APRIL 2025

Farmers Guide

The Best of Zimbabwean Farming

Zimbabwean pig farmers set sights on success

Fake tobacco seeds, a threat to Zimbabwe's golden leaf industry

80 tonnes of onion per hectare possible, experts

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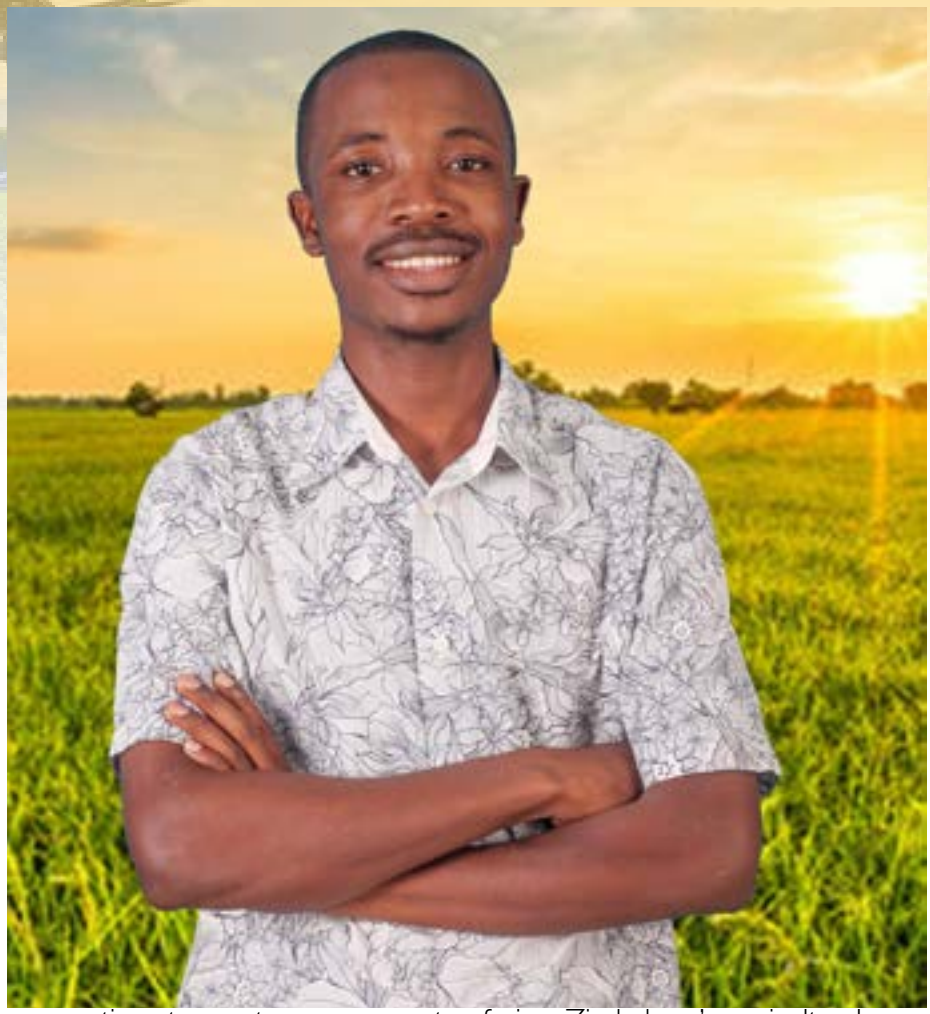

As we celebrate another edition of Farmers Guide, we are reminded of the incredible progress being made in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. From the farmers who toil tirelessly in the fields to the researchers and innovators pushing the boundaries of what is possible, there is a sense of excitement and optimism that is palpable.

In this issue, we delve into the world of pig farming, where producers are defying the odds and setting their sights high. Our cover story takes a comprehensive look at the opportunities and challenges facing this critical industry, and we are confident that you will find it both informative and inspiring. We explore the latest trends and innovations in pig farming, from genetics and breeding to nutrition and health.

But we also confront some of the tough issues affecting our farmers. The proliferation of fake tobacco seeds is a major concern, and we examine the impact this is having on the industry. We talk to experts and farmers about the risks associated with fake seeds, and what can be done to prevent their spread.

We also explore the ways in which technology is transforming agriculture, from precision farming to drone technology. These innovations have the potential to revolutionize the way we farm, and we are excited to share them with you.

To bring you the most insightful and informative content, we have interviewed some of the leading experts in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. Their knowledge, experience, and perspectives have been invaluable in helping us to understand the complex issues facing our farmers, and to identify the opportunities and innovations that are shaping the future of agriculture.

For our practical farmers, we have an invaluable guide to onion farming, covering everything from soil preparation to pest management. Our expert contributors share their knowledge and experience, providing tips and advice on how to optimize onion yields and quality. We also take a closer look at the latest market trends, with our crops market price report. Whether you're a seasoned farmer or just starting out, we are confident that you will find something of value in these pages.

As we look to the future, it is clear that Zimbabwe's agricultural sector is poised for greatness. We are proud to be a part of this journey, and we look forward to continuing to bring you the latest news, insights, and analysis from the world of agriculture. We are committed to supporting our farmers, and to helping them navigate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

In the coming months, we will be exploring some of the key issues facing Zimbabwe's agricultural sector, from climate change to market access. We will be talking to experts and farmers, and sharing their stories and experiences. We will also be highlighting some of the latest innovations and technologies that are transforming agriculture, and exploring their potential to improve yields, reduce costs, and enhance sustainability.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. We are excited to have you along, and we look forward to continuing to bring you the best of Zimbabwean farming. Happy farming!

From the Farmers Guide Magazine

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Zimbabwean pig farmers set sights on success

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As the demand for pork and pork products continues to grow, the potential for pig farming to contribute to Zimbabwe's economic development and food security becomes increasingly evident. With the right combination of planning, expertise, and resources, Zimbabwean farmers can unlock the full potential of pig farming and reap the rewards of this lucrative venture.

The pig farming industry in Zimbabwe has experienced significant growth in recent years, driven by increasing demand for pork and pork products. This trend is expected to continue, making pig farming an attractive business opportunity for entrepreneurs and farmers.

Following a visit by Farmers Guide reporter at Peter Nyasvimbo (51) Piggery in Nyanga recently, breeding and genetics, nutrition and feeding, health and biosecurity, housing and infrastructure, and marketing and sales have been mentioned as key strategies to succeed in pig farming.

Selecting high-quality breeding stock, providing a balanced diet, and implementing effective health and biosecurity measures, Nyasvimbo has improved the productivity and profitability of his pig farming operations.

"The secret to successful pig farming is attention to detail and a commitment to best practices. You need to select high-quality breeding stock, provide a balanced diet, and maintain a clean and healthy environment," said Nyasvimbo

In addition to these key strategies, best practices such as record keeping, regular monitoring, staff training, and waste management are essential for successful pig farming. By maintaining accurate records, regularly monitoring pig health and growth, and providing ongoing training and support to farm staff, farmers can identify potential problems early and make informed management decisions.

