

NOVEMBER 2023

Farmers Guide

The Best of Zimbabwean Farming

**US\$300,
Black
Chicken**

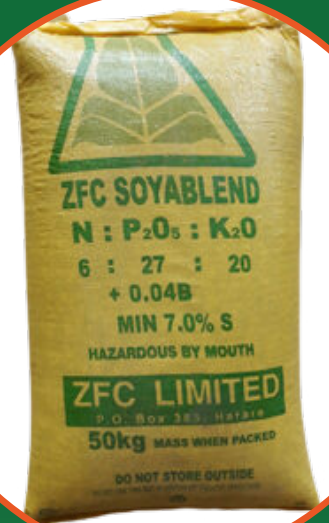
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farming, a
profitable
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**Topping and
suckering in
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Editor's Note

Greetings dear readers! Welcome once again to another exciting edition of Farmers Guide Magazine which makes it the last edition for 2023.

My deepest gratitude goes to our audience, the editorial team not forgetting companies that have been advertising with us the whole year. Without your engagement and interest, we would not have been able to publish the magazine. Your feedback has been invaluable in shaping the magazine and helping us to grow.

We will strive to provide the best and informative content on all aspects of agriculture, from the latest trends and shocking insights. In this issue we delve deep into the world of the most expensive chicken Ayam Cemani which hogged the limelight during the Zimbabwe Agricultural Show (ZAS) 2023 priced at US\$300 and the world market price for this chicken is shocking. Many have been asking how, why and what is so special about an ordinary looking chicken going for such an amount. This is where much of our focus was, to answer all those questions, so just flip the pages and read for yourself.

We also looked into how goat farming is slowly becoming a profitable business and taking over the market in Zimbabwe. People want to have different taste of meat which is not beef, pork or chicken. If you are one of those who want to start goat farming business, just know that we have something for you in this edition.

Tobacco farmers, this is your season and likewise, we included something. In this edition we feature experts in tobacco farming who focus much on topping and

suckering, explaining what it is and also the effects of it.

In response to feedback which we get via e-mail and WhatsApp groups we included an article on ginger farming, and on pig farming explaining how to produce a big return.

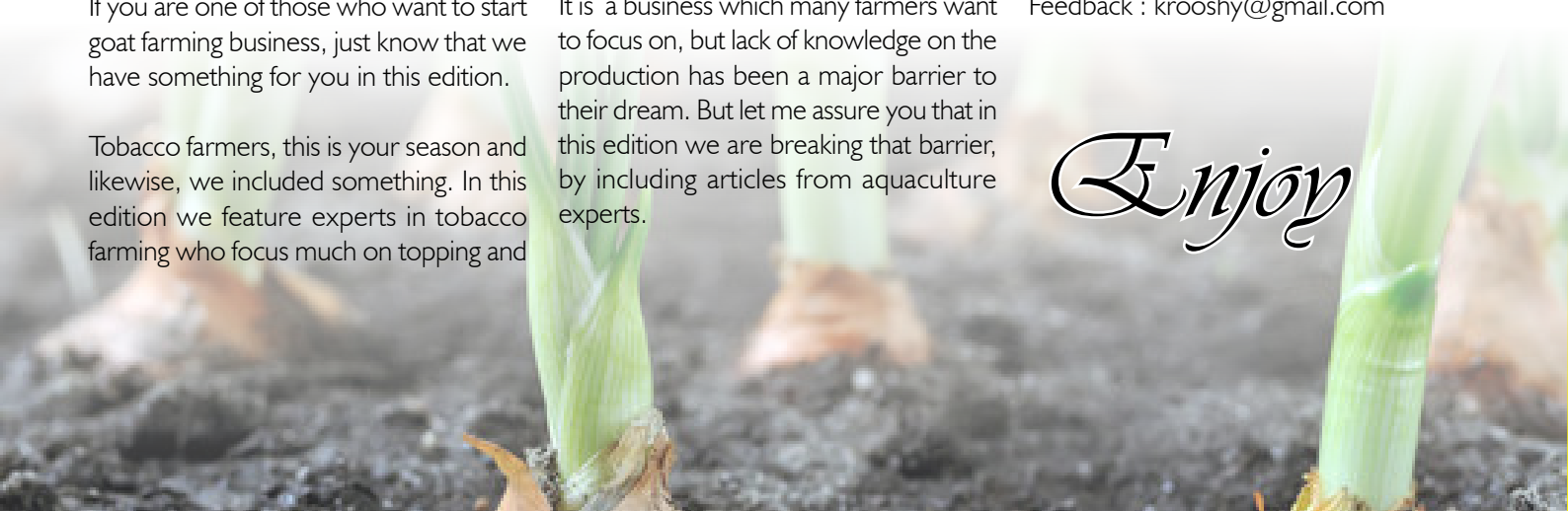
Fish has over the years been the world's main source for protein and fish farming. It is a business which many farmers want to focus on, but lack of knowledge on the production has been a major barrier to their dream. But let me assure you that in this edition we are breaking that barrier, by including articles from aquaculture experts.

To ensure that farmers make well informed decisions when planning we are always including market prices of agricultural products. Therefore please check that out and stand guided by market prices.

Once again, thank you for your feedback through the various platforms. From the Farmers Guide Magazine

Feedback : krooshy@gmail.com

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US\$300, Black chicken



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From rare genetics to exclusive lineage, their value lies in scarcity and exceptional traits. When discussing costly chicken breeds, one breed stands out: the Ayam Cemani. Not only is it the most expensive, but it also possesses exceptional qualities that make it truly unique.

