



MUSEAA Newsletter

April, 2007 Edition

Lilongwe Alumni Visit Kauma Permaculture Plot

Lilongwe members of the Malawi U.S. Exchange Alumni Association (MUSEAA), on Friday, April 12, 2007 will lead journalists on a guided visit of the Kauma permaculture plot. The Kauma plot is now on harvest stage and the purpose of the trip is to showcase results of permaculture farming.



MUSEAA and community members treat themselves to a permaculture meal in Chiradzulu.

About MUSEAA

The Malawi U.S. Alumni Association (MUSEAA) was established in September 2005 with support from the [Alumni Affairs Division](#) in the State Department Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs (ECA). The Association aims to provide a forum for internal and external networking among all exchange alumni while contributing to matters of national development using lessons learned from United States exchange programs. The Association is committed to promote networking among U.S exchange alumni both within and outside Malawi, and within different professionals; to contribute to Malawi's social and economic development; and to build lifelong relationships among members.

The objectives of the Association are to create networking opportunities for United States exchange alumni nationally, regionally, and globally; share experiences from United States exchange programs with Malawian audiences to promote mutual understanding; strive to make maximum use of knowledge and skills derived from exchange programs to promote development in Malawi and the region; develop and maintain lasting relationships with the United States of America Mission and larger American community in Malawi; and do all such other things that may be deemed incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above aim and objectives

Membership is open to all Malawian residents who participated in United States Government exchange programs, including but not limited to [International Leadership Program Visitor](#), [Hubert H. Humphrey](#), [William J. Fulbright](#), [Study of the United States Summer Institutes](#), Washington Foreign Press Centre and other U.S. funded programs.

Since October 2005, Public Affairs Section automatically registers all exchange participants upon their return as members to the Association. For those who participated before this period membership is by application to the National Coordinator through this Registration form National Coordinator, Malawi U.S. Exchange Alumni Association, C/o Public Affairs Section, P O Box 30016, Lilongwe, Malawi. Email: LilongwePAS@State.gov

In This Edition

* *MUSEAA Visits Kauma Plot* * *Permaculture expert drills MUSEAA members* * *Food recipes* * *About MUSEAA* * *And more*

PAO Leads Media Visit to Chiladzulu Permaculture Plot



PAO, Exchange Alumni and Mai Sitima, Plot Manager



Bonangwe (wild okra) and maize.

US Embassy's Public Affairs Officer Mitchell Moss accompanied reporters on a visit to the MUSEAA permaculture plot near Blantyre. Plot manager Diana "Mai" Sitima and exchange alumni led media members through the plot and explained the agricultural and nutritional benefits of permaculture. Moss stressed the negative effects of maize monoculture: "Malawians cannot live by maize alone--it hurts the environment, the economy and the health of Malawians." Exchange alumni hosted members of National Business Women's Association of Malawi (NABW), the press and members of the community to a meal featuring foods grown on the permaculture site.

MUSEAA members attend a Black History Month book exhibition

As part of Black History Month activities, Public Affairs Section of the US Embassy organized a book exhibition at the American Corner Blantyre on Wednesday, February 28, featuring works by prominent African American and Malawian authors.

The event provided an opportunity for prominent Malawian writers, artists, journalists and academics to discuss the role of the writer in society.

Renowned author and exchange alumnus Dr. James Ng'ombe discussed how writers help us understand historical events, creating empathy in the process so that readers are able to better understand events that define their lives and society. PAO Mitchell Moss encouraged writers in the audience to "focus on telling the compelling, human stories that surround them. Exchange alumna and Blantyre Chapter Leader Dr. Angela Chimwaza commented that the event was a "great tool for understanding cross cultural issues."



MUSEAA members attend permaculture training.



Nine members of the Malawi US Exchange Alumni Association (MUSEAA) participated in a permaculture training session on January 24 to prepare themselves for establishing permaculture plots in Lilongwe and Mzimba. Technical consultant for the permaculture project, Kristof Nordin trained the participants in permaculture and nutrition principles in preparation of demonstration gardens.



As part of the training, Nordin and MUSEAA members visited Kauma and brought with them aloe vera plants, mulberry cuttings, papaya trees, and several nitrogen-fixing trees which they planted at the Kauma plot with the help of members of the community and the plot's manager, Thandi Kamanga.



“The improvements and changes that have occurred at the Kauma plot from the original follow-up visit in November of 2006 have been amazing,” said Nordin. “The plot has completely been converted from a poorly ridged maize field into the beginnings of a very successful permaculture plot.”

Nordin observed that the members of the community had begun to mulch the plot using reeds and grasses from the area which helped to control runoff rainwater, hold moisture in the soil, protect microorganism from direct sunlight, and help to replace soil nutrients. He also noted that the group had been intercropping a variety of plants together in the concept of a permaculture guild. Throughout the plot foods and medicinal plants were left to grow and be harvested.

