



The Commercial Farmers Union of Zimbabwe  
**AgriZim**

Published 12 times a year by the Commercial Farmers Union of Zimbabwe.

The Commercial Farmers Union is proud to announce the launch of AgriZim - the monthly farming magazine. As the publication develops over the coming months, we hope to create a useful and informative magazine packed with farming-related articles to keep producers right up to date with the latest developments in the industry. We aim to deliver quality advertising exposure to the commercial agricultural sector in Zimbabwe.

We look forward to receiving your support.

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**CFU MEMBERSHIP**

Membership per annum is US\$600 for anyone still farming, US\$100 if you are no longer farming, and US\$10 if you are no longer farming and are over 70 years of age.

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**QUOTE, UNQUOTE...**

"Farming looks mighty easy when your plow is a pencil and you're a thousand miles from the corn field."

- Dwight D Eisenhower

# AgriZim

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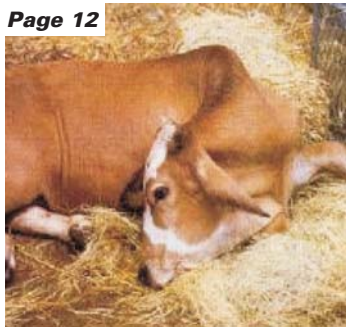
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# FOREWORD

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Firstly, a big thank you to everyone who made the publication of this first issue possible!

Over the past 12 years Zimbabweans, businesses, institutions and structures have suffered tremendously under government's failed and often misguided policies. One of the casualties was The Farmer magazine, and I am therefore pleased that the CFU has managed to produce this first edition of *AgriZim*.

There is little as gratifying as sitting on the loo and reading a farming magazine.

The newspapers, internet, news bulletins etc are full of stories of conflict, corruption, despair and death. Anything controversial that will sell. This magazine should be for farmers, and concentrate on farming issues. Sure - I see members discussing land reform and compensation as it affects us all, but the focus - as a farming magazine - should be on farming issues and the way forward.

It should keep us updated on current farming issues. Research, extension, finances, the economy, management systems, prices, animal health and diseases, selection methods, pesticides, herbicides, parasites, vaccinations, veld management, new machinery and equipment, new and future technologies, embryos, cross breeding, muscling, labour, value addition, biodiversity, climate change, the effect of cheap imports, new cultivars, top genetics, competitiveness and efficiency throughout the value chain, markets, solar energy, new legislation, the state of our 'acquired' farms, etc.

We need updates on our conservancies. What is the state of the dairy industry; the beef industry; sheep; pigs; goats; poultry; crocodiles; game; ostriches; horticulture; row crops; plantations etc?

We need to know what opportunities and threats are out there for me as a farmer, or as an ex farmer.

What is happening in South Africa, Angola, Namibia, the DRC, Malawi, Botswana, Uganda, Sudan, Nigeria, Mozambique, Zambia etc, and do any of these countries offer me consultancy or farming opportunities as a dispossessed farmer?

What is happening on "resettled farms?" Let's interview the beneficiaries and publish facts and figures.

Lets dispel the perceptions of what we owned and how we acquired it.

Let's have updates and discussions on current affairs taking place that affect us (ie the Constitution, indigenisation, ZESA, ZINWA, wages, taxes,



**"This magazine should be for farmers, and concentrate on farming issues."**

legislation), and lets allow farmers to voice their opinions.

Classified advertising, auctions, shows, photographs of prize animals and crops.

Am I dreaming? Yes and no.

Somehow we need to retain our optimism in these uncertain times, yet remain realistic.

May this magazine grow from strength to strength!

Deon Theron  
President  
CFU

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Deon Theron'. The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font and is positioned to the right of the printed name and title.

## Introduction to the Agricultural Recovery Proposal

**W**e at the CFU some 8 months ago were tasked with creating a compensation/restitution package for our community. It became very clear to us early on in our deliberations with both the local and international community that:-

- a) The government were not in any position to pay and;
- b) The donor community were not going to come up with a blank cheque to cover our damages.

We were therefore left with a dilemma of how we do this. The obvious way to do this is by reestablishing values not only on the land itself but on all assets within our country to create new flows of money, thus enabling the fiscus to be able to compensate the farmers on a cost recovery basis.

Over the last 10 years of hyperinflation we have witnessed a number of scenarios develop:-

Firstly the local asset based debt; (mortgages etc) were effectively wiped out leaving most assets debt free with 100% positive equity.

Secondly with the demise of our currency we saw the fall of our productive base which now leaves us with huge potential in the form of a) being able to create lines of credit against our country's free asset value and b) to grow a productive base from a very low starting point. If this were to happen the impact on the economy would be massive with both international and regional companies transferring wealth to within our borders to be part of both the asset and production gain. We must also remember that traditionally the relationship between direct investment in agriculture and both supply and downstream industries was always about a 3 to 1 ratio, meaning that for every dollar directly invested

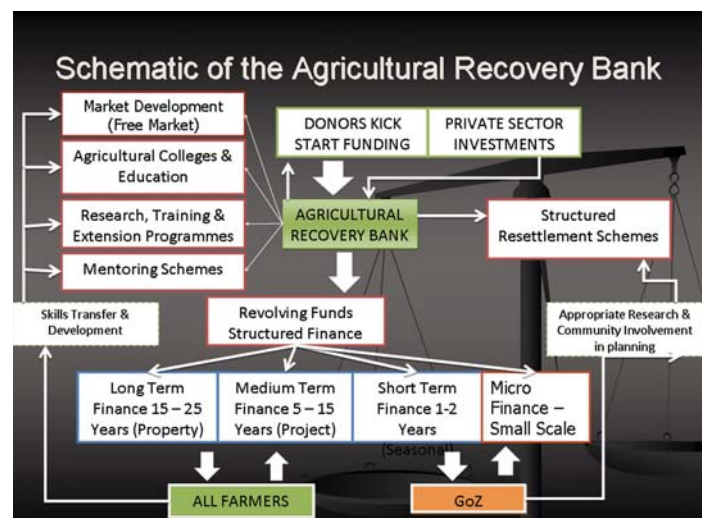
into agriculture 3 will be invested into industry. We are therefore with the right policies proposing a country solution rather than just an agricultural solution. This together with our vast mineral wealth and agricultural potential, if we get it right, Zimbabwe will be a world investor's destination of choice.

The explanation below should be read in conjunction with the numbered proposal schematic attached.