The Ayam Cemani is highly valued due to a rare condition called fibromelanosis, which causes an excess of dark pigment. This results in the chicken's meat, feathers, and even bones appearing entirely black. This striking appearance has earned it the nickname "Lamborghini chicken."

Originating from Java, Indonesia, the Ayam Cemani is considered an exceptionally rare breed.

When it comes to their dietary

preferences, Ayam Cemani chickens are not picky eaters. However, they do require a higher protein diet than most other chicken breeds due to their rapid growth rate.

For a healthy pair of this breed, expect to pay a whopping \$5,000 (or \$2,500 each) at global market.

However at the 2023 Zimbabwe Agriculture Show (ZAS) the Usena Poultry Breeders and Organic farming was selling this breed at US\$300 each.

Ayam Cemani are highly sought after and prized for several reasons. Their rarity is a significant factor: They are considered one of the rarest chicken breeds globally, making them a symbol of prestige among poultry enthusiasts and gourmands looking to taste something unique. Their striking aesthetic also contributes to

their allure, as they stand out in any flock of chickens.

However, breeding Ayam Cemani chickens can be a challenge due to their unique genetic makeup, which can make maintaining their all-black appearance a delicate task. This rarity has also driven up their market value significantly, with some buyers paying hundreds or even thousands of dollars for a single chicken.

The Ayam Cemani chicken is steeped in mysticism and prized in its native land of Java for its magic blood. It is rather unusual, having entirely black feathers, black comb, black skin, black meat, black internal organs, and even black bones.

They are thought of as good luck charms, with the blood and other parts of the bird being used in traditional medicine preparations.

The Ayam Cemani is said to have magical powers and can facilitate communication between the living and the spirit world. As such, it is



used as a sacrificial bird to please the gods, its' flesh is rarely eaten in Indonesia.

Many think the blood of the Ayam Cemani chicken is also black, just like the rest of the bird. This is a myth as the blood always runs red due to its hemoglobin content, just like all other chickens. Despite this, many people still mistakenly ask Ayam Cemani breeders to supply them with black-blooded chickens. Those believed to have this mythical black blood are sold for large sums of money.

Ayam Cemani Egg Laying

The Ayam Cemani is a fairly poor egg layer. On average, they will lay around 80 eggs per year, which is around 1 egg per week.

They do seem to go 'off lay' for an extended period of time. Apparently, they will lay 20-30 eggs and then stop laying.

This can be up to 6 months, and then they will start all over again!

Compared to the size of the hen, the eggs are quite large, and they are cream-colored with a very slight pink tint (not black).



Ayam Cemani eggs at global market are going for \$13 to \$14 per egg.

The Ayam Cemani is often associated with a group of breeds known as Kedu, from the central plains of Java. It is believed to be an offshoot of the Ayam Bekisar chicken which lives on a small group of islands in Indonesia.

They are thought to be the

result of crosses between domestic chickens and green jungle fowl. Not all of these crosses will survive, but those that do sometimes have the dark pigmentation of the Ayam Cemani. Their all-black feathers have a beetle-green iridescence in sunlight that is stunning.



Animal husbandry remains a significant aspect of agriculture



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The increase in animal husbandry across all animal group is a sign that the practice is a fundamental part of agricultural activity as a whole.

In a 2023 agriculture report released

by a financial service firm Inter Horizon Securities (IH), the goat population grew 14% to 4,87 million, sheep grew 2,53% to about 730 000 and pigs saw a growth of 8,05% to 339 644 compared to 2022

“Animal husbandry remains a significant aspect of agriculture with livestock acting as a safety net for communal households,”

the report read.

“Cattle remain an integral part of local agriculture with 75% of communal farmers relying on them for tillage. Cattle contribute about 10,81% to the country’s agricultural GDP (gross domestic product). The commercial farmers represent 29% of ownership.”



Animal husbandry refers to livestock raising and selective breeding for profit, an enterprise which many farmers in Zimbabwe relies on for sustenance and livelihoods.

The report noted that there are no recognisable recorded beef exports since the 1990s due to the country’s disease control system challenges.

“Beef exports peaked in the 1990s, with the country exporting just under 12 000 tonnes annually. However, deficiencies



in the disease control systems led to decimation of the industry with currently no significant recorded exports to date.”

“The national beef cattle herd had a growth of 2% in 2022 to 5 642 400 in 2022. Cattle mortality decreased from 9% in 2021 to 6% in 2022 with disease remaining the lead cause of mortality.”

The research firm reported that government's Livestock Recovery Growth Plan is targeting a national herd of six million cattle by 2025 to meet an annual beef production target of 90 000 tonnes.

The researchers also noted that during the 2022/23 farming season “grazing conditions were good at the time of assessment due to favourable rains”.

“However, grazing adequacy remains critical in the communal areas mainly because of poor veld management.

“As per the First Round Crop, Livestock and Fisheries Assessment report, national water levels for livestock were adequate and the trekking distance to drinking water sources on average was less than

one kilometre,” the report said.

At peak production, more than two decades ago, Zimbabwe had a dairy herd of 191 000, yielding 256 million litres of milk annually.

Based on the report, efforts to restore the sector have seen the dairy herd increasing from 33 000 in 2005 to 53 250 as of 2022.

