

**16<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

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## EXECUTIVE NEWS

It is both very sad and unfortunate that we begin this week's bulletin with the news of another totally unnecessary death of retired farmer Keith Nicholson of Mazvikadei. Keith was a well-known figure in both Zimbabwean agriculture and sport and had only recently hung up his boots to retire at Mazvikadei. He was gunned down whilst assisting a fellow resident of Mazvikadei who had been kidnapped by armed robbers and we pay tribute to both him and the others in the group who finally managed to free the captive by their heroic action. Sadly though, Keith became a victim himself.

Our sincere condolences go out to the family on their great loss.

Below is a media release following the murder:

## MEDIA RELEASE

*It is again with great sadness that our community has lost another one of its former-farming members in yet another act of senseless brutality. Despite our urgent appeals to government to immediately intervene in what can only be described as total lawlessness in some of our rural areas, we have only been greeted by total silence. On the back of the fact that our country is facing a severe food shortages with parts of the country now facing starvation the agriculture sector remains in a state of conflict, chaos and underutilization. We again ask the government is it not time after 12 years of "land reform" that we immediately work together to find a lasting solution so that farmers and their bankers can focus on production, a foundation on which the entire economy can build. Ends.*

### **Charles Taffs**

PRESIDENT

COMMERCIAL FARMERS' UNION

This is the second violent death to overcome our reduced community this month as well as another violent assault on a farmer, which we reported last week. We urge all our farmers, and ex farmers to please be very vigilant and to tighten up their security, whether still living on the farms or even in the towns.

We certainly don't have to tell our farming community about how the lawlessness started or what it has led up to but besides those well-known reasons, the damage caused to our economy and the huge lack of employment opportunities for most Zimbabweans is simply escalating the problems that are encouraging crime.

Whenever farmers do experience problems, either like the above, or any disruption of any kind we request that you make it a priority to contact us immediately so that we can see how we can help and also to be in a position to stamp out any unnecessary rumours doing their rounds.

If it is of any comfort at all we were very surprised with the news this week that at the Gweru High Court a 29-year old man was found guilty of the brutal murder of our dear old friend and employee of the Union, Bob Vaughan Evans. The judge sentenced the man to death for this horrible crime. Although this can never bring Bob back, at least we can say that we are grateful that justice has been done in this particular case. However, there are some 23 other murders committed against our community, which are still awaiting proper investigation let alone a trial.

We are also very pleased to note that Tinks Zietsman is now out of hospital and on the mend. Last week's assault victim is also out of hospital and on the mend. However, there is no news of any arrests in either of these high profile cases.

News has been received that the late Colin Zietsman's memorial will be held next **Friday 23 September 2011** at **11 am** at **22 Gaynor Road, Chisipite**, Harare. Tinks has requested that we all wear "happy clothes", being bright colours and no black. Shorts are very acceptable as well.

## COUNSELLING INVITATION

Riesl Spies will be coming to Zimbabwe during the period 26 - 28 October and will be hosting a ladies day for the pensioners/elderly at which she will have group chats/counselling sessions. Teas and eats will be served. The meetings will be held in Harare and Chinhoyi.

The venue will be advised in the near future. There will be no charge.

Please could anyone interested in attending please reply to the Director Hendrik Olivier or Louise O'Connor on e mail address [dir2@cfuzim.org](mailto:dir2@cfuzim.org) or [louise@cfuzim.org](mailto:louise@cfuzim.org)

### **INSURANCE ISSUES.**

In the **Government Gazette** of 2 September 2011 we noted that the following notice may affect some of our farmers with the official deregistration of some 1126 listed pension funds.

For your convenience we have uploaded the list onto our website [www.cfuzim.org](http://www.cfuzim.org) which may be found under **Legal – the Law** under the heading GN 323 2011 Pensions and Providence Funds Act deregistration. We suggest you have a look at the list or else feel free to call into the office to look through a hard copy.