Despite the opportunities offered by pig farming, Zimbabwean farmers face several challenges, including disease management, feed availability and affordability, and market fluctuations. To overcome these challenges, farmers must implement effective disease management strategies, develop sustainable feed production systems, and develop marketing strategies that take into account market fluctuations.

"Pig farming is a challenging business, and we face many obstacles on a daily basis. Market fluctuations are a major concern - the price of pork can drop overnight, leaving us with a significant loss. Diseases are another major challenge - outbreaks of swine fever or pneumonia can decimate our herd in a matter of days. And then there's the issue of feed availability - we rely heavily on imported feed, which can be expensive and

unpredictable. Despite these these challenges, we're committed to producing high-quality pork for the local market. It's a tough job, but it's also incredibly rewarding," he added

Climate change also poses a significant threat to pig farming in Zimbabwe, with changing weather patterns and increased frequency of extreme weather events affecting pig health and productivity. To mitigate these impacts, farmers must adopt climate-resilient pig farming practices, such as using drought-tolerant feed crops and implementing effective waste management systems.

The government of Zimbabwe has also recognized the potential of pig farming to contribute to the country's economic development and food security. Initiatives such as the Zimbabwe Agricultural Development Trust and the Pig Industry Development Project have been established to provide support to pig farmers, including training, credit facilities, and market access.

In addition, research institutions such as the University of Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe Agricultural Research Institute are conducting research on pig farming, focusing on areas such as breeding, nutrition, and disease management. These research efforts aim to improve the productivity and profitability of pig farming in Zimbabwe, and to identify new opportunities for growth and development.

Overall, the future of pig farming in Zimbabwe looks bright, with opportunities for growth, development, and contribution to the country's economic development and food security. By adopting best practices, overcoming challenges, and accessing support and resources, Zimbabwean farmers can build successful and sustainable pig farming businesses that benefit themselves, their communities, and the country as a whole.

TIMB Biometric system simplifies grower registration, boosts security

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The Tobacco Industry and Marketing Board (TIMB) has hailed the rollout of its biometric grower registration system as a major success, with thousands of farmers already onboarded and reaping the benefits of enhanced security, transparency, and accountability within the tobacco value chain.

Launched as part of broader efforts to curb side marketing and contract abuse, the biometric system, now fully functional across all provinces, links each grower's unique number to their fingerprints and GPS coordinates of their household and farm.

The move comes amid concerns of the rampant misuse of grower identities and side marketing, where farmers either sell contracted tobacco to unauthorised buyers or pass off self-financed crop to contracting firms. In 2021 alone, side marketing cost five tobacco exporters a combined US$57 million, with the broader industry suffering significant contract breaches and revenue losses.

Growers across the country have largely welcomed the biometric registration process, citing enhanced security and fewer cases of identity theft at the contract and auction floors.

"This year, I feel safer bringing my bales to the auction," said Gladys Mavhunga, a small-scale tobacco farmer in Karoi. "Last season, someone tried to use my grower number, but with the fingerprint system, that will no longer be possible. It is faster, and I know my labour will be rewarded."

Tendai Moyo, a commercial grower in Rusape, added: "This is a game-changer. Before, there were so many ghost farmers getting inputs or selling tobacco that was not theirs. Now it's your thumbprint or nothing."

TIMB has also emphasized the strides made in securing grower information through encryption, strict access controls, and continuous system monitoring.

"We've made significant strides in ensuring the security and privacy of grower information through encryption, strict access controls, and continuous monitoring," said Edson Nhemachena, TIMB Head Information Communication and Technology. "However, we recognise the need to evolve. Our current systems, while stable, face limitations in scalability and integration. That is why we are migrating to a more robust ERP system; this will not only streamline operations but also enhance data security and compliance with both national and international standards."

He added that automating manual processes and enabling real-time integration with industry systems are critical for improving efficiency and delivering better services to growers and stakeholders.

Compliance Administration Officer, Pelagia Marumahoko clarified that the introduction of biometrics has not changed the registration process but has now become a fundamental part of it. "Growers have been cooperative as enrollment continues. Though some remain sceptical, we are actively educating them," she said

While reception has been largely positive, challenges remain, particularly with older farmers or those whose fingerprints are worn from years of manual labour. To address this, registration teams have been trained to capture multiple fingerprints as an alternative.

TIMB officials say that the biometric grower management system represents more than just a technological upgrade. It is a cornerstone of TIMB's vision to transform Zimbabwe's tobacco sector into a 60-billion-dollar tobacco industry by 2028.

With biometric verification now a requirement at both input distribution and selling points, the tobacco industry is experiencing a cultural shift where identity, ownership and accountability are being redefined, one fingerprint at a time.

"Farmers will be verified using biometric scanners when collecting inputs and selling their crop. This will prevent multiple contracts under different merchants and reduce default rates" said TIMB Acting CEO Emmanuel Matsvaire.

TIMB

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Fake tobacco seeds, a threat to Zimbabwe's golden leaf industry

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Zimbabwe's tobacco industry is reeling from the effects of unauthorized tobacco seeds flooding the local market, posing a significant threat to the country's multi-billion dollar tobacco export industry.

The unauthorized seeds, which are flooding the local market, are compromising the quality of Zimbabwe's tobacco and posing a risk to the entire industry, according to experts.

In a recent report from Kutsaga Research Station. Mr. Francis Mukoyi, Head of Genetics, Biotechnology & Bio-innovations at Kutsaga, warns that unauthorised tobacco varieties are compromising both farmer profitability and the country's reputation as a premium tobacco producer.

"Growing illegal varieties is tantamount to wholesale sabotaging of the enviable and prosperous Zimbabwe's tobacco industry," Mukoyi states.

Following a research by Kutsaga numerous cases of illicit imports and sales of uncertified flue-cured tobacco seed varieties across Zimbabwe have been documented. These include outdated fertile lines and landraces falsely marketed as Kutsaga hybrids. Farmers who unknowingly plant these varieties have suffered significant financial losses

As the situation continues to unfold, the tobacco industry remains on high alert, with farmers, researchers, and regulators working together to mitigate the effects of the unauthorized seeds and ensure the long-term sustainability of Zimbabwe's tobacco industry.

Furthermore, cultivating unauthorised tobacco varieties violates Section 64(1) of the TIMB Act and the Tobacco Marketing and Levy Act [Chapter 18:20]. Offenders may face level ten fines, imprisonment up to one year, or both.

Kutsaga has developed over 75 tobacco varieties tailored for Zimbabwe's growing conditions, including flue-cured, burley, oriental, dark fire, and cigar wrapper types. These varieties deliver superior yields (up to 5,000 kg/ha), enhanced disease resistance, and the premium leaf quality that international markets demand.

The research station emphasises that Zimbabwe's global reputation stems from these carefully developed varieties with distinct flavour profiles. For those interested in international varieties, an industry-approved testing protocol exists, supervised by Agricultural Research and Innovation Services and TIMB.