“2022 saw an increase of 11,3% for the national dairy herd while raw milk production responded with a 15% rise in production in the same year to 91,4 million litres. Demand for milk and its associated products is estimated at 120 million litres with the deficit being filled by imports from regional counterparts,” the report noted.

The sector is mainly dominated by commercial production with smallholder farmers only reportedly contributing 5% of milk to the formal value chain.

Challenges facing the sector include elevated cost of feed, compromised yields, and low producer prices for milk

that disincentives investment.

“Feed costs account for about 65% of production costs, impacting viability. As per the 2021 ministry report, the cost of local raw milk at US\$0,66 per litre is highly uncompetitive against regional peers averaging at US\$0,36 per litre,” IH Securities said.

“The livestock Recovery Growth Plan by the government is targeting a dairy herd of 60 000 by 2025 and milk production of 150 million litres annually.” Fish farming has also emerged as a booming industry with the Small and Medium Enterprises, Women Affairs and Community Development ministry reporting having approximately 11 000 small-scale fish farmers on the market making up the bulk of producers.

“As of 2022, there were 7 247 fish ponds, up 29% year-on-year, however, only about 60% of these were operational,” the IH Securities report added. The most prevalent fish breed is tilapia.



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Dairy farmers in Zimbabwe are set to surpass the 100 million-litre milk production target this year as it works towards meeting the country's current national annual demand of 120 million litres.

Last year, the country produced a total of 91,6 million litres, a 14,3% rise from 2021's annual production.

Speaking at Zimbabwe Association of Dairy Farmers ninth annual general meeting in Nyanga recently, Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development minister Anxious Masuka said current production levels were pointing to the country meeting national demand.

"We are building a US\$13,75 billion agriculture industry by 2025 and the dairy sector is a very important part of it. I am told that demand is increasing by about 15% annually and this year alone it has grown by 6% in the first

Zim dairy farmers target 120 million litres annual demand

seven months," he said.

"Based on that, we will be able to grow to just over 100 million litres this year. I am told that you are milking just over 35 000 cattle. We must look for growth in terms of the number of milking cows and an increase in productivity per cow per day."

A notable spike in raw milk production in the country has been attributed to investments by international organisations.

In 2019, the European Union availed a US\$7 million funding facility to Zimbabwe which benefited small-to-medium-scale dairy farmers in the form of 500 in-calf heifers in 2021 under the Transforming Zimbabwe's Dairy Value Chain project.

Government last year rolled out a silage production programme to address viability challenges emanating from high-feed costs.

The dairy sector is saddled by huge overhead costs headlined by stockfeed which accounts for 70% of the bill.

Manicaland Provincial Affairs and Devolution minister Misheck Mugadza said the province will continue to produce raw milk for the country to reach self-sufficiency.

"The national milk production, currently, is over 91 million litres per year of which Manicaland proudly produces about 16% of this volume. We have medium and large-scale commercial farmers around Mutare, Makoni and Chipinge as well as some of the best-performing milk collection centres in the country," he said.

"Small-scale dairy farmer collection centres include Mayfield and Rusitu United in Chipinge producing over 30 000 litres per month and supplying Dairibord Zimbabwe Limited. There is also Tsonzo, Sangano, Honde Valley and Cynara closer to Mutare. Manicaland province will continue to increase milk volumes."

Mugadza added that the dairy models in Manicaland were evidence that with adequate support, dairy farmers can produce the anticipated high volumes of raw milk required to close the gap between national demand and the current supply.



As production cost soars, dairy farmers engage AFC and CBZ



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The Zimbabwe Association for Dairy Farmers (ZADF) says it is putting in place a number of measures to reduce production costs for dairy farmers.

ZADF chairperson Enerst Muzorewa told the media that among other efforts, the association was engaging

financiers such as CBZ Bank and AFC Bank to provide facilities for dairy farmers at reasonable costs to promote on-farm grown feeds.

Finance and stockfeed cost are the major concerns as they milk more than 50 percent of the cost, said Muzorewa

"Major cost drivers in the sector are stockfeed and finance costs," "Stockfeed actually constitutes about

70% of total production costs. ZADF has been encouraging farmers to rely more on farm feed production and formulations."

He added that ZADF had also been engaging nutritionists to assist farmers with on-farm feed formulations.

"ZADF, through the TRANZDVC (Transforming Zimbabwe's Dairy Value Chain for the Future) project, which aims to address the problem, has been providing subsidised semen to dairy farmers to promote growth of the sector through use of the right genetics," he said.

"ZADF has been engaging government and policymakers to negotiate for reduced costs of compliance for farmers."

The organisation also continuously engages other financiers negotiating for reasonable cost of borrowing for farmers.

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Fish farming in Zimbabwe

By: Agriculture Marketing Authority (AMA)



Demand for fish grown globally and it has become a cheap alternative source of protein.

Fish farming, also known as aquaculture, is the practice of rearing fish and other water-based organisms in controlled environments such as tanks and ponds for food production purposes. It is a rapidly growing industry that plays a crucial role in meeting the increasing global demand for food.

The Zimbabwe government recognised apiculture as a form of livestock production which has the potential to contribute significantly to sustainable livelihoods, food security and economic development through diversification of exports earnings.

Zimbabwe boasts one of the largest fish farming operations in Africa as it has a notable network of dammed water and has desirable climatic conditions for aquaculture to thrive. In an effort to develop a fully-fledged fish farming

sub-sector, the government adopted a number of initiatives to grow the vast aquaculture potential in Zimbabwe. This is the reason why the Second Republic came up with the Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Strategy.