From what we can gather the Commissioner of Insurance has the power to deregister any pension funds that appear not to have the money to back their pension fund, which is probably the case of most of the pension funds included on the list, which were probably backed by the Zimbabwe dollar which lost its value during the period of super-hyperinflation. At this stage we are unsure whether there is any comeback or solution but we will investigate the matter.

### **CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DUTY REBATE.**

In the same Gazette Statutory Instrument 103 of 2011, Customs and Excise (Tariff) (Amendment) Notice, 2011 (No.23) repeals the rebate of duty general MFN from free to 10% and over. The list is as follows:

Disc ploughs of a weight not less than 55kg	10%	
Mouldboard ploughs of a weight not less than 55kg	10%	
Disk harrow with less than 30 discs		10%
Disk harrow with more than 30 discs		10%
Scarifiers and rippers		10%
Cultivators and weeders		15%
Mechanical rotary hoes		10%
Dam scoops of less than 2.5 cubic metre capacity	10%	
Dam scoops of more than 2.5 cubic metres capacity	10%	
Seeders, planters and transplanters		5%

### **THE ZFU ANNUAL CONGRESS.**

On 8 and 9 September 2011 President Charles Taffs and Vice President Peter Steyl attended the Zimbabwe Farmer's Union (ZFU) Congress. Their comments were that the congress was well attended with excellent presentations, which mainly followed the theme of the congress, which was biotechnology. The general consensus was that it should be persevered but with caution. Other discussions involved micro financing and the destruction of our environment – which involved EMA. Our feeling was that if land had a value then these aspects would be naturally taken care of.

Below is President Charles Taffs' speech, which he made at the Congress:

#### **“SPEECH FOR ZFU 71<sup>ST</sup> CONGRESS**

*Mr President, distinguished guest, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished farmers.*

*Thank you for allowing me to address this on the occasion of your 71<sup>st</sup> congress. It is an honour. I have listened over the last 2 days to the deliberations regarding GMO and Bio Technology with great interest. We as Zimbabweans must embrace this technology as to fail to do so will see us being left behind both globally and within the region due to the fact that we will not be able to compete. However we must understand that the GMO technology is a further tool to assist farmers in increasing their production, but will not make farmers successful on its own. You can plant GMO seed and you can plant open pollinated seed at the same time in the same fields but with no money and inputs neither are going to produce. Zimbabwe agriculture needs to get back to basics before full advantage of the new technologies can be taken. We need to redevelop our grower's structures, regional and areal representation, research centres, river catchment boards, marketing bodies, to name just a few, so that discipline can be put back into the agricultural cycle. Most importantly we must put the value of the land back into the hands of the farmers. Farmers must have bankable tenure regardless of their size so that they can borrow money to drive their agriculture businesses.*

*If this can be done farmers will then not be at the mercy of traders, they will have options which allow them to both diversify and take control of their own farming businesses.*

*Once the value of the land is placed back with the farmers, the current devastation being seen throughout the country such as felt fires, deforestation, soil erosion all previously mentioned by the Honourable Governor will disappear because the farmer will now be in control of his or her own asset.*

*Mr President we have heard how the world food demand is going to double in the next 30 years. The majority of this increase will have to come from sub-Saharan Africa and we as Zimbabwean are in a prime position to take full advantage of this massive increase in demand, but we must however be ready for this by putting our agricultural sector on a solid base. Mr President I would like to congratulate you and your able team on steering your Union and your farmers through one of the most difficult economic periods in our history and I am sure with your leadership your farmers going forward will be well placed to make our country the bread basket it was and indeed should be. The future is now in our hands and we must unite and using a saying from our Zambian colleagues, always remember - no farmers, no food, no future.*

*I thank you.”*

### **COUNCIL VACANCIES.**

We still have some vacant positions for suitable persons to represent our farmers and non-farmers out there that desperately need to get filled as set out below:

Midlands – a non-farmer  
Matabeleland North – one farmer and one non-farmer  
Matabeleland South – one farmer and one non-farmer  
Mashonaland West South – one farmer and one non-farmer  
Mashonaland East – one farmer  
Manicaland – one farmer  
Corporate member representative

