

NORTH DAKOTA BUSINESS BEARS FRUIT IN GHANA

When Delore Zimmerman set foot in the African country of Ghana, he changed the fortunes of several people. You see, there was a bet involved.

“Very few Americans visit the countryside in Ghana,” Zimmerman explains. “One of my colleagues told his business associates he could bring an American businessperson there, and they bet that he couldn’t.”

Zimmerman, President of Praxis Strategy Group, helped win that bet. Praxis is a growth strategy company that works to develop and implement technology-based industry initiatives and business ventures. It’s headquartered in Grand Forks, ND with offices in Los Angeles, CA, and Fargo, ND.

“It was a fruitful visit to a country full of potential and one of the African continent’s strongest democracies,” Zimmerman says.

Fruitful, indeed.

Zimmerman helped organize a group to import pineapples to North America through a sustainable farm community project. Local women will grow the pineapples as part of a farm-based organization that will focus on sustainable, low-impact use of natural resources.

“Pineapple production provides vital work and income in the pineapple growing regions, yet the current structure and organization can be improved, especially for exports to the United States,” Zimmerman explains.

As a developing country, Ghana relies on a few primary commodities and minerals for revenue and foreign exchange. Cocoa, snails, mangos, pineapples, gold and timber are all export products for the African country.



Zimmerman and Praxis Strategy Group are helping coordinate efforts to improve production techniques, packaging and shipping for enhanced export opportunities.

“We’re now working on putting together a market for the pineapples. Our colleagues in Ghana will organize the farmers while we organize the buying groups and marketing efforts,” Zimmerman says.

Zimmerman plans to return to Ghana in the fall. Not to win another bet, but to lead a tour of other economic developers and agribusiness professionals from around the world.

Praxis is also leading efforts to organize a first-ever agricultural expo for Ghana that will include participants from across North America. Zimmerman believes that venture will bear fruit as well. ■



Delore Zimmerman with commercial growers at His Excellency Farms, a mango growing operation.