The strategy, which focuses on regulatory framework, capacity building, financing mechanisms and research and development, aims to provide a framework for the sustainable development of aquaculture in Zimbabwe and to ensure that it is contributing to food security, poverty alleviation, and economic growth.

Fish farming has been practiced since time immemorial with evidence of early fish farming dating back to ancient China, Egypt, and Rome. However, it has evolved significantly over time due to advancements in technology where modern aquatic practices have been adopted.

The Second Republic is pulling out all

stops in making sure that fish farming contributes to the country's development agenda and had taken advantage of the refurbished irrigation schemes and community gardens to create commercial fishing hotspots countrywide. This has seen the number of fishponds increasing from 5 634 last year to 7 247 this year.

The Presidential Fisheries Scheme has also come in handy. Under this programme more than 50 000 farmers have received fingerlings as a way to boost production.

For Zimbabwe, there are several fish species that can thrive. The most common is the tilapia. This one can thrive in almost any weather. Tilapia can eat plant-based food and insects. One of the reasons why tilapia is a farmer's favourite is that it can be harvested in eight months.

Catfish is another popular fish species in Zimbabwe, particularly in the Zambezi River basin. There are several catfish varieties found in Zimbabwe, including the African catfish and the smaller-sized



→ catfish. Catfish is a good source of protein and is often consumed in traditional dishes.

Bream is a versatile fish species that is found in many Zimbabwean water bodies, including lakes, dams, and rivers. There are several bream varieties in Zimbabwe, including the largemouth bream, the smallmouth bream, and the tilapia bream.

Trout is a cold-water fish species that is found in the mountainous regions of Zimbabwe, particularly in Nyanga. Trout is a popular game fish and is often targeted by anglers. There are several trout varieties found in Zimbabwe, including the rainbow trout and the brown trout. Carp is a hardy fish species that is found in many Zimbabwean water bodies, and some popular carp varieties include common carp and the grass carp.

Production

There are several methods of fish farming, each with its own merits and considerations. The most common methods in Zimbabwe include:

Pond – This method involves raising fish in man-made or natural ponds. It is one of the oldest and simplest forms of fish farming. Ponds are stocked with fish fry or fingerlings and managed to provide optimal conditions for growth. Pond culture is suitable for various species, including catfish, tilapia, and carp.

Cages – The cage culture involves confining fish in cages or pens placed in natural bodies of water such as dams or rivers, or lakes. These cages allow water to flow freely while preventing fish from escaping. This method is commonly used for salmon, trout, and other marine species.

Recirculating aquaculture system – This is a closed-loop system that recirculates water through filtration systems to maintain optimal water quality for fish growth. It allows for high-density

stocking and efficient use of resources such as water and feed. This method is commonly used for commercial purposes.

Fish farming contributes to global food security by increasing the availability of nutritious food. It helps meet the growing demand for protein-rich food, particularly in developing countries.

Fish farming creates employment opportunities, especially in rural areas where traditional fishing may be limited. It also contributes to local economies through trade and export.

The top fish producing countries in Africa and the world vary based on different factors such as geographical location, natural resources, fishing practices, and economic development. Egypt is the leading fish producing country in Africa. It benefits from its access to the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea, which provide abundant fishing grounds.

The country has a well-developed aquaculture sector and a long history of traditional fishing practices. Nile tilapia, mullet, and sea bream are among the most commonly harvested fish species in Egypt. Nigeria is another major fish producing country in Africa. It has a vast coastline along the Atlantic Ocean and numerous inland water bodies, including rivers, lakes, and reservoirs. Other top fish-producing countries in Africa are

Morocco, Ghana, Tunisia and Algeria.

According to Statista, the volume of global fish production amounted to 184,6 million metric tonnes in 2022, up from 178.1 million metric tonnes in 2021. Fish is one of the most widely consumed foods in the world, and it is only becoming more popular over time.

China is the largest fish producing country in the world. It has a vast coastline along the Pacific Ocean and numerous inland water bodies. China's fisheries sector is highly developed, with both marine and freshwater fishing activities. The country produces a wide range of fish species, including carp, tilapia, catfish, and various species. Indonesia: Indonesia ranks second in global fish production. Other top fish-producing countries are India, Vietnam, United States, Brazil, and Norway.

Fish farming is a critical sector that contributes to sustainable food production, food and nutrition security, and economic development. While it offers numerous benefits, careful management is necessary to mitigate environmental impacts and ensure the long-term viability of this practice.

Word from the market is a column produced by the Agricultural Marketing Authority to promote market-driven production. Feedback cchiduku@ama.co.zw or WhatsApp/Call +263781706212.



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EU, NGO unite to fight livestock diseases

The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), in partnership with government and the European Union (EU), has refurbished provincial veterinary laboratories in Matabeleland South and Masvingo provinces as part of efforts to control frequent livestock disease outbreaks in these areas.

The laboratories, which have been refurbished and well-equipped by the Livestock Production Systems in Zimbabwe (LIPS-ZIM) project, will enhance the provision of veterinary services and surveillance of notifiable diseases through early detection and effective control of livestock disease outbreaks.

