



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DAIRY FARMERS

# OCTOBER 1 - 2010

Dear Member, Stakeholder and Supplier

Debbie Mylroie will be away from the office from the 14<sup>th</sup> October for approximately a month as she is scheduled for an operation and will recuperate after this.

I hope you are all managing to keep your cows in condition through what seems to be a very long dry period. Don't forget your heifers at this time, they will also need some extra feed and attention. Stock feed has become a bit short again and therefore prices have been creeping up. Part of the problem is caused by there being very little milling being done in Zimbabwe and therefore no brans. Most of the bran being used in feeds is being imported from Malawi and Zambia. Another longstanding problem is with the oil expressers who continue to apply for export permits of the meals and cakes on the grounds that there is no local demand. We on the other hand cannot get enough and when we call the expressers are told "try next week as we have had no power or we can't get seed". Go figure? Our milk price has increased slightly from most processors but this has generally been linked to quality so Rachel will be getting around again advising about this and training you again on how to achieve these premiums.

Since the national AGM we have met once as the new executive. It's a mostly new crew and I look forward to working together with the area representatives to serve you all. While there is much to do, our agreed priorities are to get an independent credible lab up and running as I am sure you will agree there can be limited progress in the industry without this. We also need to find a way to enable our executive to run constitutionally while meeting all our members' needs.

Rob is back at work this week after losing his wife Pam some three weeks ago. We will all do what we can to aid Rob in the long process of adjusting to a completely new way of life. On behalf of Rob I would like to thank all those who managed to attend Pam's Funeral. I know Rob appreciated the support he got from this community he has served for so long. Thank you also to the NADF crew that have stood in as best they could for Rob.

Until the next flash..... keep on producing that white gold. The children will love you for it.

## **STABEX '95 VACCINE PROGRAMME**

Vaccine applications continue to be processed and Fivet have just received a large consignment of Quarter Evil, so remember to fill out your application form for your 2010 requirements as this Programme is ongoing until December 2010.

Training campaigns have been undertaken by Dr Rachel Stewart and Farai Tinarwo in the following areas; Nyarira, Bulawayo, Gokwe and Zaka. This training targeted Farmers, Veterinary Livestock Technicians, Veterinary Extension Assistants, Government Vets and Animal Health Inspectors. Training covered general vaccine handling, storage, application, etc, calf rearing/scours, LSD and Senkobo disease.

Farai Tinarwo has also attended a number of Agricultural Shows country-wide, in partnership with The Department of Veterinary Services, in order to promote the Vaccine Programme.

Reports for both Programmes were presented by Sue and Linda to the Stabex Steering Committee at a meeting held at Mont Claire Hotel, Nyanga from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> September. During the meeting reports were heard from all of the programmes under Stabex '95. NADF's reports were well received and not many issues were raised. The entire Committee was taken on field visits of Sangano Milk Collection Centre and Tsonzo MCC. This consisted of a tour of the centres, Sangano on Wednesday and Tsonzo on Friday, followed by discussions with the Executive Committees at each Centre.

Farai is presently undertaking mass vaccinations in the Hwange area during this week and next week.

Following assurances that our replenishments have been approved and paid, we wait to see the funds in our accounts before we begin another spending spree!

### **STABEX '95 MARKETING PROGRAMME**

Funding through the Land O Lakes sub-award came through in early August and since then intensive training of the Centre Administrators and Book-keepers in the Accounting Bureau System and the Components of Good Record Keeping has taken place. Introductions to Executive Committees on the ABS system, Good Record Keeping and Governance have also been done during August. The NADF ABS office is now in operation with the hiring of the Bookkeeper, who will operate this, Hilda Musukutwa, joined us on the 6<sup>th</sup> September and we welcome her. Centres are now submitting weekly records to NADF ABS Office, this is then loaded onto the Quickbooks system and Financial Statements sent back to the Centre. The Accounting Bureau System is a service that we would like to offer any of our members who feel they need assistance with record and book keeping, so if you would like to find out more about this, please contact Sue Bell or Linda Nielsen.

Centre Administrators and Farmers have undertaken an Artificial Insemination Course at Livestock Breeding Services in Banket during September including further training on the business component of running an AI small business. It is hoped that this will be a service that the Centres can then offer to their members and an opportunity for a Farmers from each area to be educated and equipped in AI. Through the Land O Lakes partnership, each participant will be equipped with semen flasks, straws and a bicycle to enable him/her to provide AI services to an area of the community.