### 1) GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE

The Government would have to:-

- a) Acknowledge the debt owed by acknowledging the total figure in the acknowledged value (8) as an investment with Government which ultimately needs to be settled.
- b) Government would also have to set in place policy to enable the appointment of a land commission (4) which in turn would appoint an agricultural asset audit (5)



c) Government would also have to facilitate and enable constitutional reform (3) with a purpose of a new home grown constitution being adopted.

**2) DONOR SUPPORT**

This aspect of the scheme is essential in that the donors would be relied upon to:-

- a) Fund the land commission together with the agricultural asset audit on a grant basis
- b) Provide funding for the agricultural recovery bank (6) through a revolving fund;
- c) Donor support would also be needed to kick start the interest payments on the investment block (8) in order to create real value of the investment itself.

**3) CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM**

This is a prerequisite for a Zimbabwe recovery, The constitution has been amended so many times over the last 30 years that a new all inclusive and protective constitution is required to allow for real empowerment and equal opportunity for all.

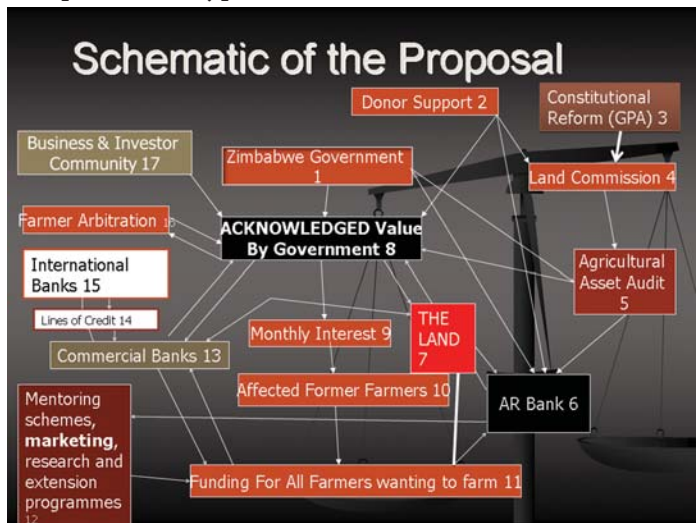
**4) LAND COMMISSION**

The land commission would have to be appointed by government to monitor and implement policy going forward on the land issue as well as the appointment of an agricultural asset audit to allow for a complete understanding of the land/ ownership occupation and value of all land in Zimbabwe.

**5) AGRICULTURE ASSET AUDIT**

This would be instituted by the land commission to:-

- a) Get a full comprehensive register on all agric land in Zimbabwe
- b) To create a full comprehensive register of owners/ occupiers on all types of tenure on all land in Zimbabwe.



**6) AGRICULTURE RECOVERY BANK**

This body is vital to the whole process of agricultural recovery through the reestablishment of land values in the country by funding an active land market. This would be achieved by

- a) Providing structured finance to all those wishing to farm including Government as per the AR Bank schematic.
- b) To fund structured resettlement schemes throughout the country. This will enable A1 beneficiaries to be moved into structured environments with schools, water, clinics, supply

networks, transport networks etc. freeing up farm land into the land market.

c) To engage displaced and or retired professional farmers in a process of skill transfers through mentoring schemes. It is envisaged that any one participating in the land bank funding will be mentored until their debt is fully paid for 2 main reasons:-

- 1) To protect the revolving fund
- 2) To empower new owners through promotion of skill and excellence within the agricultural field.
- d) To re-establish and capacitate research stations, colleges and extension services. In the main most of these centres are structurally sound they just need to be recapitated to their previous levels.
- e) To develop a free market system which can be competitive on the world stage. Zimbabwe farmers need access to all markets at all times to enable them to strategise and plan their businesses. The AR Bank would have to be managed and monitored by external institutions such as the world bank until the investment is fully paid to the original title holders

**7) THE LAND**

What has happened as a result of the fast track land reform programme is that the land value has been destroyed and whilst our land values have been destroyed our regional neighbours land has increased.

Through good policy and funding through the AR Bank (6) we can create an active competitive land market, open to all players. The net effect of this will be a regional and international transfer of value back into Zimbabwe with the ultimate result of the land itself being re-valued. By re-creating the land values this will go a long way to meeting the cost of compensation on a cost recover basis.

**8) THE ACKNOWLEDGED VALUE BY GOVERNMENT**

This is the centre of the entire scheme. The value in this block has been established by professionals as in the Valuation Consortium, which is made up of 8 firms of land valuers with local expertise, using the latest technology available. The value has been established on the premise of equivalence, in other words no better or not worse off than when the farmer was evicted. The parameters used to establish this value are the principles outlined in the UN/ FAO document and confirmed in principal by ICSID on compulsory land acquisition. These principles are outlined in the compensation proposal. Once this value has been established, it needs to be underwritten by institutions and or donors, such as the World Bank, so that it has real bankable and tradable value. Values are then apportioned against title deeds, which in effect become interest bearing bonds of a specific value until they are fully redeemed.

Effectively what this means is that the title deed now has a bankable tradable value which then allows the owner to:-

- a) Sell his title within the investor block to other investors
- b) To borrow against the value of that title to invest in other businesses
- c) To leave his title in place and earn interest as an investment

until fully redeemed. It is envisaged that once real tradable value has been established against title, international lines of credit will be opened up through local banking structures to on-lend to the title holders. The interest charged must be equivalent to the interest received through the investment block. This in essence means that the title holders would be able to achieve the value of their title before actually being compensated. Once funds are available through the cost recovery of the land market/donor/government to pay for the title, any loans outstanding will then be serviced and any payable interest will be cancelled. If this proposal were to be adopted as government policy, money through normal credit lines would begin flowing and there would be natural asset inflation. So it is important that anyone wanting to benefit from this inflationary gain must have access to funds against his title from day one.

I must make it absolutely clear that the title holder will remain the legal owner until his /or her value is fully redeemed.

#### 9) MONTHLY INTEREST

This is an amount paid to owners against their apportioned title value within their investment block. This figure would have to be negotiated, but must we feel, be equal to any charged interest a title owner would have to pay in the event he was to borrow against his title.

#### 10) AFFECTED FARMERS

These are obviously the evicted title deed holders.

#### 11) FUNDING FOR ALL FARMERS WANTING TO FARM

This is structured funding to be made available through the AR Bank (6) to all farmers wanting to farm.

#### 12) MENTORING SCHEMES

These are the schemes set up by the AR bank to:-

a) Provide employment to farmers who want to participate in a Zimbabwe recovery but do not want to actually farm themselves.

b) To transfer skills onto new and aspiring farmers to ensure success.

