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Our History

The seeds for ASLAN were planted in the minds and hearts of founders Jes Tarp and Paul Larsen in the early and mid 1990s. While travelling to Ukraine several times a year as an educator, Jes began to explore how he could become meaningfully involved in sustainable economic development, while at the same time using that structure to bring social and even spiritual transformation to the people of Ukraine. Jes saw how agriculture could be a key factor in bringing economic and social transformation to a poor and struggling country. After gaining direct experience as a financial partner with several Americans that were experienced in Ukrainian agriculture, he designed a model that would allow for the development of a series of investor-funded farms in southern Ukraine. In 2004 he founded Ag Management Group, LLC to provide management for these farms. Paul joined the management team to help design the investment model and provide administrative support for the project.

Over the first 3 years, 4 separate farms were started in different villages. These farms were merged as of January 2008 into one farm--Alpha Farm. Today, the company is operating about 30,000 acres, and is currently in the process of starting a dairy farm. Alpha Farm employs over 100 people full-time with many seasonal employees, which is significant in a poor country where the unemployment rate in the rural villages is very high. The farm has provided regular income for workers, good rent for landlords, and new tax revenues for local governments to improve services. Additionally, Alpha Farm has provided social help to the community by way of aid to school and health facilities, a chaplaincy program for spiritual development, humanitarian aid and clothing distributions to the very poor, with other services as needed.

In both 2010 and 2011 Alpha Farm was named "Farm of the Year by a consortium of agencies including the Committee of economic development of Ukraine, Ministry of economics of Ukraine and the International Chamber of Commerce. This group monitors over 300,000 Ukrainian enterprises of all kinds and chooses 35 each year to honor.

Alpha farm completed its seventh full year of production at the end of 2011. And in addition to the economic, social and spiritual returns in the villages, investors have received average annual cash distributions of over 10% while watching the operation grow from under 5000 acres to 30,000 acres in 2012.

MOZAMBIQUE

In late 2008, Jes and Paul began to consider reproducing this model in other parts of the developing world. In early 2009 they decided to concentrate on Sub-Saharan Africa. Jes and Paul were invited to Mozambique to start commercial scale soybean and maize production in order to supply the growing poultry market. Following several trips to Mozambique in 2009, Aslan decided to move forward with the deliberate goal of launching the venture.

Aslan's understanding of the dynamics of starting business in developing countries, along with the challenges inherent in crop production, required them to move quickly in recruiting an experienced team of individuals to join them in this venture. In addition, they also moved quickly to deepen their current relationships and initiate new ones among officials from the local, and all the way up to national, government levels.

Aslan Global Management, LLC provides the management, and Ag Management Group - Mozambique, LLC was formed as the US holding company in which investors are vested, and a Mozambican company, Rei do Agro Limitada was formed and registered in Mozambique (and owned by Ag Management Group - Mozambique).

By September 2010 Aslan had secured land, and the work began with a full-complement of Senior Staff and over 100 locals from nearby villages, clearing and preparing land for planting.

In 2012 Aslan will have cleared and planted some 5000 acres, of what will be over 25,000 acres, of irrigated cropland near Gurue in northern Mozambique. In addition, an extension program has been initiated to bring technology, training in best practices and access to the market to the small-holder farmers in the villages that surround Rei do Agro's farm operations.

Today, Rei do Agro Limitada has a staff of over 130, and is making plans for educational and community health initiatives in its local area.

Rei do Agro also represents Mozambique on the newly formed Southern Africa Soybean Association (SASA).

TANZANIA

In early 2011 Aslan began meeting with officials and making plans for operations in Tanzania. As of early 2012, land has been identified and the company is making plans for the development of over 40,000 acres of irrigated cropland.

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