



Members:

New Focus - Last month we made our new focus to develop the depth of our industry by encouraging new investment, primarily in new farms. We will count the new acreage. We discussed yesterday that we have a good story and this includes:

- Our breakthroughs on profitability / new article: [How We Cracked the Code on Bamboo Farming Profitability](#)
- Growing it better - the story of improving the soil
- Big Asper
- Mechanical Harvesting updates
- Leases available

We talked about how we can spread the news and also about the potential to hire Terry Feinberg (member and works with Greenfield Bamboo and Florida Fresh Bamboo) to get some public relations work done.

Research:

- Key Project - we have lowered the costs of the Key Project and are planning for about 100 additional acres over last year. We plan to work with a soil consultant to understand production variability amongst farms.
- Mechanical Harvesting - they are working on a \$9 million USDA grant
- Big Asper - quarantine period has been successful and the plants will be released in June and hopefully available for new farms in 2027.

Mechanical Harvesting Farm Tour - Separately I conducted a Farm Tour for the UF engineers that are designing the Mechanical Harvesting. Michael Rogers and I left the Lake Alfred facility after the Directors meeting to meet everyone at the Pioneer Farm in Zolfo Springs. We spent about 2.5 hours walking through the anticipated harvest process and working through options. The crew included Bob Pitzer, who has developed autonomous harvest applications for strawberries (think through what that looks like...). The team is working hard to get their funding (thanks everyone that submitted support letters), design solutions for cutting, stripping, pulling down through the canopy, cutting into standard lengths, and putting the poles into a trailer. They are also developing a process for harvesting bamboo shoots. This is quite exciting!



Here are a few photos and vids from the farm tour:

- [Photo 1](#)
- [Photo 2](#)
- [Vid 1](#)
- [Vid 2 cutting culm in lengths](#)

Thank you!