



Kaima Nahalal – A Feminist Farm

Empowering girls and women through sustainable agriculture

October 2022

Dear Kaima Nahalal supporters and friends,

I hope this finds you and your family well as we enter 5783. Like others, I find myself looking back and imagining what might be in the future. I'm excited to share some of my reflections below. Enjoy!

Big News

Five years have passed since we planted our first seeds, welcomed our first team of girl farmers, and brought to market our first harvest. In that time, our farm has evolved as a safe place for girls to heal after trauma and for women to gather around issues of environmental and social sustainability. Each week, our multi-generational team harvests and delivers fresh veggies to 90 customers, an increase of 500% since starting!

And while proud of our accomplishments, my colleagues and I are concerned about our long-term sustainability and our vision of encouraging other women to follow in our footsteps.

To build the professional capacities necessary to sustain our operations into the future, there are some big changes afoot. As a member of the Kaima alternative farming network, we have been gifted with new resources offered through the [Kaima Center for Economic Development and Educational Training](#), the body responsible for maintaining and supporting all network farms. The Center is undergoing an exciting reorganization process intended to strengthen, expand, and unify all educational, marketing, and fundraising activities across our network. What does this mean for Kaima Nahalal? In brief, the Center's expanded professional team is investing ~40 hours each month to help us build the following capacities:

- **Educational:** The Center's social worker will mentor our professional team, enable us to increase the time spent working directly with girls and women, and develop/implement new educational programs for the general community.
- **Business:** The Center's marketing director who helped build the sales platform for the network's prototype farm will help oversee our own marketing needs, implement new sales strategies, and increase our purchasing power by sharing expenses with other network farms.
- **Resource Development:** The Center's expanded development team will assume the primary responsibility for securing financial resources, with renewed focus on mobilizing local resources. The primary goal will be to secure funding through the Ministry of Welfare, to date illusive, but understood as essential to true long-term financial sustainability

While Kaima Nahalal will remain an independent organization, with our own board of directors, this is a total game changer for us as this shift will provide us with the encouragement, direction, and resources needed to evolve yet further.

Fast Facts

From last Rosh Hashanah to this Rosh Hashanah, Kaima Nahalal:

- Provided full- and part-time employment to 41 girls, ages 15 –18, and 10 young women, ages 18-21, through Project Lavender, our farm employment initiative.
- Provided supervised residential support and expanded wrap-around services to five young women in collaboration with Tmura through our Save Living initiative.
- Implemented a summer program for 20 local youth, eight of them girls, in collaboration with our regional council. We were heartened when some of our Project Lavender farmers naturally stepped-up to mentor our younger visitors.
- Assisted 21 graduates (those turning 18) transition off the farm after at least four months with us, all of whom moved on to pursue important life challenges. Some are now performing army/national service; others have resumed their studies, while others enrolled in professional training courses.
- Restarted our offsite vocational training initiative through the establishment of a new scholarship fund.
- Donated 4,284 pounds to the hungry through our Feed my Neighbor initiative.
- Successfully covered ~38% of our operating costs through self-generated funds (via farm sales and user fees), a number which we are proud, but seek to appreciably increase in the coming year.
- Welcomed 25 groups participating in our multi-generational all-women Garden of Eve programming, a 150% increase over the past two years during which the pandemic forced us to all but cease such activities. Notably, our young Project Lavender farmers, keen to share their newly gained knowledge, are key to leading this track which focuses on environmental stewardship and scaled organic growing.
- Reached 1,317 families through our weekly farm update.

Liaising with other local women activists, change-makers, and assault survivors

Once public safety restrictions eased, Kaima Nahalal was approached by the Jezreel Valley Regional Council to host a community event on women and the environment. We opted to focus on the unique power of women conservationists, local product consumption, and the ecological price of ‘fast fashion.’

The event featured youth-led tours of our fields, a farmer’s market, and an amazing swap party where people traded gently used clothing with one another! The event brought together some 300 girls and women from throughout our region, providing many with the opportunity to sell their art and share their knowledge with others. One of the highlights was interacting with another nearby NGO, [“The Land Where Women Heal,”](#) whose staff and volunteers reach out to survivors of sexual trauma.

Media

- **Video:** In 2021, we were accepted into the inaugural Rayah Fund Fellows program. The Fund brings together women CEOs from all backgrounds who are leading social change organizations in Israel to encourage both national and local collaboration. Check out this 3-minute video made for us by our friends at the Fund: <https://bit.ly/3yrzJSj>
- **Honorable mention:** We were delighted when our partners at the Boston-based Miriam Fund published a short piece on our work in the bi-monthly online publication, The Jewish Journal. The article included a photo of Kaima Nahalal's now world-famous sweet potatoes. <https://bit.ly/3ejCsGE>

What's next?

We hope in the coming year to further expand our complementary educational and workforce entry programming; introduce new a new self-defense workshop; secure government funding at more meaningful levels; encourage other women farmers to adopt our operating model; and welcome YOU to the farm.

Shana Tova and thank you for being a part of our unfolding story,

Merav and the Kaima Nahalal Team



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Our new website address is: <https://www.kaimanahalal.org>