

Pamela Ben

“I turned to the land for my future.”



Started Out Watermelon Planting

After completing Year 12 at Wawin High School in 2006, Pamela took up a stint as an Administration Officer. Following which, Pamela decided to start farming with the help of her husband, Ben Naboth, a customary landowner from Taranan village who is very supportive of her farming endeavors. They started out planting watermelon on her husband's land.



The Markham Valley is known for its fertile land and farming activities by large Agricultural Industries. Identified as the food bowl of Papua New Guinea, the valley is famous for different types of agribusiness models, ranging from palm oil, cassava, and peanut to rice and watermelon. The valley even supports agroforestry, poultry, cattle farming, piggyery, and the popular local green gold called the Markham Meat 'Betelnut'.

Pamela's motivation in farming came about after having seen the sale of watermelons at the Lae Main Market. Looking at the income generated from watermelon sales, she increased her farming land to half a hectare and started planting other fresh produce such as Indian Hybrid Guava, Green Boy Chinese Cabbage, Cucumber, PT Kaukau, Taro, Lettuce, and Pakchoi Chinese Cabbage.

Her commitment to improving the business did not stop there. Pamela attended the Financial Literacy Training by Ginigoada in 2018 and was one of the farmers selected by Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) in their Village Extension Worker (VEW) project. FPDA provides farmers with a Startup Kit containing seedlings, tools, fertilizers, and insecticides in addition to conducting nursery and quality checks, as well as soil preparation training for farmers. The toolkit helps to kickstart vegetable production and aims to address food security and financial security issues. As vegetable crops can be harvested any time of the year, growing vegetables allows people in rural villages to raise funds for school fees, uniforms, and other basic necessities for the family unit throughout the year.



Pamela Ben and her husband Ben Naboth

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- Pamela Ben

Pamela aspires to do three things with her farm's proceeds – build a permanent family home; buy a vehicle to transport produce to the market; and purchase a tractor to plough their land for planting. The proceeds from her farm have also enabled her to operate a store and a liquor shop along the highway which will greatly help her in achieving her dreams.

Pamela strongly believes that self-sustaining opportunities on land must not be wasted.

In encouraging other women to do the same Pamela says, "If women are unable to continue their education, they should return back to their land, and work on their land. Land is life, and we must go back to our land."