The AR bank would also set up funding for research and extension programmes as well as recapacitating agricultural learning centres.

#### 13) COMMERCIAL BANKS

These are crucial in accessing new lines of credit created against the secure investment block enabling on-lending to farmers who may want to borrow against the value of their title. We also see local banks participating in the funding of farming ventures, parallel to the AR Bank. We would actively encourage free market participation in the funding of both land and farming ventures.

#### 14) LINES OF CREDIT

These are the lines of credit we see being established between international banks and those of our country on the back of sound economic policies.

#### 15) INTERNATIONAL BANKS

These are the institutions which would wholesale fund local banks based on sound economic policy. It is through these lines that the Zimbabwe economic recovery process can begin.

#### 16) FARMER ARBITRATION

This is an independent panel which will be set up with the specific task of dealing with farmers who are not happy with the value accorded to their properties within the investment block. We envisage that the arbitrator's decision will be final.

#### 17) BUSINESS INVESTOR COMMUNITY

This is a sector of society we see participating in the whole recovery process by becoming active investors in both the purchase of titles for farming purposes as well as the purchase of title for investment purposes. Either way this sector is essential in recreating real values.

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## Madfish?

Scientist warns that farmed fish could be a source of mad cow disease!

In a paper that shows just how strange our modern world has become, Robert P. Friedland, neurologist from the University of Louisville, USA warns that farmed fish could be at risk of Creutzfeldt Jakob disease, or mad cow disease.

Friedland and co-authors raise the issue in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease and call on food regulators to ban feeding cow bone or meat to farmed fish until it can be determined if the practice of feeding fish cow-parts is safe.

"We have not proven that it's possible for fish to transmit the disease to humans. Still, we believe that out of



reasonable caution for public health, the practice of feeding rendered cows to fish should be prohibited," Friedland said. "Fish do very well in the seas without eating cows."

Mad cow disease is a fatal disease that can be contracted by eating parts of a cow infected with bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). After an outbreak in Britain due to infected beef, 163 people died.

"The fact that no cases of Creutzfeldt Jakob disease have been linked to eating farmed fish does not assure that feeding rendered cow parts to fish is safe," warns Friedland. "The incubation period of these diseases may last for decades, which makes the association between feeding practices and infection difficult. Enhanced safeguards need to be put in place to protect the public."

# Introducing ARAC (Agricultural Recovery And Compensation)

**“Coping with the negative effects of a short sighted and ill-conceived programme purportedly to empower a nation has led us instead to ruin and international isolation.”**



**T**he recent formation of ARAC (Agricultural Recovery and Compensation) as an affiliated association of the Commercial Farmers Union of Zimbabwe follows a prolonged period where those farmers adversely affected by the impact of the fast track land reform programme (FTLRP) had felt their Union no longer cared about them. The all too familiar concept of collateral damage in times of conflict seems to describe the sense of helplessness for many, and this has contributed to the disaffection and lack of trust that followed. This has been recognised by the current leadership of the union and the importance of finding an all inclusive resolution to the issues that have emerged from the upheaval of land reform is clearly understood. Unity of purpose in this process is particularly important for a successful outcome.

For we who are forced to face change the process can be really painful, nonetheless it is a mistake to view our problems as being exclusive; manmade problems are

everywhere. For us here the long years of struggle seem unfair and so difficult to fathom, however all of Zimbabwe has been affected as indeed a young policeman, to whom I recently gave a lift, commented, “Don't you know that your pain is my hunger!”

Coping with the negative effects of a short sighted and ill-conceived programme purportedly to empower a nation has led us instead to ruin and international isolation. The rationale for this programme was based on the pretext of righting pre-independence racial policies. Sadly the transfer of exclusion from one group to another has been confounded by the thoroughly obnoxious way in which this has been achieved. We are all left reeling and traumatised though ever hopeful that things will change for the better. That some farmers who have struggled to re-establish themselves after the loss of their farms will now find their businesses are to be targeted in a similar manner in the new Indigenisation drive

is entirely disheartening. For some the slogan that appeared on the backs of busses in 1980 “A Luta Continua!” could be aptly replaced with stickers of “A Looter continue!” on the back windows of the latest Mercedes Benzes.

That said it is important to realise that we live here largely by choice and whilst we are in a constrained environment and are unable to have significant influence over many details of our circumstances, the same is not true of our attitudes. Indeed here we remain at liberty to choose how we think and feel. Victor Frankel who was a concentration camp survivor, noted that those who made it through the experience were generally those who could see through the barbed wire to a life beyond. This spirit is the essence of true freedom and empowers us to transcend the most trying situations. In this regard we are able to take responsibility for changing the way we think about others and the things and situations that have caused us hurt. We may be able to reflect and find meaning in the challenges that we are made to face. Life is a gift and does not always come in the preferred packaging.

Most of us have heard the story of the successful farmer who on harvesting an excellent crop knocked down his barns and built bigger ones. He was satisfied with his own ability to determine his personal security and future. In the story he died and could take nothing with him. In the time since my eviction I have often reflected on this story, only it seems there was a twist to the tale in my case, as for so many of us,

we lost not our lives but the barns and assets we worked so hard at to build our security. I find a lesson in this for myself and have to ask, “Did I care as much for others as I did about myself?” Each can answer such a question for himself. On reflection I see now many things about the past that were simply a part of my default settings, as it were, that kept me blind to the reality of the place in which I lived. Much of that reality is gone and indeed in that context there is indeed a very real irreversibility. However the present situation has left our land in a thorough bind and only a significant adjustment to a more inclusive agenda will bring about lasting recovery and stability.

Truth is very often a subjective thing; however, we believe that a justice can be achieved with persistence. This is the source of our hope and from it we are encouraged to work for renewal and recovery. All of us have noticed how in the bush trees show on their trunks the scars of different seasons challenged growth: healed bark where storms or fire have set it back, or where the axe has lopped off branches and yet the trees recover for they have hidden resources: deep roots and these bring stability and resurgence.

ARAC has seen fit to choose as its emblem a deep rooted tree, with a stout trunk and strong branches. The sun rise symbolises a new dawn and the birds show that life is irrepressible.

We are committed to making the difference for our constituency and working for a better Zimbabwe for all.

