

BGU's First Francophone delegation on agricultural technology in arid zones
March 10-14, 2019

Sunday, March 10

Welcome refreshments and group introduction

- 17:30 Negev Agriculture - Today's Desert Pioneers**
Film summary followed by discussion

Prof. Noam Weissbrod, director, the Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research
Prof. Simon Barak, researcher, French Associates Institute for Agriculture and Biotechnology of Drylands
Isrotel Dead Sea Hotel

Dinner at the hotel

Monday, March 11

Breakfast at the hotel

- 8:30 Bus departs from hotel**

- 10:00 Ancient agriculture: archeological tour following the Incense and Spice Route**
Prof. Steve Rosen, Canada Chair in Near Eastern Archaeology
Avdat National Park

- 11:30 Visits of top end laboratories developing innovative agricultural solutions:**
Methods of cultivation in arid zones
Desalination and irrigation
Aquaculture: fish and algae
The Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research, BGU Sde Boker campus

Buffet lunch at Sde Boker

- 15:15 Visit of David and Paula Ben-Gurion's tomb and short walk on the promenade overlooking the Zin Valley**

- 16:00 Traditional baking class**
Lasha bakery, Mitzpe Ramon

- 19:15 Estimated arrival back to the hotel**

Dinner at the hotel

- 20:30 TED style 15 minute presentation: How Israel succeeded in stopping the dwindling of arable lands and the desertification process**
Ezra Banoun, expert in agriculture and environmental issues

Tuesday, March 12

Breakfast at the hotel

8:00 Bus departs from hotel

9:30 Visit of the Ramat Negev Agricultural Research and Development Center

Guided tour of experimental greenhouses and presentation of current research projects

Prof. Naftali Lazarovich, researcher, French Associates Institute for Agriculture and Biotechnology of Drylands

11:45 Visit of the Joseph organic farm at Moshav Be'er Milka

A fascinating visit of this organic farm located at a moshav, home to only 34 families, situated just by the Egyptian border. On the arid land of Nitzana, this farm grows Asian fruits and vegetables, as well as other crops.

Moshav Be-er Milka

13:15 Lunch

15:45 Visit of BGU's experimental vineyard, followed by local wine and cheese tasting at the Nana winery

Guided by **Prof. Aaron Fait**, researcher, French Associates Institute for Agriculture And Biotechnology of Drylands

Mitzpe Ramon

19:15 Estimated arrival back to the hotel

Dinner at the hotel

Wednesday, March 13

Breakfast at the hotel

8:30 Bus departs from hotel

9:30 Visit of the Kitron farm - Moshav Idan

Introduction of the smallest tomato in the world and Israel's best peppers at the heart of a picturesque moshav right next to the Jordanian border.

Moshav Idan

10:15 Visit of the Sea-Gal farm specializing in aquaculture

The Sea-gal farm grows top quality Medjool dates exported mainly to Europe, using top end technologies and saline water for irrigation. The farm also specializes in aquaculture, growing tropical ornamental fish.

Moshav Idan

11:30 Visit of the only commercial aloe vera plantation in the Middle East

Situated at the heart of the Arava and practicing organic methods in an arid climate, "Just Aloe" grows the succulent aloe vera plant, which is the source of more than 400 active ingredients used in cosmetic and medical products. Advanced technologies are used here in order to avoid damaging those active ingredients.

13:00 Lunch**14:40 Visit of the Arava-Tamar Agricultural Research and Development Center**

Tour of experimental plantations including palm date trees, flowers and aquaculture; presentation of scientific researches and desalination plant in collaboration with BGU.
Dr. Rami Messalem, researcher (emeritus), the Zuckerberg Institute for Water Research (ZIWR)

17:30 Estimated arrival back to the hotel**19:00 TED style 15 minute presentation: The development of the Negev region during Israel's first jubilee of existence**

Ezra Banoun, expert in agriculture and environmental issues

Dinner at the hotel

Thursday, March 14

Breakfast at the hotel

8:30 Bus departs from the hotel**10:00 Visit of jojoba plantations and the Netafim micro-irrigation factory**

We will explore the world leader of the jojoba market, using advanced cultivation technologies, including a unique process of mechanical harvesting, and owning an innovative oil extraction factory. With its numerous virtues (rich in vitamin E and Omega 9), Jojoba oil has a molecular composition almost identical to the sebum of the human skin.

Kibbutz Hatzerim

12:15 Return to the center (Ben-Gurion airport-Tel Aviv)