The project, made possible through EU funding, seeks to address one of the major threats to livestock production among smallholder farmers. Livestock production contributes significantly to the

food, wealth, draught power and social well-being of many rural households in Zimbabwe with an estimated 90% of the national cattle herd, 98% of the goat flock, 90% of the sheep flock and 80% of the pig herd owned by smallholder farmers.

Since the early 2000s, the country has battled outbreaks of diseases such as January Disease, also known as theileriosis and foot-and-mouth with smallholder farmers facing the biggest risk.

In Zimbabwe, tick-borne diseases (TBDs) are the major cause of over 60% of ruminant livestock deaths, with theileriosis being the main cause of the country's TBD-induced cattle deaths.

During the 2022/23 rainfall season, theileriosis claimed an unusually high number of cattle, surpassing previous records, which forced the country to declare war against the disease.

In a speech read on her behalf during the launch of a veterinary laboratory in Gwanda on Tuesday, Matabeleland South Provincial Affairs and Devolution minister Evelyn Ndlovu urged farmers to effectively utilise the facility.

"I have no doubt that this will enhance the quality of our animals and improve disease detection, surveillance, control and research in Matabeleland South in particular and Zimbabwe at large," she said.

"The laboratory will be critical in the fight against animal and zoonotic diseases that currently bedevil our country, provinces, districts and those that can emerge; now and in the future."

LIPS-ZIM project co-ordinator Sikhhalazo Dube said because of their partnership with the EU in Zimbabwe, food would be less scarce, malnutrition less severe and hunger a thing of the past.

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2023 Zimbabwe Agricultural Show in Pictures



SEED CO stand



Crowd of people moving around



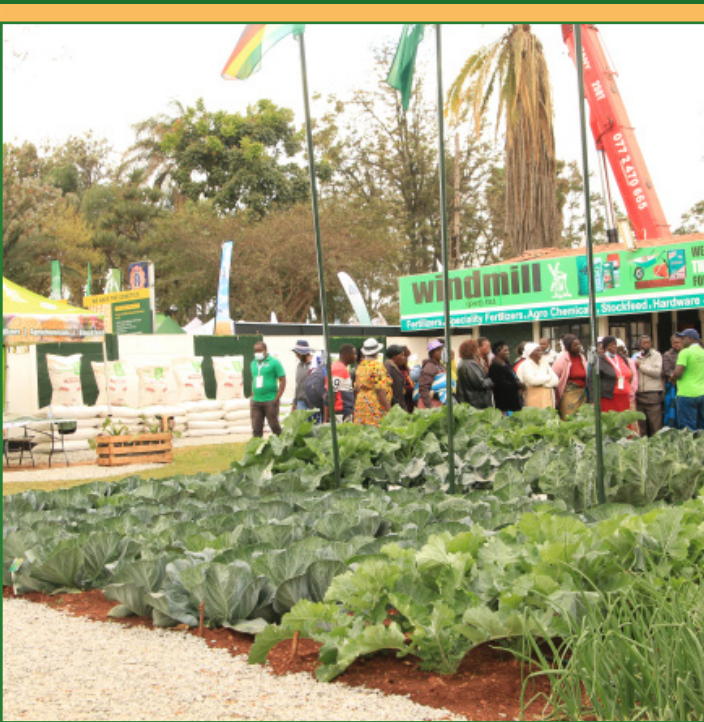
New Horizon Venture team at their stand



Cotton field for sampling



2023 Zimbabwe Agricultural Show in Pictures



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Usena Solution poultry breeders holding some of the chicken



One of the tractors Agropower stand



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Usena Solutions

Goat farming, a profitable business in Zimbabwe



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Over the years there has been an increase in demand for goat meat as people want to try a different taste which is not chicken, beef or pork.

The demand has then pushed many farmers to keep goats for commercial purpose as the business is a profitable one in Zimbabwe.

Goats are easy to keep and are very profitable as the feed costs are low due to the fact that they eat a variety of foods. Demand for goat meat is high and there is a lot of potential for the growth of the market.

In 2020, when President Emmerson

Mnangagwa commissioned the Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE) Goat Genetics and Artificial Insemination Centre, he said that "Goat breeding projects and attendant value addition interventions will go a long way towards ensuring broad-based empowerment, wealth creation and lifting millions out of poverty within our society."

He further suggested that these project must be deployed towards the realisation of robust and vibrant rural industry systems supported by livestock production and related development of modern animal handling facilities.

The Goat Genetics and Artificial Insemination Centre is a welcome development that serves to get a grip on genetics as a key ingredient in sustainable and successful goat farming.

Zimbabwean breeds have not been subjected to adequate scientific scrutiny. However, a lot of work still has to be done to unlock the potential and promise of goat farming that can uplift millions of our people from poverty. Furthermore, and with a national goat herd of approximately four million, Zimbabwe is barely on the map of goat-producing countries.

The goat herders are favored by the existence of abundant land and suitable climatic conditions that can be leveraged to boost their national herd to 25m by year 2025, should the current situation turn for the better.

In a research done by Farmers Guide, most farmers have a long-enduring love and hate relationship with goats. They are seen as troublesome animals that are guaranteed to bring problems including invading into neighbours'





fields. Very little attention is given to goats which explains the 65% pre-weaning mortality rate. Goats also tend to live in unbearable conditions that compromise their health with pneumonia being a leading killer.

In addition, the market also poses a challenge as middlemen and the farmers only regard goats as an object for transaction. Farmers seem to only care for their goats when they exchange them for money. No one is concerned about fixing the gaps in the supply chain that will enable bringing goats to the market in a fairer and transparent manner.