Industry experts have urged farmers to exercise caution when purchasing seeds as the industry grapples with the issue.

"It's crucial that farmers buy seeds from reputable suppliers and dealers," said Mukoyi. "Reputable shops and suppliers sell certified seeds that have been tested for quality and purity. By buying from these suppliers, farmers can ensure that they are getting high-quality seeds that will give them better yields and

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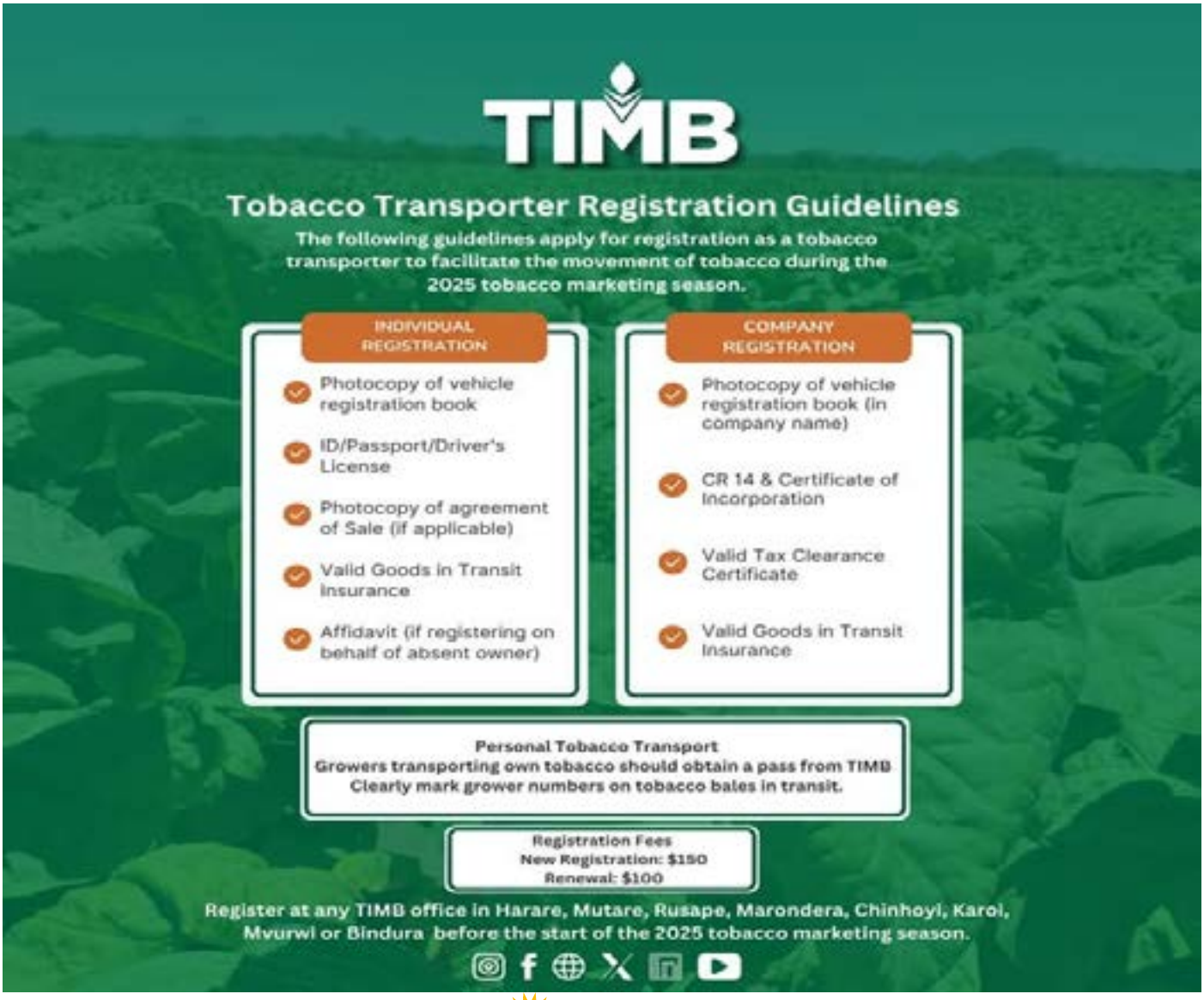
higher returns."

Farmers are advised to look out for certification labels and documentation from recognized seed certification agencies, such as the Seed Services Institute of Zimbabwe. By taking these precautions, farmers can protect themselves from the risks associated with unauthorized seeds and help to safeguard the future of Zimbabwe's tobacco industry," he added.

Kutsaga offers assistance through their team of plant breeders, agronomists, and advisory specialists who can help farmers select appropriate varieties. Farmers with concerns about potentially counterfeit seed can contact Kutsaga Research Station at 0719 004420, 0712 881 814, 080688002604, or toll-free at 0800 4511. Email inquiries can be sent to tobres@kutsaga.co.zw, or farmers can visit research stations in Harare, Banket, or Masvingo.



How technology is transforming agriculture in Zimbabwe

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Technology has revolutionized agriculture in Zimbabwe, transforming the way farmers cultivate, harvest, and market their products driven by innovations such as precision farming, sustainable practices, and climate-smart agriculture.

To start with, precision farming involves using advanced technology, such as GPS-guided machinery, drones, and satellite imaging, to optimize crop yields and reduce waste.

This approach enables farmers to collect data on soil moisture, temperature, and crop health, allowing them to make informed decisions about irrigation, fertilization, and pest control.

In Zimbabwe, precision farming has improved crop yields and reduced costs for farmers. For example, farmers using precision farming techniques have reported increased maize yields of up to 15 tons per hectare, compared to traditional farming methods.

Secondly, sustainable practices, such as conservation agriculture and organic farming, have also gained popularity in Zimbabwe. These approaches prioritize soil health, biodiversity, and efficient water use, reducing the environmental impact of farming.

Conservation agriculture, in particular, has been adopted by many Zimbabwean farmers.

This approach involves minimizing soil disturbance, maintaining soil cover, and rotating crops to enhance soil fertility and reduce erosion.

In addition, climate change has significant implications for agriculture in Zimbabwe, with changing weather patterns affecting crop yields and farm productivity. Climate-smart agriculture involves using techniques and technologies that help farmers adapt to climate change.

In Zimbabwe, climate-smart agriculture initiatives have focused on developing drought-tolerant crop varieties, improving irrigation systems, and promoting agroforestry practices.

These efforts aim to enhance farmers' resilience to climate change and improve their livelihoods.

The Zimbabwean government has launched several initiatives to support the adoption of technology in agriculture. These include programs to provide farmers with access to finance, training, and extension services.

For example, the Zimbabwe Reconstruction Fund has implemented a $1.5 million Climate Change Technical Assistance program to help farmers adapt to climate change. This program provides technical assistance, training, and support for climate-resilient agriculture practices.

