.
- Engaged 29 young people in our onsite Project Based Learning (PBL) programming at our sophisticated carpentry workshop. PBL projects may benefit either the individual or the farm, for example by building personal items or upgrading the farm's infrastructure.
- Provided intensive one-on-one mentoring to help each young person (upon turning 18) transition off the farm and into an undertaking of his/her choice, such as army/national service, additional education, or workforce placement.
- Provided full-time alternative national service programming for 14 young men and women participating in the Tmura initiative for young people unable to be recruited into conventional army or civil service programs. We also inaugurated a supervised residential program for 5 young women, ages 18-21, in this track.

*In combination, these activities encourage independence; personal accountability; positive intergenerational relationships; entrepreneurial thinking; return to conventional educational settings; resolution of personal trauma; family reconciliation; matriculation and army/national service; and the development of other important skills tied to educational advancement and workplace readiness.*



**Preparing the ground**



**Excited for the harvest**

**"The Kaima experience is very powerful, very meaningful."**

**...young farmer**

## **1. Impact on the community**

- Maintained our weekly CSA customer count of 500 families, who consumed 200,000 kilos of our harvest, the proceeds of which helped support ~60% of our budget.
- Donated 750 boxes of veggies to hungry families and organizations working to alleviate food insecurity, feeding 75 people weekly.
- Expanded eco-educational programming for the general community on agricultural diversity, conservation, zero-waste farming, farm-to-table lifestyles, etc. Approximately 750 people took part in the programs throughout 2022, an 18% increase over the prior year.
- Resumed our Sukkot Open Day with 400 members of the public taking part in a great celebration with food, crafts, discussions on sustainable farming, and youth-led tours of the fields. This was the first such gathering since the start of the pandemic.
- Painstakingly restored an additional 50 meters (165 feet) of ancient, damaged terracing that dots the land on which the farm sits. This is a multi-year undertaking and part of our strong commitment to environmental stewardship.

*In combination, these activities demonstrate the viability and desirability of Kaima's diverse financial operating model; engaged our young farmers in modeling one of the highest forms of Tikkun Olam by feeding the hungry; provided environmental educational experiences for the general community; and enabled us to play a prominent role in safe food-delivery systems.*



**Sukkot Open Day 2022**

## **2. Retiring our offsite greenhouse**

After seven years of maintaining an offsite greenhouse on the grounds of Jerusalem's Botanical Gardens, we are retiring the project. The greenhouse was initially set up using hydroponic technology but was later converted to traditional greenhouse growing. Despite some clear benefits, we found the undertaking challenging, expensive to operate, and a poor return on investment. Having said that, the experience was beneficial on several levels: it helped us to expand the concept of CSA consumption, develop as an organization, teach new skills to our young farmers, and engage hundreds of Jerusalemites in eco-educational workshops.

More than anything, we realized an important lesson. Namely, while there is value to hydroponics, we at Kaima are farmers of the land. We need soil. We need the outdoors. Kaima uses traditional methods, not to grow more and squeeze out additional profit, but precisely to try to match humanity's consumption with the earth's natural growth patterns. It was really through this grand experiment that we refined our vision of growing vegetables and people in as natural an environment as possible.

We are delighted that the greenhouse, soon to be placed in the hands of Gan Habotani and the local municipality, will see its second bloom (pardon the pun) in Jerusalem's efforts to embrace sustainable agricultural practices. Kaima thanks our local partners, youth farmers, volunteers, customers, and the collective of donors who allowed us to explore urban commercial farming.

## **3. Moving forward with expansion plans**

This past year, Kaima Beit Zayit made considerable progress with our exciting expansion plans which will see the development of an additional nine dunam plot adjacent to the farm. The compound will include our new multi-purpose space which will house the following under one roof:

- Streamlined packing house for receiving and shipping
- Expanded refrigeration room
- Greenhouse space for delicate specialty items, such as sprouts and mushrooms
- Wood and metal workshop and upgraded music room
- Demo kitchen
- Administrative offices
- Traditional olive press to produce oil from the mature trees we are caring for

This is an enormous opportunity as it will allow us to move these operations—currently offsite—just steps from our fields. During 2022, we held a series of meetings with all stakeholders, including our board, staff, youth, and volunteers to ensure all voices were heard during the planning phase. We also secured all architectural and zoning permits. In the coming year, we will launch fundraising efforts to bring additional resources to bear. Stay tuned for more on this exciting new development.

## Our network



KAIMA TANZANIA

### 1. Reflecting on 2022

The Kaima alternative educational movement currently includes three farms in Israel, specifically in Beit Zayit (our prototype, or “mother” farm est. 2013); Hukuk (est. 2016, Galil); and Nahalal (est. 2017, Jezreel Valley). (Our first international farm is located in Tanzania, est. in 2018.) Membership within Kaima’s Israel network requires that all farms commit themselves to the movement’s educational goals and philosophical principles and operate according to the CSA social sales platform.

During the past year, we completed the first phase of our massive reorganization process whereby all member farms are being absorbed under one umbrella body, with our prototype farm assuming responsibility for the networks’ a) educational, b) business, and c) fundraising efforts. While the transition to full sustainability will likely take three years, we are already tracking marked improvements.

*\* One of our original network farms has now moved to an independent farming model; four others influenced by our methodology and mindset are now operating from Beer Sheva in the south to Bat Shlomo in the north.*

### 2. Reflecting on the past decade

#### By the Numbers... A Decade Across Kaima’s Israel Network



\* % RAISED THROUGH SALES: KAIMA BEIT ZAYIT: 65% | KAIMA HUKUK: 45% | KAIMA NAHALAL: 40%

## 2023 select network projections

In the coming year, we seek to:

- Secure cross-network government funding by remounting efforts to renew government funding at our prototype farm and assure new funding be released to our sister farms
- Provide 125 youth with full-time employment across our network. Each farm will provide ~ 7.00 hours of farm experience daily, on an average of four days weekly
- Implement a cross-network employment preparation workshop to increase financial literacy and prepare the young person for the general workforce
- Expand our alumni activities
- Increase our post-Kaima scholarship program
- Study the feasibility of organizing an Israel/Tanzania exchange delegation
- Carry out customer surveys across our network to assess how we are meeting our business targets and how our pro-social agenda is understood by our CSA base
- Enlighten our young farmers and the public on how small efforts can positively impact food justice, biodiversity, and climate change
- Support other professionals seeking to adopt/adapt our educational approach as a means of improving the wellbeing of vulnerable populations, such as those suffering from PTSD
- Collaborate with academics interested in studying our operating model
- Launch a significant campaign to establish an upgraded multi-purpose operations warehouse on our mother farm and implement more modest capital projects at our sister farms

**Kaima extends its gratitude to those who financially sustain our efforts,  
purchase our harvest, and volunteer in our fields.**

**Thank you for believing in us!**

