

planting faith

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Thanksgivings:

- **For the generosity of our donors.**
- **For a bountiful harvest for many of the farmers.**

Prayers Requested for:

- **The farmers with whom we work—that they will build not only a farming business but a solid foundation of faith in Jesus Christ.**
- **Wisdom in working out marketing issues for the farmers.**
- **Our new interns Michael and Rebecca Rhodes.**

Harvest Begins

October 15, 2008

Dear Friends,

We pray that all is well with those of you who are far away from us. The recent economic news is enough to make all of us tremble at times, but we have faith that God has a plan in all of this and that His plan will prevail. We know that it is painful for those of us who have life savings in the stock market or a house on the market, but we are also acutely aware of the effect that a global economic slowdown is likely to have on the farmers here. We are praying that the Lord will lead us in finding creative solutions for these farmers addressing income generation as well as food security.

Our work continues to progress. We do experience frustrations at times. Some of that appears to be growing pains and learning from experiences that we have here. There is no substitute for hands on learning sometimes.

In Mang'u, the farmers are harvesting passion fruit. We have distributed scales to the farmers in sub locations to make the weighing of their harvest and record keeping more convenient for them, and we are assisting with their marketing. In Murang'a the farmers are continuing working on their passion fruit, getting them healthy, so that they can begin harvest as well.

In Ngare Ndare, we are working on getting the very best Moby Dick flowers out of the field to the buyer, as a tight market is demanding perfect quality. It seems that here is where the first effects of the economic crisis are taking hold. Our buyer told Horace that he can only sell those flowers in the Netherlands that are perfect. "The market isn't like it was a year ago," he said.

In Kabete, the farmers continue to grow their bird of paradise flowers. This area seems more affected by drought than the others, and some of the farmers' plants are showing it. Horace recently met with a man who has a 120 foot well, which he relied on for irrigation as well as household use. The well had run dry. Thankfully, the rains seem to have begun. Please pray that they continue for the next couple of months. We need it.

In Juja, our demonstration farm is progressing nicely. Soon, we hope to have a harvest of vegetables that we will take directly to consumers. However, it too is not without challenges: namely wild animals. A hippo is eating the broccoli; a dik dik



Moby Dick

(very small antelope) is eating the cucumbers; and zebra are eating the sweet corn. Yes, farming in Africa has its own unique problems. On a positive note, we do hope to have real sweet potatoes (very unusual here) by Thanksgiving!

Also, in Juja we have begun a very exciting research and demonstration project with our passion fruit farmers. Partnering with the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI), the Kenya Horticultural Development Project (KHDP) and a private company called Real IPM (integrated pest management), we are helping to develop radically new techniques for growing passion fruit. It involves the use of drip irrigation, the laying of plastic over the seedbeds and both organic and non-organic fungicides. There are plans to publish the results when work is through, and a manual will be developed for this method of growing. We also plan to use the farm in Juja as a teaching and demonstration tool for other passion fruit farmers.

Family life is progressing well. Both children stay very busy with all their many activities, and both had excellent report cards. It is still soccer season for Horace, and Mary Shea has continued with basketball and swimming. The animal members are also doing well. Our newest family member is Zoe. She is a boxer puppy, and she is about 8 months old. She is very sweet, and if you know boxers, you know what we mean by her being so ugly, she is cute.

Living in Nairobi is never without challenge, but lately we are experiencing water rationing. We regularly go without city water on the weekends now. We do have reserve tanks, and with a little effort (filling tanks and pumping our own water into the reserve), we are getting by. We have all become much more careful about water consumption, and we are learning to cope with the situation. Thankfully, we have enough water for the athletes to bathe during the week!

We are very excited to announce that we are getting two interns in January: Michael and Rebecca Rhodes, who are recent graduates from Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Georgia. Their arrival is truly an answered prayer for us. They come with the highest recommendations, as we know they are both very Godly people.

On another note, we want to thank our dear friend the Rev. Don Smith and his family for renting our house in Memphis for the last year. It was a real blessing. Don has recently taken a call from a church in Fair Hope, Alabama, and we are thrilled for him, and we know he doesn't mind living on the coast either. However, we are now faced with the difficult task of having an empty house. We, therefore, have decided to put it on the market, in spite of all the economic turmoil. So, if you know of anyone who is interested in a very cute, smallish (2000 sq. ft.) house in East Memphis, let us know. If you don't know of anyone, please pray that this house sells as quickly as possible.

Finally, please note our change of address in the U.S. Our new address is:

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Now, may the Lord bless you and keep you, and may His face shine upon you always.

Yours in Christ,

Horace, Anne, Horace, Jr. and Mary Shea