The private sector has also played a crucial role in promoting technology adoption in Zimbabwean agriculture. Companies have invested in developing innovative solutions, such as precision farming software, drones, and mobile apps, to support farmers.

These solutions have improved farmers' access to information, markets, and financial services, enabling them to make informed decisions and improve their productivity.

Ensuring a bumper harvest in winter wheat: Tips for farmers

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In Zimbabwe, agriculture is the backbone of the economy. Agriculture is a science and an art done to feed the nation and world at large. A well-fed nation is a strong economy and the vice versa is true. As agriculture is one of the biggest industries in Zimbabwe, it should be practiced as a business both on a larger and smaller scale and likewise in every business, planning and preparedness is key to make the business lucrative.

In 2024, agriculture once again faced extraordinary challenges that includes: unpredictable weather extremes ranging from droughts to devastating floods, wildly fluctuating temperatures and unpredictable developments in pest and disease pressure in the fields. These conditions had and continue to have a significant impact on the harvest, with many crops suffering damage or a noticeable drop in yields.

As one of the industries most affected by climate change, agriculture now faces the task of preparing for a future in which such extreme conditions could be the new norm. Crop protection is one of the agent preparations that needs prompt attention. Fall army worm (FAW) has been a devastating pest in the cereal crops that includes maize, millets and sorghum. In addition to that, tobacco farmers have been facing challenges with the common insect pest like the Bud worm, White Mealy bugs and Aphids and diseases like Black shank, Pythium rots, Wildfire, Angular leaf spot and Alternaria. To curb the negative effects of the mentioned yield reducing factors, farmers have to adopt the technology of safe use of agrochemicals.

The winding up of the summer season is opening a window to prepare for the winter production. Time of operations has a direct impact on yield potential of every field and horticultural crop. In agriculture, failing to plan is planning to fair. Winter is fast approaching hence need to start the preparations for different winter enterprises that includes winter cereal production (winter wheat and barley), and horticulture.

In farming, we cannot talk about bump harvests without good agronomic practices (AGPs). Farmers are encouraged to ensure that all pre-planting, planting and post-planting operations are followed to reach for plant potential. In preparation of the 2025 winter season, farmers are expected:

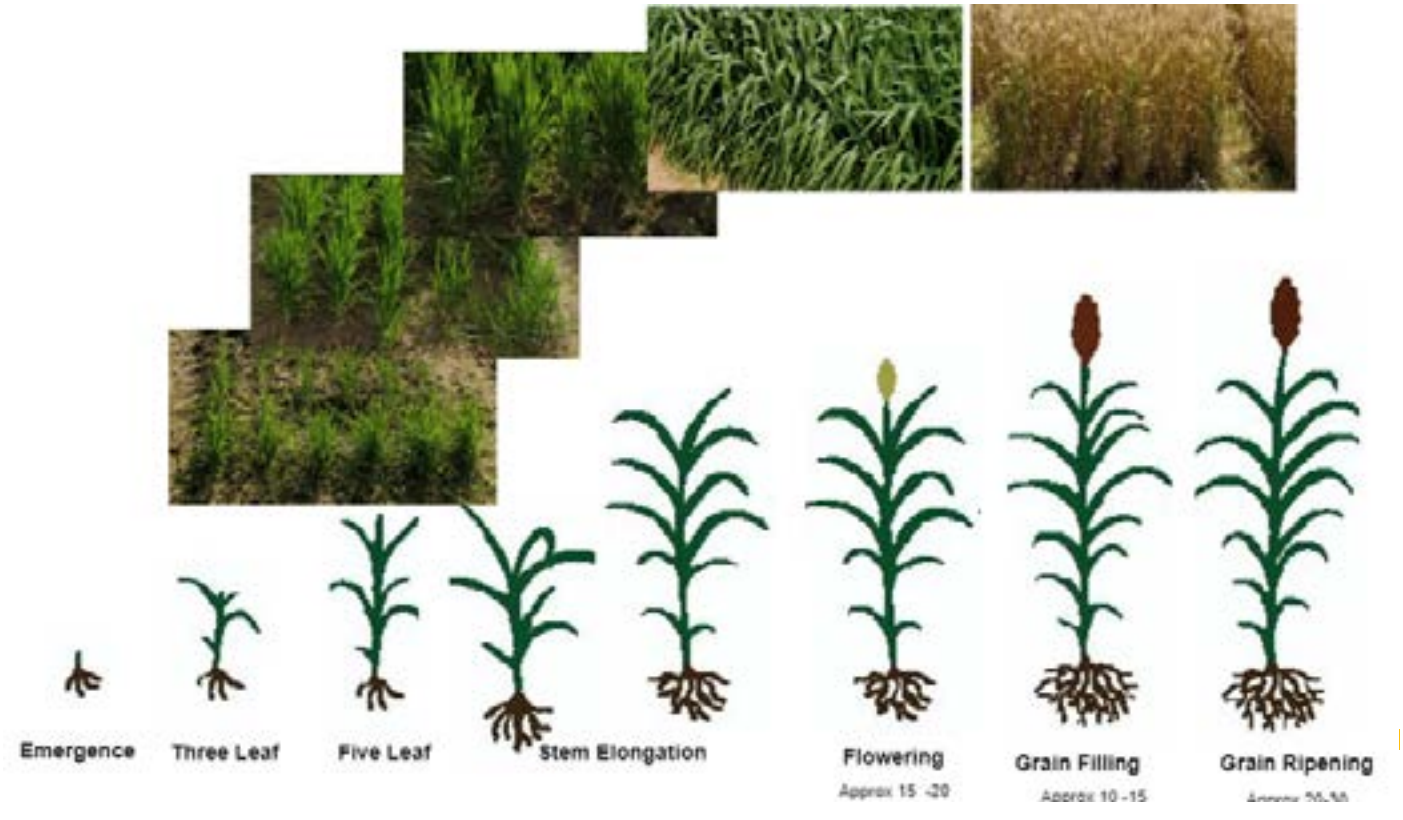
1.Soil testing: an important operation that involves collection of a soil sample and analysis of the soil to determine its richness. Soil testing gives

a summary of what has and lacks. This information enables the farmer to make good decision as to what to put in the soil and what amount. The institutions for soil testing in Zimbabwe include, Kutsaga, Department of Research and Specialist Services (DR&SS) and Zimlabs.

2 Land preparation: a process of making a necessary soil condition that enhances successful crop establishment. It is a vital operation when one wants to venture into winter wheat and barley production that requires a fine tilth to enable good seed-soil contact for good plant stand. Early land preparation promotes breaking of insect pest and diseases and weeds cycles and also adds to moisture conservation.

3. Input procurement: a very essential farming preparation that involves purchasing of farming inputs. Agricultural inputs include seed, fertilizers, agrochemicals, machinery and farming equipment. Farmers are always encouraged to procure inputs from reputable suppliers (NOT VANAMUSIYANWA) to maximize yield this coming winter.

