



Andrew Cliff Kamtoseni
Kasunga District, Malawi

Farming sustains community

As he tours visitors through his community, you can quickly understand why Malawi is often called the “warm heart of Africa”. Andrew Cliff Kamtoseni, a farmer and village head man from Kasunga District, and his wife are generous hosts. Kamtoseni expresses great pride in how his farm and his prevailing cooperative spirit have helped build a future that will sustain the community.

Once a subsistence farmer, Kamtoseni has applied the knowledge he’s gained from agrologists and other farming specialists, including CropLife Africa, to increase the productivity of his farm. “With the training, I have been able to increase production of all crops to the levels you see today,” he says.

Since he started farming two hectares in 1992, Kamtoseni has expanded to nearly 40 hectares on which he grows

corn, groundnuts, beans and other crops. “From this field, I am able to harvest 80 to 100 bags of maize, each bag weighing 50 kilograms,” replies Kamtoseni standing next to a tall crop of corn. “I make profits and cash is not a big problem these days.”

With more crops to sell, Kamtoseni has invested his additional profits to improve the standard of living for his village. For example, he has built a better house for his wife and family and he now sends his young children to school. He has built homes for his adult children,

started a village grocery store and constructed a maize mill that helps to feed the community and creates jobs for other villagers.

“On maize I make sure that I plant hybrid seed, which yields higher than local varieties,” he says. “You know the rains in this area can be very erratic so we plant early maturing maize because it takes advantage of the little rain we receive.” Today, Kamtoseni weeds his maize fields by hand but he’s looking forward to the time he’ll save when he can use herbicides.

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The training he received from CropLife Africa has made it possible to use crop protection products more safely and effectively. “The trainers taught us how to safely store crop protection products, how to safely apply these products while wearing protective clothing, and how to properly clean and dispose of containers,” he says.

Kamtoseni uses other means to increase the likelihood of a successful crop. “I grow a lot of different crops so if one fails the other crops will sustain me,” he says. By rotating his crops, he reduces the incidence of crop disease and improves the health of his soil. He contours the soil to reduce erosion and maximise the water available for his plants. He’s also replanting trees to restore the natural landscape.

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Kamtoseni is proud of all that he has accomplished in his village. His three automobiles, including two trucks and a car, help him with farm business but his dream is for much more. “My vision is to get a tractor that will help to plough and do other activities on this land,” he replies. “I am also looking to build fish ponds so that I can produce fish on this farm.” As an enterprising farmer and leader of his community, he has confidence that even better things are to come for his family and his village.

enterprising