In last week's bulletin we made the following statement, which has been queried by one of our members out there:

### **CFU'S FOCUS.**

*“Our primary focus, in conjunction with the restoration of production in agriculture in Zimbabwe will, and will continue to be, the restoration of property rights and the payment of full and fair compensation as soon as possible.”*

In answer to his queries the following is Ben Purcell Gilpin's response:

*“More than ever Compensation is a live issue. This is largely due to the considerable effort not only to draw attention to the fundamental importance of resolving this issue but also to the enormous amount of work done to explore and promote a way forward. This has been core to CFU policy and direction since a little over two years ago when Charles Taffs was tasked as incoming VP to listen to the earnest calls from all sides to take the issue seriously. ARAC's work has been in direct support of this and the re branding of FIT was essentially the result of formerly displaced farmers demanding that compensation take centre stage in CFU's thoughts words and deeds.*

*This has happened.*

*We are now not simply in a position where we along with other bodies call for compensation as victims but we have gone one step further in drawing up and promoting a possible way to achieve resolution that will bring inclusive benefit to all Zimbabweans and enable those stakeholders within the international community a way to engage. FYI, the DVD WAY FORWARD can be down loaded from the CFU website. If you are unable to access this please let us know and we will be happy to arrange for you to get access somehow. I believe you will find a lot in the DVD that explains our current effort. This presentation has been extensively promoted to GOZ parties, most Diplomatic missions and also FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS BOTH LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL. A couple of weeks ago it was presented to the newly formed Joint parliamentary committee on land reform together with the World Bank. The WB representative gave a thorough endorsement to the proposal and pushed the parliamentarians to come up with the framework to get it into reality.*

Similarly the recent Mandi Rukuni Seminar on fixing Agriculture reported on by John Laurie in this week's CFU calling endorses much of the process.

In the mean time we work closely with Valcon to encourage them in their work and ensure that they have adequate resources available to complete the database. The better and more comprehensive this work is the stronger our case and ability to achieve what we all require. The work on consequential losses that we have done at ARAC will supplement this effort and provides additional information to make our case.

When it comes to working closely with other groups who claim to represent former farmers, it is important to recognise how hard we have worked to be inclusive in the representation of CFU. There are some detractors out there who would prefer to remain outside of our efforts and peddle information that is often less than accurate or helpful to our cause. There seems little point in getting sucked into such debate much of which is centred on extremist views driven by personal agendas.

I believe it can be safely said that Compensation is on the agenda. We cannot definitively say when it will be paid, however through a combination of:

- Individual beneficiaries paying directly for transfer
- The reinstatement of farmers with recovery loans
- The establishment of an Agricultural Recovery bank that is tasked with re introducing market value and paying of compensation mechanisms, there is real prospect of achievement of our goal.

Clearly for many of our constituency time and resources are running out, we are acutely aware of this. The only real obstacle to international reengagement here seems to be the reestablishment of a credible and acceptable end to the current political impasse. This in the final analysis seems essentially linked to the mortality of one individual whose current health remains a matter of daily conjecture; each year as the Jacaranda's once more bloom I am reminded that we are one year closer to that inevitability.

I hope these brief comments are of value. It is equally important for you to realize the considerable effort being put into keeping the Union going so there is a voice to speak for you and others not just when the time comes but each and every day until the whole process is settled, we appreciate any support you are able to engage in this, ringing the bell amongst our peers is certainly one area we need support."

#### **IMPORTANT DATES.**

The dates of our next few **Open Farmers' Meetings** which will be held at 2.30 pm at the Union's offices are as follows:

**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

**Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

**Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2011**

This week Director Hendrik Olivier spent the week in Cape Town attending the World Farming Organisation's General Assembly on behalf of President Taffs.