Timely preparations for the 2025 winter season can contribute to the increased production thereby meeting the national food demands.



Driving innovation in livestock production

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Livestock farming is a vital component of Zimbabwe's agricultural sector, providing a source of income for thousands of farmers and contributing significantly to the country's food security. However, despite its importance, livestock farming in Zimbabwe is facing numerous challenges that are affecting the productivity and profitability of farmers.

In an exclusive interview with, Farmers Guide, renowned livestock expert, Dr Jacob Gusha, shared his insights on the challenges facing livestock farmers in Zimbabwe. According to him, one of the major challenges is that many farmers are not treating livestock farming as a commercial business.

Dr. Gusha also highlighted key challenges facing farmers in livestock production, including limited commercial approach, inadequate professional guidance, disease management, poor nutrition and breeding challenges.

"Few communal farmers are taking livestock production as a commercial business which is one of the major challenges, "said Dr Gusha.

"Most farmers view it as a part-time venture which takes us to the next challenge of most farmers not seeking expert advice, leading to suboptimal practices and reduced productivity," he added

Dr. Gusha also addresses the diseases management strategies for preventable diseases such as tick-borne however, these illnesses result in high mortality rates due to the lack of proper treatment, such as dipping.

"Inadequate feeding practices lead to weight loss, reduced cattle production and increased susceptibility to diseases. It can delay calving, resulting in cows taking up to more than two years to give birth, compared to the expected yearly cycle. These challenges significantly hinder livestock production growth."

He also addressed the breeding challenges, favoring exotic breeds without understanding their specific needs can negatively impact fertility and overall productivity.

Dr Gusha

Dr Gusha has highlighted the transformative impact of technology on livestock production, citing its benefits in reducing human labor and improving efficiency. He referenced the innovative technologies developed for poultry farming at the University of Zimbabwe's farm.

He also emphasizes on the importance of seeking professional advice and proper training before entering the livestock farming industry, acknowledging that while initial investments can be substantial, the long-term returns are significant.

: An exclusive interview with Dr J. Gusha

Get to know Dr. Jacob Gusha, a distinguished expert with 18 years of experience in livestock production with a career marked by leadership, innovation and a commitment to sustainability.

With experience spanning roles such as livestock production manager, research officer, animal feed consultant, a senior lecturer among other roles, Dr. Gusha offers an insightful perspective on the industry.

Dr. Jacob Gusha's agricultural roots run deep, having been born and raised on a small-scale farm in Karoi, Hurungwe. His introduction to farming began at a remarkably early age, with his involvement in the family's agricultural activities dating back to his first year of primary school. "I started interacting with soil and dung at a tender age…" Dr. Gusha said.

Influenced by his upbringing which distilled in him a strong passion for agriculture and livestock production, his academic journey commenced at Marere Primary School, followed by Chivende Secondary School and later on Harare High School for his Advanced level studies. Dr. Gusha subsequently enrolled at the University of Zimbabwe where he earned a Bachelor of Agriculture Degree honours in Animal Science which laid the foundation for his future academic pursuits including his Master's and Ph.D. degrees.

In addition to his professional qualifications, Dr. Gusha expanded his expertise through international training and certifications. Notably, he holds a Training Certification in Animal Production and Health from the Egyptian International Centre for Agriculture (EICA) in Cairo, Egypt (2009), as well as a Certificate in Animal Science and Technology from Jiangsu Animal husbandry and veterinary College in Jiangsu, China (2012).

Beginning his professional journey as a trainee, Dr. Gusha worked at Lorna doone Dairy farm (Zimbabwe) as a dairy farm manager where he gained valuable insights into dairy farm management. He then joined the ministry as an extension officer in Makonde district although his tenure was brief. He then moved to Makoholi research station where he served as a research officer overseeing rangelands, pastures and animal nutrition and ultimately became a section leader.

Throughout his illustrious career, Dr. Gusha has demonstrated remarkable versatility, donning multiple roles that showcase his expertise and dedication to the agricultural sector. His academic tenure includes serving as a lecturer at Bindura University of Science Education (2010) and later that year as a senior lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe. He currently holds the position of Director at the University of Zimbabwe Agro-Industrial Park and a board member of the Agricultural Research Council.

In terms of project involvement, Dr. Gusha is collaborating with Mimosa on the Livestock Revitalization Project (LRP) in Mberengwa and Zvishavane. This initiative leverage technology to improve livestock production and empowering local livestock farmers. The project seeks to unlock the economic potential of livestock farming and equip farmers with knowledge and skills on how to effectively commercialize their livestock production. As a seasoned feed consultant, Dr. Gusha has a proven track record of training farmers and addressing key challenges. He has developed a program to educate farmers on livestock management, in partnership with fellow farmers like Letwin Nyagano. This initiative demonstrates Dr. Gusha's commitment to empowering farmers and promoting sustainable agricultural practices in the region.

Drone assisted farming

Drones are increasingly being used in commercial farming to improve efficiency, productivity, and crop management. Here's how they can be applied:

Crop Monitoring and Management:

Aerial Imaging: Drones equipped with cameras or multispectral sensors can capture high-resolution images of crops. These images can be used to monitor plant health, detect pests or diseases, and assess crop growth.

NDVI Mapping:Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) maps generated from drone imagery can provide insights into the health and vigour of crops, helping farmers identify areas needing attention.

Precision Agriculture:

Variable Rate Application:Drones can be used to apply fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides in a targeted manner based on the specific needs of different areas within a field, as identified through drone data analysis.

Seed Planting:Some drones are capable of precision seed planting, ensuring optimal spacing and placement to maximize crop yield.

Field Scouting:

Drones can quickly and efficiently scout large fields, identifying problem areas such as irrigation issues, soil variations, or crop damage, allowing farmers to take timely corrective actions.

Livestock Monitoring:

Drones can be used to monitor livestock by providing aerial views of herd movements, health checks, and identifying potential issues in grazing areas.

Weather and Climate Monitoring:

Drones equipped with weather sensors can collect real-time data on temperature, humidity, wind speed, and precipitation, providing farmers with valuable information for making informed decisions about irrigation, planting, and harvest

Insurance and Documentation:

Drones can aid in insurance assessments by providing detailed documentation of crop health and damage after adverse weather events or other incidents.

Rural Connectivity:

In some regions, drones are being tested as a means of providing rural internet connectivity, helping farmers

By Jack Mudhumeni

80 tonnes of onion per hectare achievable, experts

Blessing Mutisi

Onions are an important crop in Zimbabwe. They are consumed daily in every household countrywide. Yellow onions are the most favored type by Zimbabweans with the red onions being viewed as more of a novelty type. It is a mainstream crop which by nature is supposed to be grown so widely enough by local farmers to meet the demand requirements of Zimbabwean consumers but however, we always fall short.

Every single year, onion imports always trickle into the country from South Africa which according to the Trend Economy website, commands about 98% of all Zimbabwean onion imports.