# ARAC

(AGRICULTURAL RECOVERY AND COMPENSATION)

**Committed to the restoration of confidence, trust, security and dignity for our members through:**

- The recognition of our rights as citizens and investors,
- The principle of equivalence in the process of compensation for compulsory acquisition,
- The re-engagement of our skills and investment in a non discriminatory environment,
- Recognition and extension of Property Rights and security of tenure to all farmers.

**We are actively working:**

- To alleviate the situation of our poor elderly through ZEST (Zimbabwe Elderly Support Trust),
- To re-establish direct contact with all former CFU members and build a strong , unified and well informed membership,
  - Compiling business and consultant data bases,
- Looking out for projects and opportunities that can engage members skills constructively,
  - Advising members on compensation claims.

**Contact Shayne or Ben: [arac@cfuzim.org](mailto:arac@cfuzim.org)  
Tel +263 (0)4 309800 - 19, ext 249.**



# Land Tenure Reform as an Economic Development and Poverty Reduction

Dr Maxwell Mutema discusses issues facing African farmers with particular reference to land tenure reform: which one works best?



Agriculture is the dominant sector in most African countries and plays an important role in rural and overall economic development. More than 60 per cent of Africa's active labour force earns a livelihood in the agricultural sector and land makes up nearly three quarters of people's wealth. Thus, the future of Africa is closely intertwined with the development of its agricultural sector.

However, Africa's potential with respect to commercial agriculture is largely untapped, and the current status of agriculture is a source of major concern. The sector is dominated by poor smallholders, often engaged solely in subsistence agriculture while the agribusiness sector is in its infancy in most countries. Smallholders face tremendous challenges in accessing input and output markets and find themselves trapped in a vicious cycle of low income, low inputs and low

productivity. In 2006, the African average cereal yield was only 40 percent of the Southeast Asian average.

Food availability per capita has declined by 3 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa since 1990, in sharp contrast with an increase of more than 30 percent in Asia and 20 percent in Latin America. Furthermore, Africa currently imports 25 percent of its food grains. The poor performance of

African agriculture implies that the continent has been lagging behind in adapting to the structural transformation of the international agro-food market which has opened up new business opportunities for developing country producers.

Added to this already gloomy picture is climate change. It is the smallholders who shall bear the brunt of climate change most because of their slow pace and lack of capacity to adapt. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change put the extra investment and financial inflows required worldwide at US \$60 billion-US \$182 billion in 2030. The largest uncertainty is in the cost of adapting infrastructure.

The World Bank is estimating the extra costs of adapting to the projected impacts of climate change in developing

countries to range between US \$9-41 billion a year, while Oxfam International put the figure above \$50 billion a year. The most pessimistic estimate so far came from the UN Development Programme which suggested that financing requirements for adaptation in developing countries could come to \$86-109bn a year by 2015.

Taking the specific case of Zimbabwe smallholders, in semi-arid agro-ecological regions of the country, climate change is already imperilling their survival. Yet, strategies to combat it already exist: switching to millet and sunflower, planting shorter season maize varieties, changing plant spacing, applying appropriate fertilisers at the right time, using insecticides and rotating cereals with legumes. While the smallholders are aware and recognise the benefits of these strategies they cite cash, risk, labour and input supplies as major constraints to their adoption.

Given the scenario in the preceding section and the critical role of land and agriculture to the economic development of Africa, it is important that whatever tenure system is in place confers security to landholders and users to unlock the value of that land and encourage economic development.

#### Africa's Tenurial Structures

There are three broad tenurial classifications in Africa as follows:

(a) A landholding system based upon community values: the traditions of community control for subsistence, security and continuity. A system displaying land resource allocation for kinship or family cohesion and survival, revealing paramount community, clan or family rights, interests and loyalties transcending those of the individual; resource use by the kinship group, descent group or extended family. This is an ancient and autochthonous relationship, more socio-political in nature than merely tenurial or economic consideration; pre-capitalist, pre-socialist, preindustrial, pre-nation state; essentially rural; evident worldwide but now frequently a residual category in longterm decline but still with a wide prevalence in Africa and other developing countries. Also commonly referred to as the customary system.

(b) A landholding system based upon the principle of private property, accepting private enterprise and the personal profit motive as the guiding dynamic but with checks and balances. General emphasis on individualised, negotiable interests; essentially capitalist, increasingly commercialised and market oriented, but with institutionalised frame-work-planning allowing state or local government intervention with national, regional or local planning perspectives. It is a hallmark of the colonial era.

(c) A landholding system based upon the principle of state ownership of land together with the other factors of production; Land is seen as an exclusively national asset and with the objectives of land use tied closely to national ambitions; to political or economic advantage at a national level. An integral part of the command economy with group incentives and benefits, necessitating a structure of collectivised, nonnegotiable interests with comprehensive, central planning in detail. This was the system of first

## Fact Box

*The concentration of hunger in rural areas suggests that no sustained reduction in hunger is possible without special emphasis on agricultural and rural development*

*Productivity-driven growth in agriculture can have a strong positive impact on the rural non-farm economy by boosting demand for locally produced non-agricultural goods and by keeping prices low.*

*Source: FAO, The State of Food Insecurity in the World. 2006*

Major Issues and Trends	Action Required
Strong customary and colonial legacy, colonial administration, structures and legislation. Very low % land subject to title.	Land redistribution and restitution where great inequities remain.
Legal pluralism with many conflicting and overlapping law and systems for land administration, establishing land claims and conflict resolution.	Gradual formalisation of local land rights through decentralised land administration and accountable processes. Build bridges between customary and statutory rights, to provide greater security to former.
Common property resources key to poorer groups.	Provide greater security to poor and vulnerable groups.
Majority of urban dwellers living in slums.	Address implications of high HIV/AIDS prevalence on land issues.
Major disparity within the continent between:	Strengthen alternative sources of credit.
1) E & S Africa where large scale alienation of land by colonial powers, commercial farmers and national parks.	Establish and protect rights over common property.
2) W Africa, where limited white settlement, continued strength of customary powers, overlaid by sequence of legal, political and institutional changes.	Support negotiation between state and local people to ensure consensus.
3) North Africa, where a legacy of strong central government control has meant few incentives for local management.	Strengthen women land rights in both local/customary and formal systems. Reform land policy.

choice at attainment of independence by most African countries as it was seen as a means of breaking away from the colonial past. It is no longer a favourite of most countries in recent years as it has been found to stifle investment in the agricultural sector. The key distinguishing features of the three systems

Category (b) based upon private property carries within itself a mechanism for continuous adjustment or readjustment: namely the land market.

