

emerging market
BUSINESS
in sustainable food & agriculture

Agribusiness Investments Take Center Stage

A Note from Rich Johnson, CEO & Co-founder, Spark Ventures



**30 honeybee hives
buzz in Nicaragua**

In Chicago, we are finally seeing signs of spring. As I walked to the train this morning, blooming gardens and excited kids are a reminder of the potential of Spark's model.

Spark is investing in sustainable food and agriculture businesses and utilizing the returns to fund our social program partners. Traditional international philanthropy is a dollar-in, dollar-out model and it requires raising the same money for the same programs year after year. Spark's model leverages that philanthropic dollar by investing it in a business that will help to sustain social programs for years and years to come. We call it business driven philanthropy.

**Capacity increased
to 20,000 chickens
in Zambia**



This issue highlights the growing operations of our farm investments in Zambia and Nicaragua, and the opportunity to see those investments in action by traveling with Spark. I hope you enjoy it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rich Johnson".

2015 annual production level increased by 54%, from 78,000 to 120,000 chickens annually



Farm operations support 12 permanent and numerous seasonal jobs

2015 projected profits of \$30,000+ funding high impact programs at Hope Community School



Hope Ventures Poultry Farm Expands Production

Counting Our Chickens After They Hatch

Spark's investment in the Hope Ventures poultry farm in Zambia is producing important economic and social returns: the ultimate goal of our business driven philanthropy model.

New construction was completed in late 2014, and in April of this year, cycle production grew from 13,000 to 20,000 chickens. **Annual production levels will increase by 54%** to 120,000 chickens raised and sold each year.

The Hope Ventures farm, like any other growing business, has gone through ups and downs, but the team in place has the benefit of a partnership with one of Zambia's largest poultry distributors (Zambeef). This relationship, along with experienced poultry manager Mr. Hatimbula (pictured to the left, with members of his team), is paying off as the farm has met numerous performance metrics including mortality rates below the 5% industry average and optimal weight averages for the chickens.

With continued strong performance, the **annual profit should surpass \$30,000**, the majority of which will fund high-impact programs at Hope Community School. In addition to sustainable revenue directed to nutrition, education and healthcare programming, **the farm employs 12 full-time workers with living wages and housing**, even as unemployment rates in Zambia top 15%.



Honeybee Pilot Hives Begin Buzzing

First Honey Harvest In Nicaragua

On Spark's Nicaragua farm, a pilot of 30 honeybee hives begins our revenue generating operations, and serves as a **professional development opportunity** for our land caretaker, Carlos. During the first honey harvest, Carlos was mentored by a local master apiculture technician, Fabio, and the two men made for an impressive team (pictured below).

Prior to harvest, the duo built a small extraction house called the "casita", which eliminates any possibility of contamination of the honey in its route between the hives and the extraction equipment. Within the casita the team places the extraction chamber, where four honey panels are inserted at once and spun for 20-30 seconds at high speed while the honey is ejected and collected at the bottom of the chamber.

The team evaluates each honey panel individually, selecting the most mature ones for extraction. In the first harvest, about **385 pounds of honey** were collected. A great start to the season.



The 30 pilot hives on the 175 acre Nicaraguan farm will scale to 100 hives, and will be accompanied by cacao, coffee, and chillies.



Spark's International Travel Vision

The Leader in Impact Travel

With international travel at the center of Spark Ventures' origin story, we have a deep understanding of the transformative power of a trip experience. Over the past seven years, Spark has developed a world-class impact travel program, hosting over 300 participants on trips to Nicaragua and Zambia.

What do we mean by "Impact Travel"?

1. A first-hand look at Spark's international impact investing via our business driven philanthropy model
2. Volunteering with the beneficiaries and engagement with the leaders of Spark's social program partners
3. Unique access to cultural experiences including food, music, dance, and history via Spark's on-the-ground network
4. The best excursions the country has to offer: nature, tourism, dining and entertainment

Spark travelers learn about the challenges faced by the communities where we work, and how Spark Ventures partners and invests to provide a sustainable alternative to traditional dollar-in, dollar-out philanthropy.

We hope to see you on an upcoming impact trip...



Visit sparkventures.org/travel for more info and a full trip listing. Or call Arnold Duijzer at the Spark office to have a conversation about traveling with Spark, 773.293.6710.

sparkventures
business driven philanthropy

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