

Zambia Dairy Transformation Programme

APRIL 2018 NEWSLETTER



IN BRIEF

Fodder grown on demo plots ensiled

Maize and sorghum crops that we have been supporting farmers to grow on 30 demonstration plots have now been harvested, chopped and ensiled in silage pits. The ZDTP team and farmers are looking forward to opening the pits from May onwards and recording the benefits to cow condition and milk production that materialise.

IN BRIEF

Great outcome for Kwanshama

Business management support services provided as part of the ZDTP have resulted in increased revenue from water sales in Kwanshama. Alternate income streams are one of the key ways in which cooperative sustainability can be assured and this is something our two Cooperative Business Support Officers are discussing with our target cooperatives.

IN BRIEF

Focus on affordable on-farm nutrition

Jørgen Henriksen, our Dairy Farm Management Specialist, has been working closely with the field team to encourage farmers to feed animals strategically and produce more on-farm feed in order to decrease production costs. His suggestions are currently being incorporated into a series of fact sheets.



Milk quality workshop

ZDTP milk specialist Greg Braggins, left, held a two-day workshop for field staff in collaboration with the programme's Dairy Farm Management Specialist (third from right) during his four-week trip to Zambia in March/April. The aim was to build capacity in milk quality, promote cross-programme support and start developing helpful fact sheets. Read more about Greg's milk quality visit on page 2.

Welcome to the latest edition of our monthly newsletter, which summarises activities carried out under the Zambia Dairy Transformation Programme (ZDTP) in April 2018.



Monthly overview

Work carried out during the ZDTP's first agricultural season has resulted in a number of benefits, including improved knowledge of farmers about crops that can provide nutritional benefits to cattle. We have also had significant interest and uptake of fodder conservation, such as hay and silage making as a result of pit and barrel silage making demonstrations carried out by our team of Extension Officers across the ZDTP's six target cooperatives (Bamakasi, Chibombo, Liteta, Fisenge, Kwanshama and Mufulira). We've also seen the effectiveness of working alongside farmers from 'seed to feed', with a focus on home-grown nutrition. This approach is giving our field team a deeper understanding of some of the challenges faced by farmers such as sourcing labour, accessing affordable farm inputs and linking fodder production to the nutritional requirements of their herds.

Driving further commercialisation of the smallholder-based Zambian dairy sector

Milk quality visit

ZDTP milk specialist Greg Braggins spent four weeks in Zambia from March 23 conducting milk quality visits. His objective was to understand current milk handling and hygiene practices and identify areas for improvement. Greg spent three days with each of the ZDTP's Extension Officers, who collectively provide extension support to farmers and Milk Collection Centres associated with Bamakasi, Chibombo, Liteta, Fisenge, Kwanshama and Mufulira Cooperatives. In total, Greg and the extension team conducted 43 farm visits, which were mostly carried out during milking. He also visited the associated Milk Collection Centres. Each three-day visit culminated in a 'Milk Quality Planning Meeting' attended by the Senior Dairy Field Extension Officer and relevant Extension and Cooperative Business Support Officers as a way of identifying and agreeing with respective Cooperative Boards on the areas of milk quality improvement the ZDTP will focus on over the coming months. Greg also held a workshop for ZDTP staff in Kabwe, part of which was attended by Extension Officers from the Dairy Association of Zambia (DAZ) and Zammilk. Work over the coming months will focus on putting governance and management systems in place to support the implementation of milk handling, storage and hygiene Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). In tandem, work will start on the development of these SOPs, ensuring they are aligned to Zambia Bureau of Standards (ZABS) standards, current legislation and international good practice.

Farmer spotlight

Getrude Mwila, a member of Bamakasi Cooperative, cares for a dairy cow and calf on her farm. ZDTP milk specialist Greg Braggins visited Getrude's property in April and found her dairy cow and calf in "excellent" condition. Greg commended Getrude's approach to animal husbandry, with food and water available 24/7, and her hygienic approach to milking preparation.



Silage demonstrations

Thirty silage demonstration days were held on demonstration plots during March and April as part of the ZDTP's 'seed to feed' initiative, focusing on home-grown nutrition. The demonstration days were attended by 361 community members (194 men and 167 women) from all six of the ZDTP's target farmer cooperatives. Fodder on all plots was chopped using mechanised choppers. These included low-cost motorised choppers being tested by ZDTP, a mechanised hand-operated chaff cutter modified for Kwanshama and other engine powered machines hired from local farmers. Using these choppers helped demonstrate to farmers the benefits mechanisation can bring to silage preparation and that 'the hiring out of forage choppers' is a possible business opportunity to support farmers to raise cash to develop their own farm enterprises. We are hoping that farmers will feed the silage collected to their cattle over the coming months, ideally selecting animals at the start of their lactation period to support strategic feeding and improve overall lactation milk yields.

We hope you have found this edition of the ZDTP newsletter informative and welcome any questions or comments you may have. For further information, please contact ZDTP Country Manager Tania Thomson on tania@primeconsultants.net or +260 96 456 4206.

The ZDTP is focused on supporting dairy farmers to improve their productivity, milk quality and linkages to urban markets. The views expressed in this publication are those of the implementers of the programme and do not necessarily reflect those of the New Zealand Government.