Category (a) although never entirely static, has traditionally resisted any adjustment or readjustment mechanism; whilst category (c) rejects all factor markets in favour of centralised bureaucratic control.

Major land policy issues and trends in Africa

As Africa seek to find solutions to a plethora of land tenure reform and agriculture related problems the following are important points to remember:

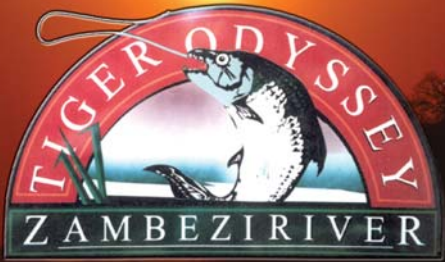
- World agriculture is expected to produce as much food in the next 25 years as has been produced in the last 10 000 years due to large increase in world population, most of it in Africa and developing countries where agricultural systems are already struggling to provide sufficient food.

- Many countries in Africa are working on the inequities of the past (including land inequities) and lessons must be learnt across countries.

- Land tenure reform decisions take time. Politicians are not aware of this and they need guidance. In fact any decision to do with the land has to be long term.

- Scientific agricultural productivity increase between 1920 and 1990 was backed up by expanding the area under cultivation but there is no more or very limited suitable land on which production can be expanded. In terms of cultivable land expansion the world is fiddling on the edges. Faced with such a myriad of challenges innovation in agriculture is the only way forward if the world, and in particular Africa, is to be food self-sufficient one day.


- As one agriculture pundit puts it and I quote "it is better to have the right number and calibre of farmers who are efficient than a large number that is a huge resource drain to a country."



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**ADVERTISE TODAY**

# Agrizim

The Commercial Farmers Union is proud to announce the launch of Agrizim - the monthly farming magazine. As the publication develops over the coming months, we hope to create a useful and informative magazine packed with farming-related articles to keep producers right up to date with the latest developments in the industry. We aim to deliver quality advertising exposure to the commercial agricultural sector in Zimbabwe.

**Don't miss this golden opportunity to support the farming community.**

Our monthly rates are as follows:

Page Size	Full Colour
A4 portrait	\$500
A5 landscape	\$300
Third/Column	\$190
Half Column	\$120

**We look forward to receiving your support.**

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## Botulism in Cattle



**Cattle of all ages are susceptible to botulism, which is characterised by a progressive muscle weakness (paralysis). Affected animals may be weak, stagger about, or go down. In most cases the disease is fatal although some animals may recover. When a large amount of toxin has been ingested, the animal may be found dead without having shown any signs of disease.**

### **Aetiology (Cause)**

- Ingestion of preformed nerve toxin (neurotoxin)
- Neurotoxin is formed by bacteria called *Clostridium botulinum*.
- It is the basis of Botox!!!

### **Epidemiology**

- Feed preparation or storage allows multiplication of organism which then produces toxin (anaerobic ie no air or decomposing silage)
- Contamination of feed with carrion containing the toxin
- Consumption of toxin containing carrion on pasture by phosphorous deficient animals.

Fig 1 This carcass may contain botulism toxin cattle deficient in phosphorus will eat these bones.

### **Epidemiology cont**

- Drinking water contaminated with carcasses which contain the toxin.
- Shrinking dams with rotting vegetation in which toxin is formed.
- Chicken litter as a feed source (this is a major cause!!!!)
- Risk factors often result in multiple cases: starvation, phosphorous deficiency, animals drinking from contaminated dam

**FIG 1**



- Rare cases occur from toxin production by organism in the intestine or wounds

### **Clinical Findings**

- Early muscle tremors (often unnoticed)
- Progressive weakness usually starting from hind quarters progressing to forequarters and neck/ head
- Eventual full motor paralysis leading to recumbency
- Dilation of pupils and drooping eyelid

Fig 2 Cow paralysed in the hind quarters but showing signs of trying to get up on front legs.



FIG 2

**Clinical Findings cont**

- Drooping ears
- Neck turned to side (similar to milk fever)
- Weak tongue retraction
- Sensation and alertness are retained till death
- Passing manure and urination retained
- Death results from respiratory paralysis

Fig 3 Classic sign of neck turned to the side.

Fig 4 An easy test for botulism – when the tongue is pulled

FIG 3



out, it remains extended.

**Post Mortem Findings**

- No specific post mortem findings
- Differential Diagnosis (diseases with similar clinical findings)
- Milk fever
- Tick paralysis
- Paralytic rabies



FIG 4

- Theileriosis
- Heartwater
- Organophosphate poisoning

**Diagnostic confirmation**

- Clinical signs indicative
- Absolute diagnosis is by demonstration of toxin in blood or feed (not available in Zimbabwe)

**Treatment**

- Type specific anti serum (not available in Zimbabwe)
- Supportive care

**Control**

- Avoidance of exposure by feed management
- Mineral blocks for cattle on veld
- Best control method is vaccination (minimum of 2 weeks before exposure to contaminated feed). Vaccine is one the ones available on the EU Stabex 95 program
- Don't forget initial vaccination requires a booster

**IN THE NEWS  
Strange But True**

***Fries With That?***

*The hog-farming Fox family of Mahaska County, Iowa, USA which for 10 years has been selling vials of boar semen for artificially inseminating sows, recently expanded its operation to include a drive-through window for farmers in a hurry. Said Genette Fox of the playfulness of customers, "Order of semen and fries' - I've heard that a million times."*

***Good Use For Bad Chicken?***

*A restaurant owner in Edinburgh, Scotland, was unsuccessful in his appeal of Karen McNulty's judgement against him. McNulty, 29, had won about \$7,700 in damages after eating salmonella-infected chicken curry at the restaurant; the restaurateur had argued that McNulty was overweight at the time and thus that the 21 pounds she lost after being hospitalized actually helped her.*

***Unionized Goats?***

*In July, a Teamsters local in Oakland, Calif., protested Mills College's use of goats to clear brush on its land. Since the union has a contract with Mills, a Teamsters official said the college should either replace the goats with its members, or unionize the goats.*

## Commodities Forum 2010

The Commodities Forum 2009 was deemed to be so successful in bringing together like-minded producers and stakeholders that the NADF, Zimbabwe Crop Producers' Association, (ZCPA) and the Cattle Producers' Association (CPA) agreed to combined effort and resources to organize and host the Commodities Forum 2010 at Troutbeck Hotel, Nyanga from the 5th – 7th July 2010.