At the same time, none of these players have ventured further to unlock the full value and multiple functions of a goat.

Goat Breeding

There is also currently an ongoing frenzy about mixing local goat breed with foreign breeds such as Boer, Red Kalahari, and Savannah, among others. While there is no fundamental problem with cross breeding, the matter is presented like a quick fix. However, it does not address the core of why the local Mashona and Matabele breeds have progressively grown smaller due to inbreeding. Despite their high profligacy and adaptability, high reproductive

wastage under traditional systems of management remains a limitation to increased local goat productivity. This loss in production has been attributed to a number of constraints namely poor nutrition, poor health care and low management input.

Without taking care of the basics, farmers can import all loads of exotic breeds to no avail. There is also a danger that we will end up wiping out our hardier, tastier and adaptable local breeds at the altar of increasing carcass weight through cross breeding.

How to Raise Goats

Goats are very versatile animals. In the United States, they are primarily used to produce meat and dairy products such as milk and cheese (chevre).

To use goats for dairy production, producers need to allow them to kid every year. In order to increase efficiency, it's advised to have does ready for breeding at 7 months of age. This way, the total lifetime herd production of milk is increased, reducing the number of non-producing animals at any one time.

When raising goats for meat, multiple

births, rapid growth, and good confirmation are important. Meat goats are generally considered highly fertile with 98% of does bred under good management. Planned breeding seasons should be considered, as well. This benefits the marketing by allowing kids to be more uniform in weaning weight.

Knowing how to sustainably manage your goat herd on pasture is essential. Producers should remember that forage quality is the basis of animal health in a grazing system. Discover more about building a successful grazing enterprise with the Grazing 101: Suitable Pasture Management online course.

Goat Nutrition and Health

All animals require adequate nutrition in order to maintain good health. It is important that they get enough water, protein, vitamins, and minerals on a daily basis. Nutrient requirements, however, often vary depending on the goat's lifetime (e.g. pregnancy, breeding, or lactation). Learn how to meet your animals' nutritional requirements on Penn State Extension's Goat Nutrition and Feeding page.

Goat Farm Management

A successful goat enterprise requires careful planning. Before you start with goat farming, it is sensible to know that goats need strong fencing. A solid perimeter fence is not only good for containing livestock inside, but also for keeping predators out.

In terms of living facilities, goats need dry and well-ventilated shelter. Remember that good air quality in livestock housing is crucial for optimal animal health and productive facilities.

As goats spend the majority of their time in barn areas and pastures, concentrated areas of manure can quickly add up. This is why writing and implementing a manure management plan is critical.



Coal facility excites tobacco farmers



Farmers have applauded the Tobacco Industry Marketing Board (TIMB), Kutsaga and Hwange Colliery Company Limited for developing a coal package meant to reduce production costs and address deforestation concerns.

To address fundamental production issues affecting sustainability and farmer viability, the three organisations have come up with a special coal facility for tobacco farmers.

The facility will, however, benefit only TIMB-registered growers with active grower numbers. TIMB said negotiations were underway with transporters to ensure that the coal is timeously delivered closer to tobacco growers at affordable rates.

"The high cost of tobacco production is

one of the main challenges bedevilling tobacco farmers in Zimbabwe," TIMB spokesperson Chelesani Tsarwe told NewsDay Farming. "The high costs stretch from production inputs to curing energy. This high-cost structure is negatively impacting the viability of tobacco farming in the country."

Tsarwe said tobacco farmers will realise significant savings in the curing process.

Zimbabwe Tobacco Growers Association president George Seremwe commended the three organisations for heeding the grassroots outcry.

"The outcry has been us tobacco farmers through our associations, lobbying and advocating reduction

on the cost of production and they started sort of goal rolling by engaging different suppliers in this case, Hwange Colliery Company to come up with cheaper modalities, better way of cushioning the farmer in the form of reduction on the cost of production. We are very happy and pleased to hear such an initiative happening," he said. -NewsDay



Topping and suckering in tobacco

Kumbiraiishe Ruzengwe
(Agronomist)

What is topping?

This is the removal of the apical bud at approximately 18- 20 harvestable leaves. It is done at extended bud stage when 10% of the plant flower buds are clear of the upper leaves.

- This is normally noticeable at 8-10 weeks after transplanting.

Effects of topping

Does Topping reduce the yield or quality of the tobacco leaf?

- There is production of side shoots (Auxiliary) in leaf axils. The plant changes from a reproductive to a vegetative phase concentrating on leaf development therefore there is increased photosynthetic rate.

- The size and weight of upper leaves increases and the chemical composition of the leaf is altered. Early topping is recommended for better results (when the top leaf is 5-10cm in length). Root growth is greatly increased hence increased production of nicotine in the roots.

- Therefore cured leaf from the top of the plant has higher nicotine content than leaves from the lower part. The mid rib becomes bigger as a result of topping. Leaves become turgid therefore more tolerant to moisture stress.

- Ripening rate is reduced and there is more time for harvesting. Early topping increases the proportion of heavy

bodied, and dark coloured leaf. Delayed topping reduces yield by 1% per day for every day after extended bud stage. It also increases susceptibility to the disease white mould.

Suckering

- It is the removal of side shoots. To obtain the full benefits of early topping there should be complete control of suckers. It is done by hands or suckercides. A chemical suckercide is applied soon after topping.

