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From 1975 to 1986 I was employed by **Wolfsen Land & Cattle Company**, later known as **Wolfsens, Inc** in Los Banos, California. I was involved in market analysis and directed the hedging operations in the futures and options markets for the diversified agricultural operation that included the production of various crops including tomatoes, sugar beets, cotton, and other crops. The operation had a 29,000 head capacity feedlot operation and a 1,000 milk cow dairy operation, a feed-mill and retail farm supply store.

From 1985 to 1987, I opened my own Agricultural Marketing and Management Service Company called – **Axum Commodities Inc.** in Los Banos, California and served as Founder/CEO for several years.

In 1988, I joined the **California Department of Food & Agriculture** as an Agricultural Economist and served as the director's representative to over 12 commodity boards, councils and commissions. I was personally responsible in helping the industries create The Forest Products Commission, The California Salmon Council and The California Seafood Council.

From 1992 through the end of 2011, I worked at **The Morning Star Company (TMSC)**, the largest tomato processor in the world. In 1994, I conducted the feasibility study of a harvesting company that was later established and has been a thriving business. I maintained the cash flow and relations with bankers and leasing companies until 2004, and developed a database for commodity prices and economic data in addition to developing and monitoring production costs for a number of competing crops. I also developed the concept and coordinated the creation of the web site for the company and managed it until 2008.

Furthermore, while at **Morning Star**, I served for over eight years as **Director of International Business Relations & Economics**, where I was involved in international business development, production cost studies for agriculture, as well as processing costs for tomatoes. My responsibilities required global travel in Europe (Italy, France, Portugal & Germany), North West Africa and East Africa (including, Tunisia and Algeria, Senegal, Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda), in South America (Argentina and Chile), the Far East (China: Beijing and Xinjiang) and to Turkey. In addition, I served as **Chairman of the Information Exchange Commission of the World Processing Tomato Council** and have been invited to speak at several world forums on processing tomatoes.

With regard to community volunteerism and service, I was very active in the Ethiopian community in the Greater Sacramento, CA area and served as president of the **Ethiopian Community Center in Sacramento** for eight years. I also served as a Board Member of the Center for African Peace and Conflict Resolution (CAPCR) at the California State University, Sacramento.

In 2009, I established company called **ETHAMCO, LLC** (Ethiopian American Company) and traveled to Ethiopia and established **Ethamco, LLC – Ethiopian Branch** and was able to lease 200 hectares of land in the Awash Valley (one of the most agriculturally productive areas in the country).

During this process, I established a relationship with **Heinz Seed** at Stockton and secured an advance of \$100,000 to help establish a processing tomato hybrid seed production operation. I had a strong relationship with several Heinz staff, some of whom had traveled to Ethiopia to visit our operation. We managed to send a package of hybrid seed to the Stockton facility as a trial. While we were working to get our operation to a higher level and produce and ship the second batch of hybrid processing tomato seeds, the political situation in Ethiopia changed. There were riots and political upheaval in many parts of the country. On October 6, 2016, the dreaded riots made it to our area and several companies suffered arson, destruction and other vandalism. The devastation was so bad, that one of our farm neighbors, a Belgian company, left the country because of it.

Ethamco, LLC suffered nearly 30 million Ethiopian Birr (1 Million USD equivalent in 2009 Dollars) worth of machinery and equipment and imported a drip irrigation system including pumps, filters, drip tape and control boards etc. The financing from the Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE) immediately stopped and we could not continue our project pending funds to be released from our loan with DBE. It took 4 years for the bank to reestablish and sign a new loan agreement in June 2020. Thus, our collaboration with Heinz could not continue under those circumstances. Ethamco, continued to struggle with the operation because of political pressure from the regional government and their refusal to register the new loan, which was a condition set by the bank. Thus, to this day we are trying to resolve the issues and have now reached the PM of the country to resolve our case administratively. If that does not come through, we are considering a legal action against the Ethiopian Government.

There are other individuals who are considering a hybrid seed production operation in Southern Ethiopia near the Kenya Border. They have the resources and the land adjacent to the Omo River. I would like them to be considered for a trial production since they are able to finance the operation themselves.

Finally, my **educational background** includes a **Bachelor of Science Degree** in Agricultural Science and **Master of Science** in Animal Science, both from **California State University, Fresno**; and a **Master of Business Administration (MBA)** in Agribusiness from Santa Clara University. In addition, I have received additional education prior to moving to the United States, with Diplomas from **Jima Agricultural Technical School (JATS)** Ethiopia, and from the School for Animal Health Assistants with a designation of **Diplomate in Animal Health (DAH)**, both degrees in Ethiopia. Any and all educational credentials can be presented if and when requested.