Technical presentations were given on the Monday and included topics on Animal Diseases, Scours, Herd Health Programme and Milk Quality for the livestock sector and Alternative methods of Ensiling Forages, Groundnut Production and an update on Projects for the crop sector.

Presentations were given by both local and South African speakers and all were very informative and well received.

Mr. Mike Black, deputy Chairman of the Milk Producer's Organization of South Africa, officially opened the Commodities Forum 2010 at a cheese and wine cocktail on the Monday evening.

Tuesday morning started with a closed session for members to hold their respective AGM's and formalize offices bearers for the coming year.

The general session opened after tea with the Commodity Chairmen giving their annual reports and commodity related reports given by the respective personalities.

A Market Report on grain crops was given by Roy Ormerod from Croplink. Handling Indigenization was covered by E. Chikaka from Tetrad and H. Olivier gave a CFU update. These were all excellent and informative presentations.

During the morning session the ladies enjoyed talks on "You are what you eat" and a demonstration of Resin Products.

Tuesday afternoon was set aside for social activities such as golf, tennis, bowls and fishing.

Tuesday night was the dinner/dance function which included the announcement of the various commodities awards.

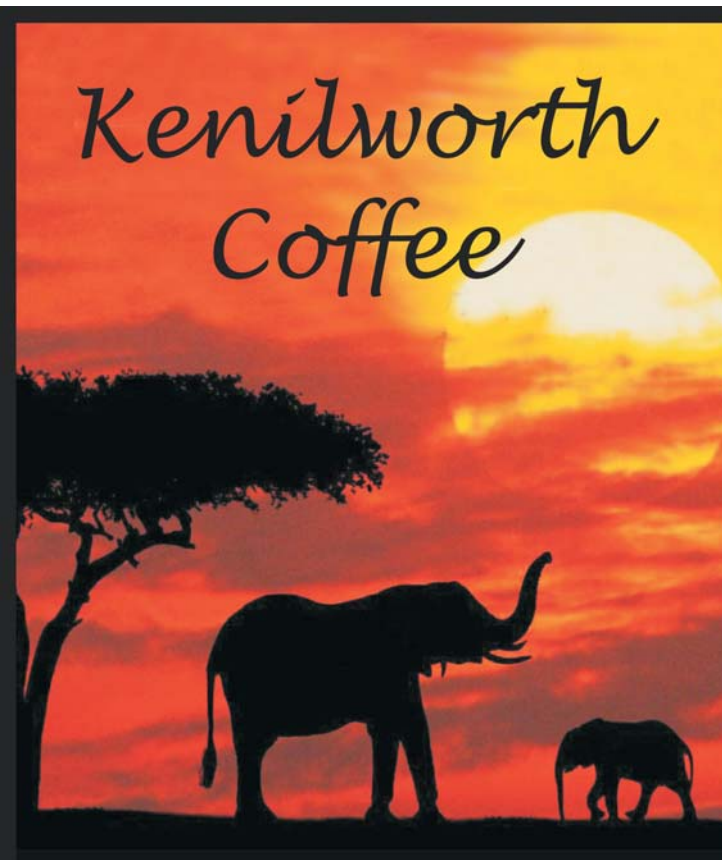
Colin Cloete was presented with a citation and silver tray for his outstanding service to the Agricultural Industry from the ZCPA and Rob van Vuuren was awarded the NADF Oscar. Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell from Beatrice received the New Zealand Embassy trophy for producing and supplying high quality milk to their processor.

The support from stakeholders, sponsors and agro-companies was overwhelming resulting in participants being offered a free lunch on Monday and Tuesday and the dinner on Tuesday night was also free.

Approximately 170 participants from a cross section of the

Livestock and Crop sectors attended the Commodities Forum 2010 and very positive feed-back continues to flow into the ZCPA and NADF offices.

Sponsors were acknowledged at the event and their support in both cash and kind was instrumental in making the Commodities Forum 2010 such a success.



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## Irrigating Wheat for Optimum Yields

Wheat production in Zimbabwe is dependent on irrigation for success. True, other inputs are essential and their use and timing of application contribute significantly to the yield of a crop, but irrigation management will make or break a wheat crop whatever else is done. Consequently, particular attention needs to be applied to irrigating a wheat crop, especially when the cost of 1 mm of water is between \$0.40 and \$2.00 and the regularity of electrical supply is less than perfect. So, what are the key issues to attend to? Well, by this stage of the season, the crop should be at the booting stage, but all is not lost, even if irrigation application has not been perfect to date. But let's start with the basics and then look at how to finish off your crop.

### Irrigation efficiency

What application to wheat is a costly exercise, and therefore efficient use of this precious resource will ensure that you get the best return for every dollar spent. Start by looking at your irrigation infrastructure, from the pumps, along the supply lines, to the laterals and sprinklers. Take a walk! Yes, and look for leaks, worn pipes, worn nozzles, broken joints, incorrectly operating nozzles, and where these are found make plans to rectify them. Check the water pressure, and measure the flow rates, if possible, to satisfy yourself that the scheme is operating according to the design. Any improvements on this aspect of irrigation will save you money and improve your crop performance.

Next, it is important to realise that wheat responds to the amount of water applied in much the same manner as it does to the amount of fertiliser applied. In other words, the more water you apply, the greater the yield. However, this is not a straight-line relationship, but a curvilinear relationship, such that for every additional amount of water applied, there is a correspondingly less yield response (Figure 1). It is also possible to apply too much water to wheat so that at total applications of more than about 550 mm net irrigation, yield may decline. The actual amount of water to apply depends upon a number of factors, as follows:

1. On centre pivots, where the land area is fixed, you should aim to achieve the optimum yield per unit land area. Consequently, a total net application of around 550 mm will be best. As a general rule with centre pivots, aim to apply the greatest amount of water per application that does not result in run-off and erosion. On large pivots (>40 ha), this may be no more than 16 mm, but on smaller pivots the application rate may be as much as 24 mm per rotation. Of course, the



soil type, land preparation and crop stage will influence this as well. Sandy soils will erode easier than clay soils, while tillage will also increase run-off and erosion risks compared to conservation agriculture.

2. On hand-move irrigation schemes, the land area planted is more flexible than with pivots, and the field size can usually be adjusted according to the minimum rotation cycle that will give you the best returns per unit of water applied. On such schemes, a deficit irrigation cycle is usually the best approach, so that you grow the largest area of wheat that will give the greatest total profit. In this case, the total net irrigation will be in the order of 350 to 400 mm, and the minimum irrigation cycle will be 6 to 8 days on sandy soils applying 24 mm per cycle, and 10 to 14 days on heavier soils applying 44 to 50 mm per cycle.