- Before applying the suckercide, all suckers longer than 2cm are removed by hand. Suckercides have two groups: Contact and locally systemic.

- Contacts (e.g. n-decanol, suckerkil, tabamex) dehydrate the suckers, burning off the leaf axils. Locally systemic suckercides include Dinitroanilines (e.g.

butralin) and they stop cell growth at the axils.

- The suckercide is poured over the top of the recently topped plant, running down the stalk and coming into contact with the leaf axils. Care should be taken not to damage the top few leaves. It is recommended to follow a contact suckercide with a systemic suckercide at 7-10 days later.

- Regular hand suckering is essential for those axils missed.

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Zimbabwe is the sixth largest producer of tobacco in the world. In order to get higher up on the list, Zimbabwean farmers can make use of innovative farm equipment offered by us, which will help you make the most of your untapped land.

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Ginger Production Guide

HARVESTING

MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG
SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
JAN			

Ginger is harvested 9 months after planting



Weed fields of all grass.



Insert fork deep beneath the clump and lift carefully.

Do not bread off any part of the ginger, this will be done in the pack house.

IMPORTANT

Rotate your crops.

Planting a crop of ginger in the same spot year after year will use up one set of nutrients in the soil and increase the fungal and nematode population.

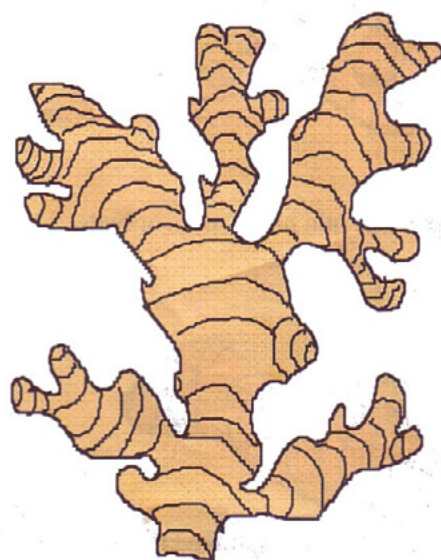
Every other season, plant a different crop, such as legumes, in your field to put back the nutrients.

For example, to implement a crop rotation programme in your field, the following may guide you:

1990 - Ginger
1991 - Pigeon Pea
1992 - Ginger
1993 - Tomato
1994 - Ginger

For more information contact your Extension Officer.

*Produced by the
Rural Communication Centre
Ministry of Agriculture, Dominica.*



Ginger Production Guide

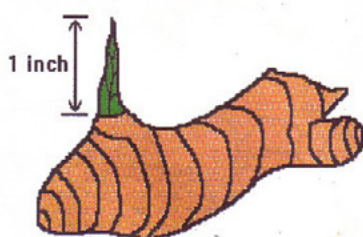
PLANTING MATERIAL



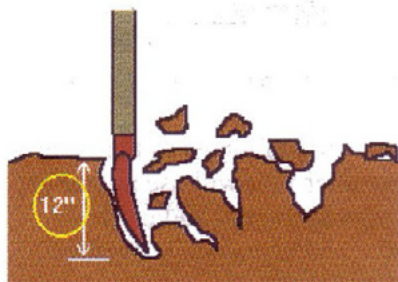
Used unwashed pieces of ginger of about 2 ounces in weight.



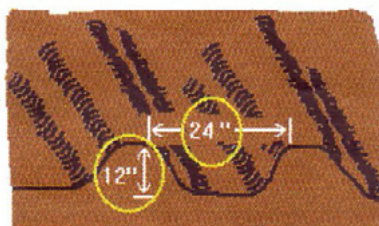
Each piece should have 2 eyes or buds.



Pieces should be pre-sprouted to about 1 inch.



LAND PREPARATION



Clear and plough the land 12 inches deep.

Build ridges 12 inches high and 24 inches

PLANTING



Plant ginger in the trenches










Ginger is planted 10 - 12 inches apart.

1,000 lbs of ginger is needed to plant 1 acre of land.



1 month after planting, apply 1 tablespoon of compound fertilizer to each plant. Repeat for the following two months.

WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	21	22
EVENT	Farrowing Cycle 1			Suckle Piglets 28 Days	Wean 5 Days	Onset of Oestrus	Service with Boar 2 Days		In-pig 115 days (Gestation) 											Farrowing Cycle 2
PIGLETS MANAGEMENT	At birth 1. Dip navel cord in Iodine 2. Clip eye-teeth within 24 hrs of birth. 3. Inject with IRON supplement within 3 days. 4. Dose against Coccidia at 3-5 days	At 7 days administer Vaccines against Mycoplasma Pneumonia RespiSure	At 21 days administer booster vaccines against Mycoplasma Pneumonia RespiSure	At weaning: Dip against Ticks & Mites Use Dectomax or Tickbuster spray or Deworm Trinitox Dectomax or Systamex, Ivermectin injectable		Deworm Use Dectomax or Systamex 	Dip against ticks and mites. Dectomax or Tickbuster Spray. Deworm Dectomax or Systamex 													
NUTRITION					Feed Windmill Sow Meal after weaning and expect heat after 7 days		Feed Windmill Pig Grower diet from 8 weeks until 16 weeks or 50 kg live weight		Feed Windmill Pig finisher meal from 16 weeks until slaughter											
SOWS MANAGEMENT	2 weeks before weaning Vaccinate against: Parvovirus			Feed Windmill Sow Meal at a rate of 2kg + 0.5 kg/piglet/day		Continue to feed boar and dry sow meal up to one week before farrowing 4 kg or less depending on sow condition		Feed Windmill Brood sow Meal at a rate of 2 kg + 0.5 kg/piglet/day												