#### **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DAIRY FARMERS** (from the Desk of Rob Van Vuuren)

During the next two weeks, Chairman, Veneka Bwerinofa, Dr. Stewart and Rob Van Vuuren will be travelling around the regions to attend the local NADF/CPA meetings. Their schedule is as follows:

Wednesday 21/09/11 – Beatrice Club at 10:00am (Mash B)

Thursday 22/09/11 – ZITF (Bulawayo) at 10:00am (Matabeleland)

Friday 23/09/11 – CFU Offices, Gweru at 10:00am (Midlands)

Tuesday 27/09/11 – Fiddlers Green, Chipinge at 10:00am (Manicaland)

Wednesday 28/09/11 – Mutare Club, Mutare at 10:00am (Manicaland)

Thursday 29/09/11 – Agricultural House, Harare at 10:00am (Mash B)

Veneka will be giving members an update, Rachel will be giving veterinary related talks and Rob will be recording comments on the draft N.A.D.F constitution.

National milk intake continues to be around the 4 million litre/month mark.

The NADF has embarked on a comprehensive exercise to update the membership data base and in the near future members who have e mail will be receiving information from the office-Newsflashes etc.

The NADF/Land O Lakes programme has started with judging for the small scale producer competition at an advance stage. We thank our members who have helped with the judging.

### LIVESTOCK INFORMATION

We have in stock and available at our offices at present:

**Animal Foods of Central Africa Technical Handbook @ US\$10,00 each**

**Stock Registers @ US\$5,00 each**

**Daily Milk Records of Individual Cows @ US\$5,00 each**

**Recommended Guide to Good Dairy Farming Practices @ \$2.00 each**

**Dairy Handbooks @ US\$40,00 each**

**Cattle Producers' Association Beef Production Manual @ US\$40,00 each**

**Go Green Mastitis Mint @ US\$10,00 each**

**Automatic Syringe Kits @ \$100,00 each**

Should you be interested in purchasing any of the above items, please call at Commercial Farmers Union, Agriculture House and see the NADF Offices.

### C.P.A

We have received information that C.S.C has confirmed that the total number of cattle destined for slaughter from Botswana is 16,000 head; to be delivered in two tranches of 8,000 head and the final batch should arrive by October 2011.

Contrary to press reports, DVFS has clarified that very strict procedures have been put in place to minimize any risk of FMD outbreaks in Zimbabwe, from the cattle from Botswana.

A new consignment of L.I.T ear tags have arrived and available.

Hay bales wanted by Ben Mostert – Contact: 071 2 411 216

### BEEF OPEN MARKET PRICES (PLEASE NOTE THESE PRICES ARE ONLY A GUIDE)

VENUE	MT. HAMPDEN		BULAWAYO SHOWGROUNDS		PLUMTREE	
	DATE	12.09.2011	14.09.2011		07.09.2011	
	AVE. PRICE	AVERAGE	AVE. PRICE	AVERAGE	AVE. PRICE	AVERAGE
GRADE	NO. OF CATTLE	PER KG LV WT	NO. OF CATTLE	PER KG LV WT	NO. OF CATTLE	PER KG LV WT
SUPER	8	1.88		N/A		N/A
CHOICE	4	1.77		1.95		N/A
COMMERCIAL	18	1.56		1.75		1.58
ECONOMY	32	1.56		1.47		1.36
MANUFACTURING	25	1.48		0.08		0.98
WEANER HEIFERS	7	1.66		N/A		2.18
BULLING HEIFERS	N/A	N/A		N/A		1.9
WEANER STEERS	13	1.66		N/A		1.37
LONG WEANER HEIFER	N/A	N/A		N/A		N/A
LONG WEANER STEER	3	1.76		N/A		N/A
FEEDER STEERS	N/A	N/A		N/A		1.61
COMM WEANER STEERS	3	1.41		N/A		N/A
COMM WEANER HEIFERS	N/A	N/A		N/A		N/A
BULL	5	1.54		1.47		N/A

**ZIMBABWE CROP PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION****PRODUCER PRICES**Local Purchaser Trading Prices as at 15<sup>th</sup> September 2011 R7.4 - US\$