3. Each season will vary in the evaporation regime, and so a daily irrigation scheduling system should be used to guide actual irrigation application. Without a good scheduling

system, based on evaporation data and crop growth stage, irrigation will be mere guess-work and optimum results will not be achieved. Therefore, an “A” pan located near the field to collect evaporation data, and the use of a scheduling system will be of great value to efficiently irrigating your wheat crop.

### **Irrigation Scheduling of Wheat**

The simplest but least efficient way of irrigating wheat is to simply follow a fixed, pre-determined schedule based on the irrigation system and the crop growth stage. With this method, the most critical times for water application are at germination, the three-leaf stage, booting, flowering and early grain-fill. However, for optimum irrigation, the use of an evaporation pan in conjunction with a spreadsheet (Irrished 11) or the ZCPA graph is recommended. Both of these systems have the same basic underlying principles, but the spreadsheet has the advantage of allowing the manager to do some “what-if” scenarios.

Irrigation scheduling of wheat with an evaporation pan begins with the “21-day” irrigation. In all wheat crops, the field should be brought to field capacity during the establishment irrigations, which are normally completed 5 to 7 days after planting. The crop is then left until 21 days after the first irrigation or three-leaf stage. At this stage, the plant begins to form the ear, tillers and crown roots. It is therefore essential to apply an irrigation to recharge the soil – usually this is a 20 to 25 mm application. This is also an ideal time to apply the first nitrogen topdressing and herbicide. From this irrigation onwards, the evaporation pan and scheduling system should be followed.

The ZCPA graph (Figure 2) is dependent on the net application rate and season length of the wheat crop. Thus, for each farm situation appropriate graphs may be obtained from the author or from the CFU. On a daily basis the daily evaporation is plotted on the graph in a cumulative manner, and when the cumulative evaporation reaches the graph line, it is time to begin the new cycle of irrigation.

The Irrished 11 spreadsheet programme (also available from the author) requires a computer and excel. The principle is similar to the ZCPA graph, requiring information on the soil depth, growing season of the wheat variety, and altitude of the field. On a daily basis the pan evaporation is entered into the appropriate cell, and a graph is automatically plotted to indicate the soil water status and recommended irrigation application. An example of this graph is given (Figure 3), which is derived from an irrigation experiment at the Agricultural Research Trust Farm in 1999 in which the wheat yielded 11.94 t/ha with a total net irrigation of 475 mm.

Whatever system of irrigation scheduling you use, it must be accompanied with the “boot in the field” and the “auger in the hand”. Walking through the fields on a regular basis and augering to evaluate the soil water profile will give you, the manager, a good “feel” of the way the irrigation schedule is working, and guide you as to whether to apply less or more water, less or more frequently. This will also enable you to identify crop problems, such as diseases or pests, or field



problems, such as water-logged areas, irrigation patterns, sprinkler mal-function, compaction and so on.

### **Termination of Irrigation**

As the crop approaches maturity, the question arises as to when to apply the last irrigation, or when to turn off the irrigation system. This decision is determined by three factors:

#### **1. The crop growth stage**

The grain-fill stage of wheat from flowering to physiological maturity is the time during which the yield of the crop is accumulated. This period may last from 30 to 50 days, depending on planting date, altitude (related to air temperature) and irrigation regime. The grain-fill period is reduced by late planting, high temperatures and lack of irrigation. Obviously, the longer the grain-fill period, the more opportunity the crop has to accumulate yield, other things being equal. At physiological maturity, grain-filling ends, and the kernels begin to dry off. This stage is identified in wheat when 50 % of the stems supporting the ears are yellow. The crop at this stage will still have a fair amount of green leaf and stems, but as one looks over the crop there will be a distinct and predominant yellow colour. There is no point irrigating a crop after this stage. In fact, irrigation after physiological maturity when the crop is drying down may harm kernel quality.

#### **2. The irrigation method and environment**

The irrigation method and soil type determines the amount of water applied at each application. Centre pivots usually apply less water per application than hand-moved schemes. But even with hand-moved schemes, application amounts are less on sandy soils than heavier, clay soils. Consequently, for optimum yields, the last irrigation is applied to ensure that the crop does not enter significant water-deficit stress before physiological maturity. Thus, the last irrigation will be closer to physiological maturity if the daily evaporation is high or the application amount is low, or both. As the crop approaches physiological maturity, and you come to the point of starting a new cycle of irrigation, assess the crop and estimate how many days are left to reach that 50 % yellow-stem stage. If it is a week or more (i.e., there are less



than 20 % yellow stems) then another irrigation would be required, especially with schemes that apply 25 mm or less. If the crop has 30 % yellow stems, you could comfortably turn off the irrigation scheme.

### 3. The desired end soil water content

If you irrigate your crop at or after physiological maturity, the soil will remain at an high soil water content as the crop dries to harvest maturity, simply because the crop is not using any soil water. Consequently, at harvest, the machinery (combines, tractors and trailers) will cause undesirable compaction. Thus, the earlier you terminate irrigation, the drier will the soil be at harvest maturity. Ideally, at harvest, you would want the top 30 cm or so of the soil in a dry state, with most of the lower soil at field capacity. But, if you have been following a deficit irrigation cycle, the soil will be depleted of soil water to significant depths, and this may be detrimental for establishing the following crop. Therefore, when the crop is in the late grain-fill stage, use an auger to evaluate the soil water profile in the part of the field where the cycle begins, consider your crop rotation plans, and, combined with the previous two points, determine whether another irrigation will be desirable or not.

#### Conclusion

Wheat is a wonderful crop in that it responds very well to irrigation while also being very forgiving of poor irrigation. Not that poor irrigation management is to be recommended! But, if you have electrical cuts or equipment failure, wheat is far more tolerant of water deficits than maize or soybeans.

Nevertheless, a successful wheat crop will only follow a well-managed and efficient irrigation regime. Although about half the season has already past, make certain that for the remainder of the season the crop is given the best irrigation schedule possible. Ensure that your equipment is in good working order, use and evaporation pan and scheduling system, and walk your fields to get a "hands on" knowledge of your crop. Then, as the crop approaches maturity, turn of the irrigation at a judicial time before physiological maturity to save water, to leave the soil with a dry surface, and to prevent any quality loss.

