



My Year at The National

Follow Ayesha Al Khoori and Asmaa Al Hameli as they chronicle their first year working in a newsroom.



Enter search terms

Business » Economy



Al Dahra invests \$20m in Namibian date farm

Tom Arnold

May 15, 2011

[Save this article](#)

[Tweet](#) [Share](#) [+1](#) [Recommend](#) 0

Date fans will be better able to buy their favourite delicacy all year round thanks to a UAE company's multimillion-dollar investment in a date farm in Namibia.

Al Dahra Agricultural Company's US\$20 million (Dh73.4m) backing of a project in the southern African country is expected to boost availability of the fruit across the Middle East outside the summer harvest season.

As much as 2,500 tonnes a year of dates are forecast to be exported to the Middle East once the farm is fully cultivated, due to be in four years, said Abdulkadir Yousef, the chief executive of the Namibian operations of the Abu Dhabi food company.

He initiated the project in 2007, securing 200 hectares of land from the Namibian government and shipping out 24,000 date palm trees from the UAE to cultivate.

"The climate in Namibia is very good for date growing and the season there complements the off-season in the Middle East," he said. "With this project, Al Dahra has two seasons to produce dates as we have two date farms in Abu Dhabi."

While the UAE is estimated to be the fifth-biggest date producer globally, Namibia had little foothold in the industry before the investment. Namibia currently exports 300 tonnes of dates a year, mainly to Europe.

But the project is helping boost the industry, in addition to creating 1,000 jobs in the Karas Region.

More Business news: Editor's pick of today's headlines

Last Updated: May 15, 2011

Brands urge big fines for fakes UAE executives want harsher punishments to slow the flood of fake goods flowing through the Gulf. [Read article](#)

Baby boom in Dubai puts pressure on nursery places A pre-financial crisis baby boom and more expatriate families moving to Dubai are heaping pressure on the nursery education system. [Read article](#)

A new economy is in the pipeline Industry Insights // Fujairah is building a huge new industrial and port zone that will transform the emirate into one of the world's biggest oil trading hubs. [Read article](#)

Fake goods on the rise in UAE Counterfeit goods are widely sold in some parts of the UAE, and the problem is growing despite efforts to shut down stores selling them. [Read article](#)

UAE's market status in sharp focus ahead of MSCI decision The upcoming decision by index compiler MSCI on whether it will include the UAE on its emerging market index is likely to dictate investor decision-making this week. [Read article](#)

[More Business](#)

ECONOMY

Dubai has designs on joining London, Paris and New York

Dubai in deal with REDmoney

Foreign investment a likely key to reduce India's poverty levels

Tabreed cools off debt while quarterly profits rise by 37%

Concerns can still bubble up at times

CSR tops agenda in Dubai

[MOST VIEWED](#) [MOST COMMENTED](#)

1. UAE telecom users outraged by 'du'opoly' as bills hiked
2. Adic buys into Tokyo property
3. Al Noor in good health following public listing
4. Battle over American pipe dreams
5. Standard Chartered profits fall after Korean bank writedown

POLL

Have you received a pay rise in the UAE in the last 12 months?

- Yes
 No

[Vote](#) [Show Results](#)

Finde uns auf Facebook



28.422 Personen gefällt The National



Neueste Aktivität

[Registrieren](#) Erstelle ein Konto

[US pulls its citizens out of](#) Eine Person empfiehlt das.

Soziales Plug-in von Facebook

EDITOR'S PICKS



Dubai has designs on joining London, Paris and New York

Dubai's planned design and fashion council will help to put the emirate on an equal footing with the retail capitals of Paris, London and New York, one of its members said.

BLOGS

Five ways to tackle financial stress

[Your Money](#)

One in five UAE residents use debt to pay off debt

[Your Money](#)

Fund of the month to help you better manage your investments

1,000 jobs in the Karas region in southern Namibia where the farm is located.

Al Dahra established a 50-50 joint venture with the Namibia Development Corporation, a government agency that promotes economic growth. Profits will be divided equally between the two shareholders.

"It's unlocking an industry with huge potential to help the Namibia economy through job creation," said Pieter de Wet, the acting managing director of the Namibia Development Corporation.

The warm climate and rich soil make Namibia suitable for growing dates throughout the year.

Medjool, barhee, khalas and hilali are among the dates being grown as Al Dahra is keen to ensure varieties of the fruit familiar to Middle East consumers are produced. Grapes will also be produced on a 20ha site, with the produce being sold to the local market. Water supplies for the dates come from the nearby Naute Dam, Namibia's third-largest dam. Etihad Airways transported the first batch of 30 tonnes of the fruit from Johannesburg, in neighbouring South Africa, to the UAE in February and March.

Production is due to be gradually increased each year from the existing 13ha of trees currently cultivated.