Nordin conducted a similar follow up to the Mzimba permaculture plot along with the media and other MUSEAA members on January 25, 2007. Nordin noted that there was a lot more support from motivated individuals to develop the plot.

“It was very interesting to see both the Lilongwe and Mzimba projects doing so well, both made a great deal of progress and are quickly becoming good examples of permaculture in Malawi.



Preferred recipes for diarrhoea patients

Drinks (in order of preference):

Tea out of	How to prepare	Comments
Garlic	Chop 3-4 cloves of garlic. Add to one cup of boiling water. Boil for another 10 minutes. Add salt and honey if you want it sweet. Cover and allow to cool slightly before drinking. Drink one cup 3 times a day	
Ginger	Add ½ teaspoon chopped fresh ginger to one cup of boiling water. Boil slowly for 10 minutes. Cover and allow to stand for five minutes. Strain. Add honey if you want it sweet. Drink one cup 3 times a day.	Add a pinch of salt if possible.
Garlic and ginger	Add 12 cloves of garlic and 1 ½ teaspoons chopped fresh ginger to 3 cups of boiling water. Boil for 10 minutes. Cover and strain after 5 minutes. Flavour with honey if available. Drink one cup 3 times a day.	Flavoured with honey was also nice.
Mango and guava leaves	Take one handful of guava leaves and one handful of young mango leaves (or bark from the branches). Add to one liter boiling water and Boil for 15 minutes. Take leaves out and add a pinch of salt. Dosage per day: Children under 3: ¼ litre, from 3 to 6: ½ litre, 7 to 12 ¾ litre, adults 1 litre	Easy to swallow, ranked as tea. Advantage: readily available.
Papaya leaves	Add one handful of leaves to one litre of boiling water. Take from the fire and filter after 5 minutes. Drink in small portions throughout the day.	A bit bitter, ranked as mankhwala. Taste can be improved using honey.

One other recommendation for drinks to drink in plenty could be lemon grass tea, if lemon grass is available. Lemon grass planted around the house is also good as an insect repellent (malaria prevention).

Foods:

Food	How to prepare	Comments
Sweet potato with ginger, garlic and salt (Can be done with cassava as well)	Peel ca 1kg sweet potato and cut into small pieces. Boil with some salt. When boiled, add 2 teaspoons mashed garlic and 1 teaspoon chopped fresh ginger. Mash the potatoes in the pot with the water they were boiled in.	No bitterness, was nice to swallow and smooth. It is an advantage to use the orange coloured type of sweet potatoes as it has an appealing and appetizing colour (eyecatcher), it is sweeter and has more Vitamins especially Vitamin A. But it can be done with any kind of sweet potato that is available. Disadvantage: sweet potato not available all year round, but can be substituted by cassava.
Green pawpaw with garlic and salt	Peel 1 medium size unripe pawpaw. Remove the seeds and cut into small pieces. Boil until soft. Take 5 cloves of garlic and mash with salt until a smooth paste. Add to boiled pawpaw and mix.	Nice but not as nice a sweet potato. Advantage: available all year round. Some preferred the pawpaw unmashed, they found it more appetizing. Depends if people can still eat well. If patient has problem with chewing, then mash the pawpaw.
Masamba with garlic and salt	Boil masamba of batata, bonongwe, mphiru, etc. Add 3 cloves of garlic mashed with salt.	With ginger it became bitter. Don't use oil or groundnut flour to prepare. The longer you boil the garlic, the less intensive the taste, but also less intensive the antiseptic quality.
Rice with garlic and ginger and salt	Add 1 cup of rice to two cups of boiling water. Boil for 2 minutes. Add 5 cloves mashed garlic with salt and 1 teaspoon chopped fresh ginger. Take from the fire and put in the 'fireless cooker' for 30 minutes. Serve plain or with masamba.	not available in all areas, alternative white maize ufa and mixed with chimera. Also good to try with any type of phala out of refined ufa (maize, sweet potato, cassava, sorghum in any kind of mixture) seasoned with ginger, garlic and salt.

As mankhwala: eat a fresh clove of garlic, Adults can also eat several unripe guava fruits.

General remark: garlic and ginger not yet available in plenty, it is a question of promoting it, as those two ingredients seem to be the most liked for drinks and seasoning for food.

Remark on garlic: the fresher the garlic, the more intensive the taste and medicinal qualities. If people don't like the intensive taste of fresh garlic, it is still ok to boil the garlic to make it more acceptable. It still has got a lot of good qualities and can be used for many other conditions (anemia, high blood pressure, general digestion problems).

This translates into: the later you add the garlic to the food, the more intensive the qualities and the taste. The longer you boil it, the less intensive the taste. Garlic has antiseptic qualities and contains a lot of minerals and vitamins. It can also be applied externally for wounds and infections. It is generally beneficial to eat garlic. There is no danger of overdose of garlic, the more the better.