Onions are relatively not difficult to produce in the Zimbabwean climate with most of the fresh and dry onion production happening during the winter period when we receive short day lengths.

This is because most of the onion varieties grown locally start bulbing when they intercept light for 10-12 hours per day. The greater bulk of the onions produced are sold as fresh onions and the rest as dried. Selling these dried onions successfully is the feat which proves to be a little harder for most producers. About two to four months can pass after harvesting before the prices start to rise thus, the storage abilities of the onion variety propagated play an important role. Proper storage conditions coupled with good post-harvest handling can also help deal with this storage headache.

Seed Co Vegetables offers onion varieties that can provide solutions relating to storability of the dried onion produce. The varieties available in stores are Dina F1, Ada F1,Chelsea F1, Soberana F1 (all yellow varieties) and Shani F1 (a red onion variety). These are all specialized hybrid varieties that can be stored for up to six months under good storage conditions. High yields that can eclipse 80t per hectare can be achieved with all these cultivars. Plantings of these onions can start as early as the first week of January until the end of June. Choosing these varieties, coupled with Good Agronomic Practices can be the first step to ensuring onion self-sufficiency in Zimbabwe with the goal of being a net exporter of onions regionally.

Seed Co Vegetables has Agronomists in all the provinces of Zimbabwe who service for free once you purchase any of their vegetable seed varieties. Feel free to get in touch with them for any onion enquiries, agronomy tips and after-sales support.

For any quick WhatsApp enquiries, get in touch with our Digital Desk on **+263 71 535 0654.**

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ONION PRODUCTION GUIDE

Classification	Family	Poaceae	
	Genus	Allium	
	Species	cepa	
Nursery management			
Seed requirement	Seeds/gram	225-300	
	Seeds/m²	3000-5000 seeds (10-20g)	
	Seeds/ha	Trays	2-2.5kg
		Conventional	3-5kg
		In-situ/ Direct	7-9kg
Periodical time to	Planting	1 January-1 May (Window period for Nursery) Note: Late maturity varieties should be planted early	
	Emergence	7-10days	
	Transplanting	5-6weeks	
Soil temperature for germination	Minimum	2ºC	
	Optimum	10-35ºC	
Spacing	Sowing depth	1cm	Maintain depth for good emergence
	Inrow spacing	0.5-1cm	Avoid overcrowding your seedlings as this may lead to week seedlings
	Interrow spacing	5-7cm	
Conventional bed preparation requirements	Manure/m²	10kg	Broadcasted evenly and incorporated with the soil
	Compound C/m²	45g	
	AN/m²	35g	Broadcasted 2-3weeks after emergence
Managenent	Bed preparation	Dig a bed 1m wide with a length enough to accommodate your seeds Broadcast well decomposed manure and Compound C, then incorporate lightly into the soil Drill lines 1cm deep, 5-7cm apart and sprinkle the seeds trying to achieve 0.5-1cm between seeds Cover the seeds lightly with manure or any other light materials like sand Erect a shed 10-20cm from the ground then remove soon after emergence	
	Watering	Maintain the moisture at optimum, avoid overwatering or underwatering	
	Top dressing	Broadcast at week 2-3 after emergence and follow up with light irrigation. Wingrow can also be used if the seedlings are too stunted	
	Spraying	Spray Acetamiprid + Abamectin and Copper/Mancozeb every week to make sure the seedlings are healthy	
	Hardening	Around 5-6 weeks, the seedlings will be ready for transplanting, harden them by withdrawing water for about 2-3 days so that they easily adopt to the field conditions	
Field Management			
Soil requirements	Soils	Well drained soils with high OM	
	pH	5.0-6.8	

Climatic requirements	Temperature	18-26ºC
	Time of planting	Winter (Transplanting between 15 February- 15 June)
Spacing	Interrow	20-50cm
	Inrow	7-10cm
	Planting depth	1-2cm (Only the roots inserted into the soil)
	Point to note	Planting in beds of 1-1.5m with with 5-7 rows most ideal
Plant population	Minimum	500k
	Maximum	800k
Varieties	Ealy maturity (90-110days)	All hybrids are early maturing and have good storability of upto 6 months. Dina, Elad, Irati, Ngwazi, Yellow queen, Neptune, Saturn, Africa red
	Mid-late maturity (150-210 days)	Most OPVs are late maturing with medium to poor storability. Capricio (good storability), Texas grano, Red creole

Fertilisation

Application	**Fertiliser**	**Composition**	**Rate/ha**	**N**	**P**	**K**	**Remarks**
Basal	Compound C	5 : 15 : 12	600	30	90	72	All at planting
Top dressing	Ammonium Nitrate	34.5%N	300	102			At week 3
	Potassium nitrate	13 : 0 : 46	300	39		138	At week 7
Total				171	90	210	
Foliar spray	Wuxal macromix	16 : 16 : 12	2ltr	From 3-7 weeks, fortnightly			
	Wuxal calcibor	9%N, 14%Ca	2ltr	From 9-13 weeks fortnightly			

Notes

1. Compound C- Should be applied before planting at 60g/m² with light incorporation
2. Ammonium nitrate- broadcasted at week 3 at 30g/m² followed with light irrigation
3. Potassium nitrate- broadcasted at week 7 at 30g/m² followed with light irrigation
4. Wuxal macromix- foliar spray at 16ml/16l every 2 weeks at week 3, 5 and 7
5. Wuxal calcibor- foliar spray at 16ml/16l every 2 weeks at week 9, 11 and 13
   - ✓ Point to note- Soil applied fertilisers complimented with foliar fertilisers will give the best results. Never replace soil applied fertilisers with foliar fertilisers

Insects

Problem	**Control**
Thrips (*Thrips tabaci*)	Abamectin, Imidacloprid, Acetamiprid, Malathion, Dichlorvos, Deltamethrin
Aphids (*Aphis spp*)	Dimethoate, Diazinon, Dichlorvos, Malathion, Acetamiprid, Imidacloprid, Thiamethoxam
Cutworms (*Agrotis spp*)	Chlopyrifos, Lambda cyhalothrin, Carbaryl, Deltamethrin
Leafminer (*Liriomyza nietzkei*)	Abamectin, Imidacloprid, Acetamiprid, Malathion, Dichlorvos, Deltamethrin, Emamectin benzoate, Flubendiamide
Onion fly, maggots (*Delia antiqua*)	Diazinon, Abamectin, Acetamiprid, Imidacloprid, Dichlorvos, Emamectin benzoate, Lufenuron, Acephate
Wireworms (*Agriotes spp*)	Lambda, Deltamethrin, Chlorpyrifos,

Fungal Diseases

Damping off (*Pythium*, *Rhizoctonia* & *Fusarium* spp)	Captan, Copper oxychloride, Mancozeb, Thiram, Metalaxyl
Downey mildew (*Peronospora destructor*)	Mancozeb, Copper oxychloride, Chemlaxyl
Powdery mildew (*Leveillula taurica*)	Mancozeb, Copper oxychloride, Chemlaxyl, Chlorothalonil, Tebuconazole, Difenoconazole, Propiconazole