The start of judging of the area winners for the Small Scale Dairy Farmer of the Year competition begins in Gokwe on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> September and will continue through-out the country covering the 7 Centres. A National Winner's Dinner is planned to be held in Harare on Saturday 23rd October 2010. Stakeholders who would like to be a part of reviving this Annual function by showering us with generous donations are welcome to contact Linda Nielsen 0913 478943 or Sue Bell 0912 239996 with your pledges which we will graciously accept ..... Our grateful thanks to the judges of this competition; Gideon Zenasi from AgLabs/Dairy Services, Dai Harvey and Christine Smith from Land O Lakes Zimbabwe.

Simultaneous to the Judging we are also running Farmer Training in; An Introduction to AI, Introduction to the Accounting Bureau System, Managing Illnesses common in HIV/AIDS patients, Calf Rearing and Preparation for Demonstration Plots. This starts off with Gokwe and will be continued over the next 3 weeks country-wide at the 7 Centres.

### **WANT MORE MONEY FOR YOUR MILK SOLIDS – IT IS ALL IN THE FEED**

Recently a number of producers have been having problems with the chemical composition of their milk, namely the protein and fat content. The importance of milk quality to dairy farmers is the milk processors and the market are prepared to pay a premium for milk of an acceptable quality standard. Although there are a number of factors which can affect milk composition, e.g. cow age and stage of lactation, the dominant influence is the feed that the cow receives.

#### **1. MILK PROTEIN**

The secret to maintaining adequate levels of protein in the milk is the provision of a healthy rumen environment. This entails feeding good quality fibre of a suitable length (+2.5cm) and digestibility which can form a mat that floats on top of the fluid in the rumen. If the cow is well fed, the rumen mat forms the ideal environment for the growth and development of a large population of rumen microbes. As the microbes die, the microbial protein passes down to the mid and hind gut where it is digested and the amino acids pass through the gut wall where they are reconstituted into protein to supply the cow's needs, including adequate amounts for milk production. An additional source of protein for milk production is the protein in food which passes straight through the rumen (undegradable bound protein) and is digested and broken down in the mid-gut.

The other important aspect of fibre in the diet is its chemical and physical form, normally measured as "physically effective neutral detergent fibre" (pe NDF). If the pe NDF is above 20%, it provides adequate "scratch factor" which provides for healthy rumen function as it stimulates rumination and saliva production that also buffers the rumen.

#### **2. MILK FAT**

Fat in the ration passes straight through the rumen without being broken down, and some will contribute to milk fat formation. However the inclusion of fat in the ration is limited, as 7 – 10% of the fat will start coating the roughage and reduce the microbial population. Energy sources coming into the rumen, either quickly fermentable e.g. sugar and starches, or slowly fermentable, e.g. fibre and pectin, will be broken down by the microbial population into volatile fatty acids from which fat can be synthesized. Again pe NDF is important and it has been shown that a 20% pe NDF is sufficient for a milk fat content of 3.4% in Holsteins.

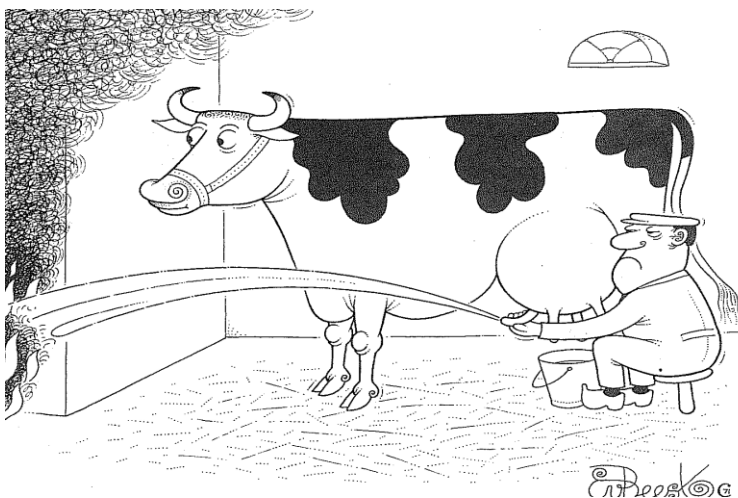
In summary, the answer to maintaining good milk quality is the provision of a balanced diet which contains adequate amounts of good quality fibre to provide a rumen mat for a healthy population of rumen microbes, and is of sufficient digestibility to be broken down relatively quickly and release volatile fatty acids into the gut.

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### **DAIRY SERVICES**

Mrs Marecha of Dairy Services asks that all farmers please collect their registration certificates from their regional Dairy Services Offices.

### **KEEPING THE VELD FIRES (AND OTHERS) AT BAY????**



**AJS KIRK**  
**CHAIRMAN**  
**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DAIRY FARMERS**