

Meet Your Farmer

Fatuma Mahat



“My dream is just [for] my kids to go to school, finish school and go to college ... get a better job ... and to have our own house ... that’s our dream.”

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Background:

I came to the United States in 2007 and currently reside in the Greater Phoenix area. I am a member of the Somali-Bantus, a marginalized ethnic group in Somalia, severely affected by the on-going civil war. Escaping the socio-political turmoil of my homeland I have brought my extensive traditional farming experience to the irrigated farm land of Arizona.

In South-Chandler I tend a small patch of land that produces carrots, beets, broccoli, radishes and greens at Gila Farms. My organic and delicious produce can be seen at the local farmer’s markets where I collaborate with other refugee farmers. I am an active and proud member of my community where my family and I participate in ESL and citizenship classes, as well as other recreational programs. To me, community is made up of my local neighbors, the Somali



Bantus in the greater Phoenix area and all the people involved in helping with the farm, the cooperative and my livelihood. For the future, I hope that my work in the cooperative and on the farm will help my children gain a better education and have good jobs someday.