Purple Blotch (*Alternaria porri*)	Mancozeb, Copper oxychloride, Chemlaxyl, Chlorothalonil, Tebuconazole, Difenoconazole, Propiconazole
White tip (*Phytophtora porri*)	Mancozeb, Copper oxychloride, Chemlaxyl, Chlorothalonil, Propineb, Azoxystrobin,
Botrytis leaf blight (*Botrytis squamosa*)	Mancozeb, Copper oxychloride, Chemlaxyl, Chlorothalonil
Rust (*Puccinia allii*)	Mancozeb, Copper oxychloride, Tebuconazole, Difenoconazole, Propiconazole
Onion Smut (*Urocystis cepulae*)	Plant certified seed
Bacterial diseases	
Sour skin (*Pseudomonas cepacla*)	Avoid excessive use of nitrogen Keep crops free from pests and diseases Hybrids have better bacterial disease tolerant Plant certified seed Use Acibenzolar-S-methyl Harvest onions during dry conditions
Slippery skin (*Pseudomonas gladioli*)	
Soft rot (*Erwinia carotovora*)	
Viral diseases	
Irish yellow spot	Keep crop free from sap sucking pests (Aphids, Thrips etc)
Yellow dwarf	
Storage diseases	
Smudge(Colletotrichum dematium)	• Hybrids are highly tolerant to storage diseases. • Avoid humidity >75% and temperature >16ºC during storage. • Avoid excessive nitrogen use during production. • Promote air circulation to prevent condensation on the bulbs. • Avoid harvesting during moist conditions. • Dry onions as quick as possible after harvesting
Neck rot (Botrytis aclada)	
Blue mold (Penicillium spp)	
Black mold (Aspergillus niger)	
Non parasitic disorders	
Chimera	Caused by genetic disorder
Hail damage	Caused by hail damage
Sunscald	Caused by bulb exposure to direct sunlight at high temperatures
Splitting and cracking	Caused by excessive use of fertilisers and over irrigation
Bolting	Caused by temperature changes. Especially when low temperatures are experienced during 3-4 real leaf stage. Hybrids are tolerant to bolting

Program

Planting date					**Variety**		
Plant pop		**Area**			**Spacing**		
Week after emergence	**Age**	**Date**	**Herbicides/ 16l**	**Fertilisers/ m²**	**Pesticides/ 16l knapsack**	**Fungicides/ 16l knapsack**	**Foliar sprays/ 16l knapsack**
Transplant			Metolachlor 120ml	Compound C 100g Rotten manure 5kg	Lambda 16ml	Copper 80g	
1	7				Dichlorvos 16ml	Antracol 32g	

2	14			MAP 10g	Abamectin 16ml	Acomil 50g	Winstart 160g
3	21		Oxyfluofen 160ml		Imidacloprid 16ml	Orius 16ml	Winstart 160g
4	28			AN(NH_4NO_3) 30g	Chess 8g	Copper 80g	Wingrow 160g
5	35				Aceta + Ema 16ml	Bravo 32ml	Wingrow 160g
6	42			PN(KNO_3) 15g	Dichlorvos 16ml	Antracol 32g	Wingrow 160g
7	49				Abamectin 16ml	Acomil 50g	Winbloom 160g
8	56			PN(KNO_3) 15g	Imidacloprid 16ml	Orius 16ml	Calcibor 80ml
9	63				Chess 8g	Copper 80g	Winbloom 160g
10	70			Calcium nitrate 15g	Aceta + Ema 16ml	Bravo 32ml	Calcibor 80ml
11	77				Dichlorvos 16ml	Antracol 32g	Winbloom 160g
12	84				Abamectin 16ml	Acomil 50g	Calcibor 80ml
13	91				Imidacloprid 16ml	Orius 16ml	
14	98				Chess 8g		
15	105						
16	112						
17	119						

AGRICULTURAL
Marketing Authority
Promoting Sustainable Agricultural Development

WEEKLY COMMODITY MARKET BULLETIN

Bulletin Number 15 of 2025
Date of Issue: 11 April 2025

GRAINS AND OILSEEDS

Table 1: Grains Producer Prices

Product	Buyer	Purchase Price (US$/t)	Contact Details	Payment
Maize	GMB	US$376.48	0242-701885-99	Transfer
Sorghum	GMB (White)	US$376.48	0242-701885-99	Transfer
	Delta (Red)	-	0712639336	Cash/Transfer
	Grainco	-	0719834782	Cash/Transfer
Rapoko	GMB	US$376.48	0242-704538	Transfer
Millet	GMB	US$376.48	0242-701885-99	Transfer
Sugar beans	Mega Market	-	0773014791	Cash/Transfer
	Ace Field	US$1 450.00	0772956010	Cash/Transfer
	Grainco	US$1 450.00	0719834782	Cash/Transfer
	GMB	US$750.00	0242-701885-99	Cash/Transfer
	Nutrie Foods	US$1 400.00	0773210307	Transfer
	ProBrands	-	0775265862	-
Wheat	GMB- (Grade A)	US$470.00	0242-701885-99	Cash/Transfer
	GMB- (Other Grades)	US$451.35	0242-701885-99	Cash/Transfer
	PHI	-	0773381825	-

HORTICULTURE

Table 3: Horticultural Produce Wholesale Prices as 11 April 2025 at Harare Mbare - Musika and Bulawayo CBD Market.

Commodity	Mbare Musika US$		Bulawayo CBD Market US$	
	04 April 2025	11 April 2025	04 April 2024	11 April 2025
Potatoes (medium) (kg)	0.43	0.43	0.57	0.56
Potatoes (large) (kg)	0.57	0.57	0.65	0.65
Tomatoes (kg)	0.35	0.33	0.64	0.38
Onions (dried) (kg)	0.85	0.85	0.80	1.00
Onions (fresh) (bundle)	1.00	1.00	1.50	1.50
Butternuts (kg)	0.55	0.50	0.70	0.75
Broccoli (kg)	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00
Lettuce (per head)	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00
Cauliflower (per kg)	2.00	2.00	2.50	2.50
Cabbages (per head)	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00
Covo (6.5kg)	4.00	4.00	1.00	1.00
Sugar beans (kg)	1.63	1.88	2.15	2.15
Groundnuts (with shells) (kg)	0.38	0.38	0.45	0.45
Groundnuts (without shells)	1.45	1.45	1.75	1.75
Wheat (20kg)	14.00	14.00	12.00	12.00
Roundnuts (without shells)	1.70	1.70	1.88	1.88
Sunflower (20kg)	8.50	8.50	7.00	7.00
Finger Millet (per kg)	1.05	1.20	2.00	2.00
Sorghum (per kg)	0.40	0.35	0.45	0.45
Sweet Potatoes (20l tin)	17.50	12.00	10.00	8.00
Soyabeans (20l)	8.00	8.00	13.00	13.00
Carrots (per kg)	1.00	1.00	1.50	1.50
Cucumbers (per kg)	0.50	0.50	0.67	0.67
Maize (dried) (20l tin)	8.50	8.50	8.00	8.00
Green mealies (dozen)	1.50	1.50	4.00	4.00
Apples (local) (kg)	1.22	0.89	1.78	1.56
Bananas (kg)	0.56	0.56	0.67	0.61
Watermelon (head)	2.50	2.50	2.00	2.00
Oranges (kg)	0.80	0.80	1.20	0.80
Garlic (kg)	5.00	5.00	10.00	10.00
Ginger (kg)	2.50	3.50	6.50	6.50
Green Pepper (kg)	2.50	2.50	0.72	0.72
Matemba (20L tin)	42.50	42.50	45.00	45.00
Mopani worms (20I tin)	135.00	135.00	70.00	70.00
Eggs (crate)	3.50	3.50	4.50	4.50
Okra (5l tin)	2.50	2.50	2.00	2.00
Broilers (per bird)	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00