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MBARE MSIKA PRICES AS AT 29 OCTOBER 2023

Item	Quantity	Price In \$USD	Price in ZWL\$
Apples	Box (12 kg)	\$15.00	\$60 000.00
Avocado	Fruit (Medium)	\$0.50	\$2 000.00
Baby Marrow	Packet (1 kg)	\$1.50	\$6 000.00
Banana	Crate (22 kg)	\$9.00	\$36 000.00
Beetroot	Bundle (1 kg)	\$2.00	\$8 000.00
Broccoli	Packet (1 kg)	\$2.00	\$8 000.00
Broilers	Bird (Live)	\$6.00	\$24 000.00
Butternut	Pocket (10 kg)	\$5.00	\$20 000.00
Butternut	50kg Sack (60 kg)	\$30.00	\$120 000.00
Button Mushroom	Punnet or Kaylite (200 g)	\$2.50	\$10 000.00
Cabbage	Head (Large)	\$0.80	\$3 200.00
Carrots	Punnet or Kaylite (400 g)	\$1.00	\$4 000.00
Carrots	50kg Sack (60 kg)	\$24.00	\$96 000.00
Cauliflower	Packet (1 kg)	\$2.00	\$8 000.00
Chili Pepper	5L Gallon (5 kg)	\$2.00	\$8 000.00
Cooked Dried Groundnuts	Bucket (20 kg)	\$9.00	\$36 000.00
Covo	Bundle (6.5 kg)	\$4.20	\$16 800.00
Cucumber	50kg Sack (60 kg)	\$28.00	\$112 000.00
Dried Covo	Bucket (20 kg)	\$18.00	\$72 000.00
Dried Cow Peas Leaves	Bucket (20 kg)	\$18.00	\$72 000.00
Dried Maize	Bucket (20 kg)	\$7.50	\$30 000.00
Eggs	Crate (Large)	\$3.80	\$15 200.00
Garlic	Packet (1 kg)	\$4.00	\$16 000.00
Ginger	Packet (1 kg)	\$1.50	\$6 000.00
Green Beans	50kg Sack (60 kg)	\$30.00	\$120 000.00
Green Maize	Dozen (Medium)	\$1.50	\$6 000.00
Green Pepper	50kg Sack (60 kg)	\$15.00	\$60 000.00
Guinea Fowl Hanga	Bird (Live)	\$10.00	\$40 000.00

PRICES BY: **ZIMPRICE CHECK**

MBARE MSIKA PRICES AS AT 29 OCTOBER 2023

Item	Quantity	Price In \$USD	Price in ZWL\$
Kapenta Matemba	Bucket (20 kg)	\$38.00	\$152 000.00
Lemon	Bucket (20 kg)	\$4.00	\$16 000.00
Lettuce	Head (Large)	\$1.00	\$4 000.00
Mopane Worms Madora	Bucket (20 kg)	\$35.00	\$140 000.00
White Sorghum Mapfunde	Bucket (20 kg)	\$15.00	\$60 000.00
Sour Fruit Masawu	Bucket (20 kg)	\$8.00	\$32 000.00
Snot Apple Matohwe	5L Gallon (5 kg)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Baobab Fruit Mauyu	Bucket (20 kg)	\$4.00	\$16 000.00
Pearl Millet Mhunga	Bucket (20 kg)	\$20.00	\$80 000.00
Cooked Dried Maize Mumhare	Bucket (20 kg)	\$18.00	\$72 000.00
Cow Peas Nyemba	Bucket (20 kg)	\$16.00	\$64 000.00
Groundnuts Nzungu	Bucket (20 kg)	\$36.00	\$144 000.00
Okra	5L Gallon (5 kg)	\$4.00	\$16 000.00
Onions	Pocket (10 kg)	\$8.00	\$32 000.00
Oranges	Pocket (3 kg)	\$5.00	\$20 000.00
Oyster Mushroom	Punnet or Kaylite (200 g)	\$1.50	\$6 000.00
Pawpaw	Head (Large)	\$3.00	\$12 000.00
Peas	50kg Sack (60 kg)	\$18.00	\$72 000.00
Pineapples	Box (12 kg)	\$13.00	\$52 000.00
Popcorn	Bucket (20 kg)	\$10.00	\$40 000.00
Large Potatoes	Pocket (15 kg)	\$8.00	\$32 000.00
Medium Potatoes	Pocket (15 kg)	\$7.00	\$28 000.00
Rape	Bundle (6.5 kg)	\$4.00	\$16 000.00
Red Pepper	Packet (1 kg)	\$2.50	\$10 000.00

PRICES BY: **ZIMPRICE CHECK**

The TIMB Consultants

invites all Agricultural producers, Farm Managers, Agronomists and anyone interested in the GLOBALG.A.P. IFA V6 Standard, its principles and importance in ensuring safe and sustainable agricultural production to our first training:

Course Category:	GLOBALG.A.P. Awareness
Course:	An introduction to the GLOBALG.A.P. Standard and its principles.
Venue:	TIMB Headquarters
Date:	28 to 30 November
Time:	0900hrs - 1500hrs
Course Fee:	\$150

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