The venture plans to begin exporting the dates by sea from Namibian ports to markets across the Middle East once production reaches 2,000 tonnes a year. Some dates will still be air freighted to customers wanting dates picked less than 48 hours previously.

Al Dahra has established itself as a main player in the UAE's drive to boost food security through global investments in agriculture.

In addition to Namibia, it has operations in Egypt, Pakistan, Spain, Sudan and the US. Within its 14 domestic farms in Al Ain, it produces dates as well as vegetables and other fruit.

tarnold@thenational.ae

Related

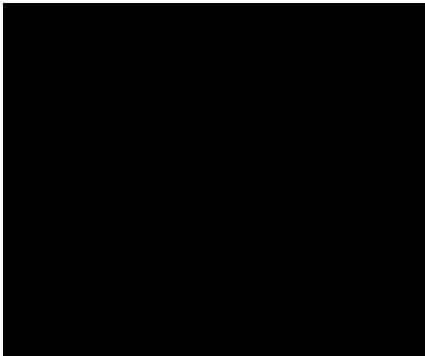
- Namibia plans Dubai consulate and food warehouse
- Egypt revives Abu Dhabi company's \$500m project cancelled after revolution
- Feed buyers could reap gains

Topic Agriculture Namibia

Related

- Namibia plans Dubai consulate and food warehouse
- Egypt revives Abu Dhabi company's \$500m project cancelled after revolution
- Feed buyers could reap gains

Topic Agriculture Namibia



Your Money

SOUND & VISION



Video: UAE achieves MSCI Emerging Markets status

[Full screen](#)

EVENTS

The Office Exhibition 2013

May 20 - May 23, 2013

To add your event to The National listings, [click here](#)

TOPICS [\(What is this\)](#)

- STANDARD CHARTERED
- RAILWAYS
- SHUAA
- THE LIFE
- JAPAN

E-PAPER



View the paper as it appeared in print [Register here](#)
Download the iPad reader [Here](#)

APP



Keep up to date with the latest news on the move
[Get your iPhone app here](#)

Get the most from

The National

Sign up to our newsletter

[Sign Up](#)

[Back to the top](#) ▲



Your comments

[Log in to add a comment](#)

Previous article

Can fake goods boost the real thing?

Next article

Results take too long, say fund chiefs

[Back to Economy](#)

SOUND & VISION



The National Conversation

[Comment](#)
[Editorial](#)
[Feedback](#)
[Sport comment](#)
[Culture comment](#)
[Our journalists](#)

SOUND & VISION

[Pictures](#)
[Videos](#)

THE GUIDE

[Practical Information](#)
[Social Information](#)
[History](#)

EVENTS

[Upcoming Events](#)
[My events](#)

ONLINE FEATURES

[E-Paper](#)
[Competitions](#)
[Weather](#)

MY NATIONAL

[Edit preferences](#)
[Manage alerts](#)

Do you have a
story?

NEWS

UAE news

[Courts](#)
[Education](#)
[Environment](#)
[Health](#)
[Heritage](#)
[Politics](#)
[Science](#)
[Technology](#)
[Tourism](#)
[Transport](#)

World

[Middle East](#)
[South Asia](#)
[Americas](#)
[Europe](#)
[Asia Pacific](#)
[Africa](#)

BUSINESS

[Industry Insights](#)
[Aviation](#)
[Banking](#)
[Economy](#)
[Energy](#)
[Markets](#)
[Media](#)
[Property](#)
[Retail](#)
[Technology](#)
[Telecoms](#)
[Travel & tourism](#)

SPORT

[UAE sport](#)
[Football](#)
[Arabian Gulf League](#)
[Formula One](#)
[Abu Dhabi Grand Prix](#)
[Cricket](#)
[Golf](#)
[Horse racing](#)
[Tennis](#)
[Rugby](#)
[Motorsport](#)
[North American sport](#)
[Other sport](#)
[The Manny Pacquiao Story](#)

LIFESTYLE

[Motoring](#)
[Travel](#)
[House & home](#)
[Personal finance](#)
[Fashion](#)
[Food](#)
[Well being](#)
[Family](#)

ARTS & CULTURE

[Art](#)
[Books](#)
[Television](#)
[Film](#)
[Music](#)
[On stage](#)

Can't find what you are looking for? Try [The National Top](#)

The
Pr
Ca
bo

[About us](#) [Contact us](#) [Work with us](#) [Privacy policy](#) [Terms and conditions](#) [Advertise with us](#) [Subscribe](#) [Blogs](#) [Sitemap](#)

| [admcSPORT.com](#) | [alittihad.ae](#) | [thenational.ae](#) | [anazahra.com](#) | [ngalarabiya.com](#) | [adtv.ae](#) | [adradio.ae](#) | [admedia.ae](#)