NB- Market prices were provided by Emkambo.

LIVESTOCK & MEAT

Table 6: Beef wholesale prices as of 11 April 2025

Product	Price (US$/kg)			
	Manufacturing		Economy	
	Koala Meats	PHI Meats	Koala Meats	PHI Meats
Forequarter	-	2.10	-	2.80
Hindquarter	-	2.70	-	3.00
Side	-	1.82	-	2.90

Product	Price (US$/kg)			
	Commercial/Choice		Super	
	Koala Meats	PHI Meats	Koala Meats	PHI Meats
Forequarter	-	3.62	-	5.23
Hindquarter	-	4.08	-	6.38
Side	-	3.35	-	4.52

OFFALS	Price (US$/kg)	
	PHI	BINDER
Casings	1.15	-
Liver	3.70	4.00
Oxtail	9.72	5.00
Guru	2.40	-
Lungs	1.40	-
Kidney	4.03	-
Heel Set	4.60	7.00
Reeds	0.46	-
Big Heads	9.20	12.00
Hearts	2.07	-
Trimmings	2.88	-
Bybles	1.15	-
Goat Head	-	-
Goat Set	2.50	-
Goat	3.40	-
Melts	1.50	-

Table 7: Beef Producer Prices

Grade	Koala Meats Price (USD) per kg	MC Meats Price (USD) per kg	Surrey Abattoir Price (USD) per kg
Super(feedlot)	-	-	-
Super	3.90	4.50	4.50
Choice	3.20	2.80	2.85
Commercial	3.20	2.80	2.80
Economy	2.45	2.30	2.45
Manufacturing	1.35	1.20	1.30

Table 8: Goats and Sheep Producer Prices

Grade	Goats Price (USD) per kg		Sheep Price (USD) per kg			
	MC Meats	Surrey Abattoir	MC Meats	Surrey Abattoir	MC Meats	Surrey Abattoir
			LAMB		MUTTON	
Super	3.05	2.20	4.80	6.00	2.80	2.20
Choice	2.90	2.10	4.30	4.50	2.30	2.10
Standard	2.55	1.60	3.30	1.60	2.10	1.60
Inferior	2.10	0.80	1.80	0.80	1.80	0.80
Mutton Mutton	-		-	-	2.10	-

Table 9: Pork Producer Price

Surrey Abattoir per kg	Price as at 11 April 2025 (US$)
Super Pork	2.95
Manufacturing	1.95

Table 10: Milk Producer Price by Processor

Company	Price as at 11 April 2025 (US$)
Dairiboard	0.58
Dendairy	0.60
Kefalos	0.56
Nestle	0.60
Prodairy	0.58

Source: ZADF

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NAME OF SOCIETY	SHOW DATES
Bulawayo Agric Society /ZITF	21 - 26 April 2025
Lowveld Show Society	31/7-02/08/25
Mash West Agric Show Society	06 - 09 August 2025
Mat North Agric Show Society	06 - 09 August 2025
Midlands Show Society	14 - 17 August 2025
Mat South Agric Show Society	28 - 30 August 2025
Zimbabwe Agric Society	25 - 30 August 2025
Mashonaland East Show Society	10 - 13 September 2025
Chipinge Show Society	11 - 14 September 2025
Manicaland Agric Show Society	18 - 20 September 2025
Masvingo Provincial Show Society	25 - 28 September 2025

NB: These dates are subject to change.
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Source: NAASSZ

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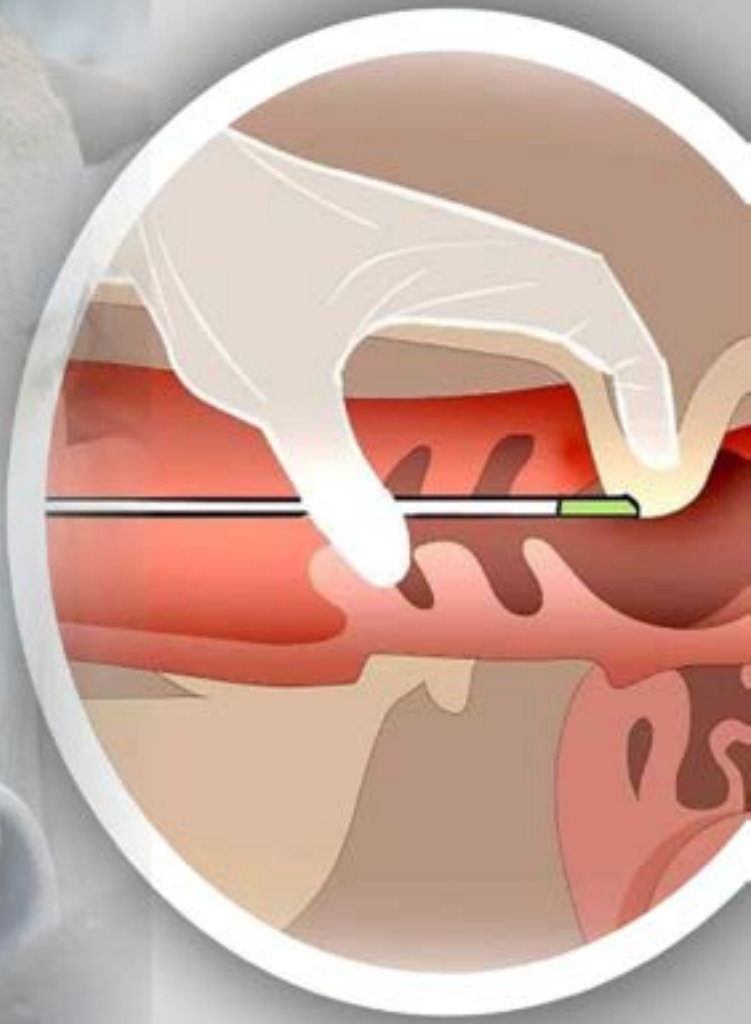

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