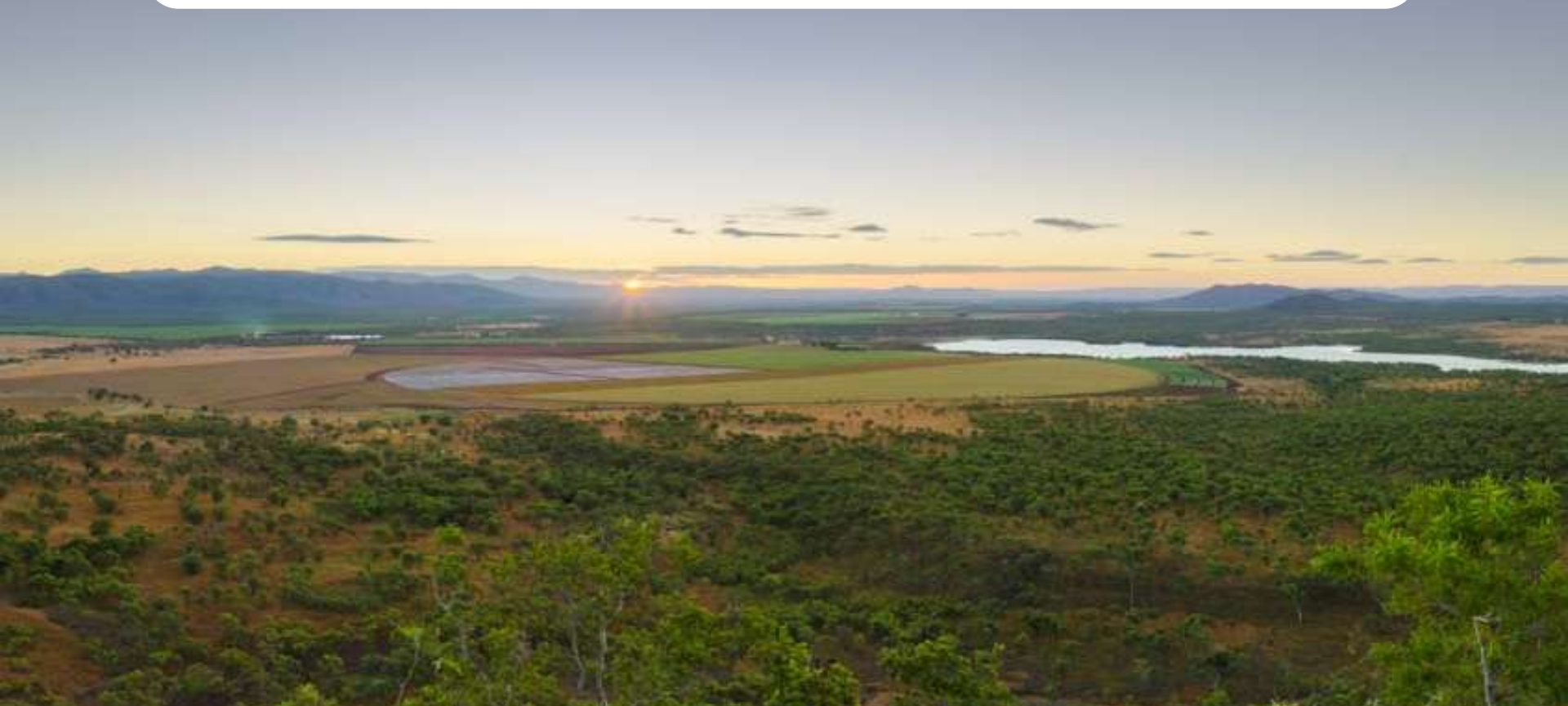


Success in the Cape



PRESENTED BY PETER INDERBITZIN





Where is Swiss Farms?

Lakeland – a small farming town:

- 260km North of Cairns
- 70km South of Cooktown



Our Heritage

- Originated from Brunnen, Switzerland.
- Owned a small dairy farm
- Eldest of three children



Migrating to New Zealand



- Migrated to New Zealand with the family in 1956 (at the age of 5)
- Started with a dairy farm in Huntly, New Zealand



Greater Opportunity

- Moved to the Atherton Tablelands in 1972
- Family purchased a dairy farm in Malanda and moved to Australia at the age of 21



Farming on the Tablelands

- Started leasing land in the 1980's to grow crops such as peanuts and corn
- Once we were established and doing well, many farmers wanted their land back to continue farming the crops themselves



Seeking Opportunity

- Heard about Lakeland in 1985, located 240km north of Cairns
- Loved the red soil and country side, land was relatively cheap
- Purchased a dry-land farm in late 1985
- The property had no power, water, buildings, fences or roads but it was 872 acres of beautiful volcanic red soil



Starting out in Lakeland

- Were assured land was cleared of rocks and stumps - turned out to be a disaster!
- Forced to invest heavily in earthmoving equipment and labour and spent the next 10 years cleaning the farm



The Family Home

- Home built from volcanic rock which were plentiful



Dry-land Crops

- Grew dry-land crops for the first 5 years
- Peanuts were our main source of income
- Other crops included Corn, Dolichos Lab Lab, Cowpeas, Seca Stylo, Verano, Sorghum



Expanding in Lakeland

- We soon realised we needed water to be successful
- Purchased our second farm close to a dam and installed 4 centre pivots over a 3 year period
- Wanted water security and ended up buying a third farm which came with the dam
- Third farm had 100acres of coffee



Water Security

- Opened the doors for winter crops
- Crops included potatoes, navy beans, macarena chick peas, adzuki beans, various varieties of grass seeds, cotton, watermelon, sunflower, pawpaws and sugar cane



Banana Farming

- Our banana farm initiated from a 2ha block and expanded over a 15year period to our current 320ha farm
- Loading our first load of Bananas – started with 1 B-double load per week



Our Farm Today

- Apart from compost, transport, recycling and earthmoving, we now only grow bananas
- Developed two state-of-the-art packing facilities & cable-way harvesting systems (the first in Australia)
- Reduced waste from 25%-5%
- Increased efficiency through improving staff management and farming methods



Packing Facility – Fruit Patio



Packing Facility – Process



How We Got Here

- Family support
- Determination, being adaptable to changing demand and taking calculated risks
- Diversifying to spread risk
- Striving to produce the best products to ensure a market for our products
- Developing a 10 step plan of improvements for our farm
- Putting a lot of energy into our people and as a result – developing a good team



The Future In Farming

- Council and government support vital in establishing infrastructure for communities
- Recognition from the government for the challenges farmers face
- There are no winners in having slightly cheaper imported products, often of lower quality, at the cost of losing the Australian farmer
- Export to China
- Replacing chemical fertilizer with Compost



Compost For the Future





Banana waste



Wet manure

Raw materials



Dry manure



Mulch



Bagas

The Final Product





Any Question?

www.swissfarms.com.au