Commodity	GMB	Agrifoods	PHI Commodities	Staywell	Croplink	ProGroup
White Maize	285	NOT AVAILABLE	240	240	245 – 260	NOT AVAILABLE
Yellow Maize	285		-	240	250 on farm	
Maize Bran	100		150	150	160	
Soya beans	500		600	585	600	
Soya bean Meal	-		670-700	640	690	
Wheat	All grades 466		P – 485 S – 475 U – 465	P – 490	465	
Wheat Bran	150		-	200	200	
Groundnuts	400 (unshelled)		-	-	800	
Sugar Beans	-		-	-	800	
Sorghum	-		-	-	250	

**Producer Prices**

South African Grain Information Services (SAGIS)  
 South African Foreign Exchange (SAFEX) 15  
 September 2011

Commodity	Rand/ tonne	US\$/ Tonne	Import Parity Rand/ Tonne	Import Parity US\$/ Tonne
White Maize	1862	259	2022	281
Yellow Maize	1873	260	2033	282
Wheat	2950	410	3110	432
Soyabeans	3320	461	3480	483
Sunflowers	3895	541	4055	563

**International  
Gulf**

Commodity	US\$/ Tonne			Import Parity US\$/ Tonne
Wheat	312			462
Maize	296			446
Soyabeans	528			678

**BUSINESS CHAMBER** (from the desk of Richard Taylor)

We met with NMB and African Century on Tuesday afternoon and had a positive discussion with the various representatives prior to the meeting with Afrexim Bank, which was held yesterday. We have been asked to step back and let the representative of NMB and African Century, take all negotiations with Afrexim bank to its conclusion. Feedback from yesterday's meeting is positive. Some of the questions that we wanted answered have been clarified, with the most pertinent one, "still not in stone".

- 1) When is Afrexim Bank going to transfer the funds to the local financiers? (We will only have a definite time scale towards the end of next week or early the following week, but look at 2 months as a minimum)
- 2) Once the local financiers receive these funds how long before the money is availed to the applicants on approval of their loan facility? (Once we have the time scale this will not be an issue as they will start immediately to process loan applications)
- 3) What is the actual interest rate, +-10%? (For the seasonal finance facility this will be between 8 and 9%, with the Capex facility coming in at 10%)
- 4) What is the minimum deposit for Capex? (This will be negotiable with African Century. If you pay a deposit of 20 – 30% of the value, then security for the capital purchase will be the asset. Any deposits below 20% will need some form of guarantee. A 10% residual payment will be required at the end of the finance term for the asset to finally be your own)
- 5) The seasonal facility will definitely be a roll over facility? (Yes. However this will be dependent on your success and honesty. If we fail to stick to ones cash flows and do not pay back the loan facility, this will be terminated)
- 6) What are the requirements for security against the loans? (This will vary according to how much one has applied for and the value of your movable assets. For those who are applying for a large facility you will have to have a property or two as surety)

Unfortunately for a number of farmers applying for this facility, finance will be too late. Where do we go from here for those farmers? We will be meeting with traders to see if we can make plans for some form of bridging finance against contracts. Inputs will not be a problem as we have the suppliers as partners who are offering terms. African Century with the capex side should not be an issue either. We will be negotiating with NMB for those farmers who sign contracts with traders to be allowed to move across once the funds are available.

For farmers applying for loans that are later in the season and wheat or barley finance, this obviously does not affect them. We will be getting both NMB's and African Century's template for the loan applications, which we will have to work with and adjust individual proposals to suit in order to help expedite your loan applications once submitted to NMB.

We continue to look for other finance options and deals that will be beneficial to our members. As we move forward I will keep you updated.

I am sorry that we don't have any real positive news as to the dates for this money, but I assure you that we continue to work tirelessly to try get better deals for you all.

For further info on any of the above please email me [rtaylor@cfuzim.org](mailto:rtaylor@cfuzim.org)

## COMMENTS AND VIEWS

Please let us know your comments and views on items contained within this issue or any other issues of CFU Calling by sending an email to us on [dir@cfuzim.org](mailto:dir@cfuzim.org)

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