

DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLLEGE FARM

The Farm had not been doing well in the recent past. All the cattle had been sold. The poultry population, ie layers and broilers, had also been drastically reduced. It had been necessary to resort to bank borrowings. Each month had ended with a loss being recorded. The farm itself was about to be closed down.

It was at this stage that the OBA intervened. Mr.K Wimalarajah an Old Boy of the 1958-1962 era who has considerable experience in this field was recommended by the Ex-Co to the Headmaster. He was recruited as the Farm Manager with a major portion of his remuneration being met by the OBA. To the relief of the Headmaster, the OBA has now virtually taken over the management of the farm. According to reports from the OBA, with the new systems, procedures etc in place, there had been a complete turn-around for the better. No losses are recorded.

Much of the credit should go to Mr.K Wimalarajah who has been ably supported by Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe, the Secretary of the OBA. The two of them have been working closely and have had a constant dialogue and consultation. Other Old Boys of Mr.Wimalaraja's era namely Mr.Sarath Suraweera and Mr.Nihal Wanniarachchi have been continuously encouraging and supporting him.

We have requested the OBA to give us details of the progress made in a manner that could be clearly understood by the membership so that we could upload such details on our web site. We shall do so if and when such details are received.

In the meantime, we have below a photograph of Mr.Wimalarajah who may well deservedly be dubbed the Chief Architect of the Development of the Farm.



The College Farm is known to be presently running at a loss. Only the Chicken Farm is now existing with the Cattle farm closed, the small number of cows having been sold recently.

It has been found that there are many irregularities in the running of the farm and a total, refurbishment of the facilities including new management is required.

An Old Boy qualified and experienced in similar farming has shown interest in taking up the challenge to manage the farm and this is being pursued strongly.

OBA Newsletter No.4
January 01,2003

The College farm had been running at a loss of hundreds of thousands of Rupees over the last few years and it was on the verge of being closed down. The Ex-Co found out the malpractices, inefficiencies and the other areas of grave concern, in the management of the farm and the Headmaster appointed Mr.K Wimalarajah, an Old Boy of the Dr.Hayman era as the Farm Manager in February 2003, at the recommendation of the Ex-Co.

With a small infusion of funds initially from the OBA and addressing of the areas of concern as well as improved methods for the growth of chicks, **the farm has shown profits in the first forty days of operation**, from only 500 broiler chicks. Now the farm produces 200 broilers every week, giving a regular supply of chicken to the kitchen and making reasonable profits to maintain a smooth cash flow. **Arrangements are under way to buy 500 layer chicks** and to grow vegetables wherever possible along with some banana and papaya trees. It is hoped that the **Members will give lavishly to the recent appeal for donations** to develop the farm to it's maximum potential, to help the College recover from the present financial crisis. Every Rs.1000 adds up.

Newsletter No.6
2003

THE FARM PROJECT

Initially the undertaking envisaged the purchase of 500 chicks at Rs. 42.00 per chick per week for culling after a 40 day period at an average weight of 1.62 kilos at Rs. 160.00 per kilo. However, a ceiling price control was introduced at Rs. 155.00 per kilo for dressed chicken; and buyers bargained for prices below that price in a very competitive market. Purchases were therefore reduced to 200 chicks a batch (Broilers) and the Farm Manager, diverted of necessity to the purchase of Layer chicks. An initial Batch of 500 chicks were purchased, and as at the time of this report, the first few eggs have been laid. The full production will only be reached in another two to three weeks. The broilers would solve the School dormus as to 50% of production, and we are exploring a steady and reliable market for the balance.

The Farm Manager has re-started the Vegetable Farm, and the initial crop of Beans has realized Rs.2800.00. He expects to start on Kankung and Mukunuwenna next with more area under cultivation. There will be phased increases in activities and the Headmaster has appreciated this trend. The periodic scarcity of water presents some problems and we hope that the new well under construction will alleviate some burdens both for the Farm & the Swimming Pool, not forgetting the needs of the College Campus as whole. Meantime, it was decided to have an independent accounting basis for the Farm in order to further the expedient conduct of the business. In this way, a proper assessment of the Farm Project can be continually done. We are extremely grateful to Mr.Vijitha Fernando of our OBA but an Old Boy of Mount Lavinia for donating Rs.18,000.- to meet the Farm Manager's salary supplement by the OBA. Thank you Vijitha. **It was indeed remarkable that the largest contributor to the Farm Development Project was an Old Boy of Mount Lavinia.** Guru Old Boys can still, we hope, do better. Come on the list is still open.

Newsletter No.7
2003