## OVERHEARD

*Whilst at our combined commodities forum AGM recently a young chap gave us an example of a failed business which goes something like this.*

*One day whilst attending their economics lecture the class was asked to give their definitions of what a failed business venture is. After numerous students had each given their perceptions one chap stood up and gave his. A failed business venture is a pregnant prostitute.*

## Whenwes

Adapted from the cartoons of Louis Bolze and Rose Martin



"Back in Zim I used to have to use a step-ladder to inspect mine."

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# ZEST - Zimbabwe Elderly Support Trust

The impact of Zimbabwe's economic implosion has been felt by all sectors of the society. In particular many elderly are in the position that they have lost their life savings, investments and pensions through hyperinflation. Often the family and other support structures have also been disrupted and all efforts to mitigate the hardship over time have now left people entirely dependent on charity. Quite a number of our own farmers who lost their homes and businesses fall into the same category. It is this awareness that has prompted the CFU to take a keen interest in the overall picture of the formal and informal coordination of assistance for the elderly. What is apparent is that there is a considerable deficit across the board and something extra ordinary needs to be done.

As a result of research and contact with the various charities already working and doing amazing work in the field, it had become clear that there was need for the establishment of a structure within which all these organizations could operate.

In particular the umbrella association (ZEST) would:

- a. Assist in a coordinated approach achieving a better understanding of specific roles played by each group,
- b. Develop a mechanism to avoid duplication and overlap as well as a forum to identify under lap,

- c. Create a body that could raise funds at an international level from sources outside the normal "charity pool", specifically avoiding competition with the existing resource areas ,
  - d. Enable the distribution of funds raised without overhead costs to the various differing bodies on a consultative basis.
- The result of this has been the legal formation of the Zimbabwe Elderly Support Trust (ZEST) which is administered by the CFU. The current data base has 4700 people registered on it. At present within the group around \$150,000.00 per month is raised, however all the partner organizations are struggling to meet the demands and some are unable to expand or add any one to their assistance programs. The global economic downturn has further negatively impacted on the fundraising activities and cutbacks are being experienced by all. The relocation of elderly people once their families have left the country and re-established themselves has simply increased the overheads for the local institutions where they were staying. Increasingly these old people's homes have residents who have no other family or children who can assist. It is particularly distressing to learn that in the event of death only a paupers burial is possible as resources are simply only available for the living. A preliminary assessment has put the actual requirement of funds to sustain and extend support at around \$1.5 million per month.

The responsibility for this initiative within the CFU has been passed to ARAC - Agricultural Recovery and Compensation office. Contact Shayne Wells at [arac@cfuzim.org](mailto:arac@cfuzim.org) or Ben Purcell Gilpin at [bpg@cfuzim.org](mailto:bpg@cfuzim.org)

We would be most grateful for any assistance you can give in publicizing the situation and putting us in contact with potential partners for assistance to these people.



## Wise Words

*As we get older we sometimes begin to doubt our ability to "make a difference" in the world. It is at these times that our hopes are boosted by the remarkable achievements of other "seniors" who have found the courage to take on challenges that would make many of us wither. Harold Schlumberg is such a person:*

*To quote Harold: "I've often been asked, 'What do you old folks do now that you're retired?' Well...I'm fortunate to have a chemical engineering background and one of the things I enjoy most is converting beer, wine and whisky into urine. I do it everyday and I really enjoy it.*

*Harold should be an inspiration to us all.*

## Harsh realities of becoming A FARMER

**This is a letter that is taken out the *Farmers Weekly* but holds true for all farmers and especially in light of what has and still is taking place here. The similarities between our two countries, is uncanny.**

**H**aving sold our house and resigned from my job, my wife, daughter and I left from Cape Town. We had a “farming dream”. We didn't think we would make a fortune – just enough to pay our way each month. I'd done a fair amount of research and felt I knew enough about when, where and how to plant cash crops, fruit trees and so on and as far as I was concerned the odds at worst were 50/50.

In our case, it soon became evident that knowledge doesn't translate into experience and no amount of reading can fully equip you for what lies ahead. I'll use two examples of the difficulties that one faces.

Firstly, the financial challenges. Obviously one calculates projected income and expenditure, but these tend to be based on somewhat optimistic expectations of what one can expect in an ideal environment. Unfortunately life isn't an “ideal environment”.

We had bought a relatively cheap, undeveloped farm with the intention of building it up. (Farms here, most already built up). We were bond free, but building up a farm is easier said than done. Buying a second hand tractor because that's all one can afford, also means expenses to keep it going. Then you need implements, equipment, transport, irrigation, generators (even in SA) – the list is endless and so are the costs. Then there's the day - to - day expenses – staff, diesel, electricity, water, fertiliser, insecticide sprays, household goods, medical aid and maybe life insurance. Before you know it, you're looking at substantial amounts just to cover your monthly operational costs. To make that kind of profit in a month on an undeveloped farm is nearly impossible; even on most developed farms it would be difficult.

The second and sometimes more difficult challenge, is of course, environmental or climatic. The cash crop research papers I read assumed I had a reasonable supply of water. Well so did I. I also never thought that too much water at the wrong time or brak water, were problematic. Or that soil quality is vital.

Hail can wipe out your cash crops, baboons, porcupines and other “free grazers” can create havoc, while a wide variety of pests and diseases can also wipe out your crops.

If by some miracle the climate conditions and “other challenges” skip you and you have a good crop of whatever, you find to your horror that every other farmer also has a good crop of whatever and you can't give the stuff away, let alone recover some of your capital expenditure. This is what I learnt from my experience:



***"You won't mind if we see your 100 000 cattle first...?"***

- It would have been easier for me to dig a hole, dump all my money in it and cover it up so it could rot away – far less effort for the same result.
- To survive on a farm, it makes more sense to by a small farm, invest your money and live off the modest income.
- The third lesson was respect and admiration for the unsung heroes of our country – the farmers who go through what I've described above (and worse), so that we can buy fresh fruit and vegetables at our local supermarkets. I salute those farmers!
- Farmers spend so much and risk so much, but make relatively little profit for the effort they put in, so they need to be adequately compensated.

One must ask how our emerging farmer can be expected to survive? He's not immune to these expenses. In most cases, he doesn't have the financial resources or the experience; the odds are stacked against him/her. Without support, most of these farmers are doomed to fail. I believe it's in this country's interest to ensure that people can provide a plate of food for themselves and their families.

Clearly we don't have the kind of capital it takes to go out and buy each farmer everything he/she needs, but surely we can come up with a blueprint for some type of communal farming concept that would give people a fighting chance? But I'm afraid I see little chance of this ever happening.