

Zambia Dairy Transformation Programme

SEPTEMBER 2018 NEWSLETTER



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

Left: Using a hand-operated motorised chopper during a silage making demonstration at the Mazzieli community plot in Kwanshama.

Monthly overview

We recently completed a summary of our activities carried out and outcomes achieved during the six-month period from 1 April to 30 September 2018.

In general, at this stage of the programme lifecycle, it appears the ZDTP is having a very positive effect on both farmer confidence and dairy management practices within its six target farmer cooperatives.

Farmers within the six cooperatives, Bamakasi, Chibombo, Liteta, Fisenge, Kwanshama and Mufulira, reported a 33 per cent increase in the value of their milk sales between May 2017 and April 2018 compared with the previous 12-month period.

Total milk volumes produced by farmers who supply the six target cooperatives have reportedly increased by 20 per cent, which comes down to the addition of new suppliers, increased volumes from cows due to improved nutrition (such as silage, or strategic feeding), increases to the number of animals in the milking herd and farmer adoption of one or more ZDTP-promoted practice, such as silage production and feeding or on-farm mastitis detection.

Excitement is brewing for the 2018/19 farming season. In particular, following the implementation of 30 fodder demonstration plots and the production of resulting silage, many farmers are enthusiastic about the prospect of growing their own crops to make silage during the upcoming farming season.

Farmer enthusiasm for forage conservation

As part of our efforts to promote silage production as an important part of smallholder dairy farming (given it is a low-cost solution for nutrition during the 'dry season'), we are very encouraged by the number of farmers who reported during our Year Two Benchmarking Survey that they would grow crops and make silage during 2018/19. By July 2018, just under 20 per cent of the households we work with said they had already made silage and an additional 38 per cent reported that they would carry out this technology before April 2019. ZDTP extension staff are already helping farmers prepare for the 2018/19 growing season and we are planning to carry out some more demonstration plots, which this year will focus on demonstrating the differences in yields between different varieties of fodder and pasture species.

Attendant training at Milk Collection Centres

As well as focusing on 'on farm' practices, we've also been identifying how practices at the Milk Collection Centres associated with our target cooperatives could be improved. As part of this effort, Greg Braggins, our Milk Quality Expert, carried out training sessions for Milk Attendants in Bamakasi, Chibombo, Liteta and Fisenge during his visit from 20 August to 7 September. During the training, which in some cases was attended by Cooperative Board members, he observed current practices and provided recommendations for improvement. Marvellous and Ngolwe, our Business Support Officers, are supporting Cooperative Boards to draft job descriptions and develop Standard Operating Procedures, which will support the continuation of these improved practices and align with standards expected by milk processors.



Above: Greg Braggins, right, talking with Milk Attendants at the Milk Collection Centre in Fisenge.

Implementation of 'on farm' milk hygiene recommendations

As reported in previous newsletters, the ZDTP team and farmers we work with have benefitted from advice provided by Greg Braggins (our Milk Quality Expert). Greg's farm visits have resulted in us developing a list of practices which support good 'on farm' hygiene and which we can monitor progress against:

- Ensure hot water for cleaning cans and buckets is not mixed with unchlorinated well water
- Dry udders with a clean towel (or tissue) for each cow
- Apply lubricant/salve to teat
- Use teat dip
- Drain utensils for drying in the sun after careful washing
- Practice better mastitis detection, including use of the 'Sunlight' formula (see the August edition of the newsletter) as a Rapid Mastitis Test
- Ensure that all milk containers are in good shape and made of materials that can be hygienically cleaned.

The most commonly reported practice across the ZDTP's six target cooperatives is using a drying rack.

The practice which farmers find most difficult to apply is the use of teat dip due to its poor availability/affordability.

Access to affordable teat dip is one initiative the ZDTP's business and farm extension teams will be working on over the coming months.

All activities implemented under the ZDTP continue to have sustainability in mind, with a focus on interventions being affordable, available, accessible and appropriate for/adapted to the smallholder farming context.

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. For further information, please contact ZDTP Country Manager Tania Thomson on tania@primeconsultants.net or +260 96 456 4206.