

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

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

This message is to all our farmers, both farming and non-farming.

We are currently in a very fluid and volatile period in our political history and I urge you all to display extreme vigilance and caution with all your dealings and activities wherever they may be. To those on the farms please make every effort to mitigate your risk, both personal and financial. Only keep on the farm what is totally necessary or required for that period of the season. See below emergency contact numbers for both the Police and our offices:

Charles Taffs	0772 284 847
Peter Steyl	0712 221 002
Hendrik Olivier	0772 235 640
Marc Carrie Wilson	0772 865 199
Mike Clark	0772 337 226; 0712 603 427
Starr Glen Williamson	0712 215 282; 0772 346 487
Police Special Response Unit:	04- 497906;

We have over the last month seen a large increase in violence, evictions court cases and intimidation and have and will continue to appeal to our leaders for sense to prevail.

It is essential that you keep in touch with us as soon as you are experiencing any problems, or better still, even before they develop, so that we can come up with a strategy to resolve the problem before it is too late. All reports should be sent to Mike Clark at [mashc@cfuzim.org](mailto:mashc@cfuzim.org)

On the issue of funding, Richard Taylor is working tirelessly in an extremely hostile environment to get affordable structured funding for all our membership.

He has experienced endless promises and delays, but it would now appear that his efforts have been successful; however there again appears to be a further delay before these funds are deposited with the local lenders. His office will let all know immediately once these funds are available and what process is required to access them. Please bear with us on this one, with the negative perception/reality our country receives in general and agriculture in particular it is and has been immensely difficult to establish these international lines of credit.

To the families of our members who have lost loved ones recently, from both, myself and the CFU as an organization we offer our most sincere condolences and should any of you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to call. Please take care in the weeks and months ahead.

**Charles Taffs**  
PRESIDENT  
COMMERCIAL FARMERS' UNION OF ZIMBABWE

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## **EXECUTIVE NEWS**

Early this week President Taffs flew to Johannesburg, at the expense of the organisers of the Africa Agriculture Investment & Product Innovation Conference, at which he delivered the below speech which was by all accounts extremely well received and became an important point of discussion, both at the meeting and after:

### **"SPEECH FOR AFRICA AGRICULTURE INVESTMENT & PRODUCT INNOVATION CONFERENCE**

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*I thank you for the opportunity to address this very valuable conference. My name is Charles Taffs and I am currently the President of the Commercial Farmers Union of Zimbabwe*

*When I was first asked to address this conference, I read with interest the pre amble notes on the conference and I could not help but think how as a continent we have preformed so badly in terms of agricultural production and development. It is shocking to note that the statistics of 75% of the world's poor who live in rural areas are in developing countries and yet the Sub Saharan African public spending in agriculture is only 4% of total government spending, this is a very stark and sad reality.*

*Sub Saharan Africa needs to immediately take agricultural production seriously by placing agriculture at the centre of its development agenda.*

*Governments also need to expand their targets not only to achieve the millennium goals of 2015, which aims to halve extreme poverty by that date, but by also taking cogensis of the fact that world food demand against the massive increase in population and the resulting increase in consumption over the next 30 years is set to double. Where is this increase going to come from? Yes, some will come from new technologies, such as GMO advancement, but the bulk upward of 70% will have to come from new productive markets, sub Saharan Africa being the largest.*

### **HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THIS**

*The answer to this question is twofold. Firstly individual countries need to develop internal strategies and policies that promote agriculture, and the second is that countries in the region must adopt common strategies and policies that will allow for continental growth in a competitive global environment.*

*On a country level governments need urgently to adopt policies that are investor friendly and encourage growth. There has to be a total commitment to both human rights and property rights and on this there can be no negotiation if Africa is to succeed in its goals. International agreements and laws such as bilateral investment protection agreements must be adhered to and honoured. Countries must promote and implement the rule of good law, create strong financial programs, strong agricultural technical support net works, research, education, infrastructure, strong and clear labour laws, and many more. But the most important of all on which all the previously mentioned can be achieved is the solid economic fundamental required to create a strong sound foundation for growth in agriculture and that is farmers at all levels must have strong bankable tradable tenure to the land on which they farm. The value of the land must be placed in the hands of the farmers. African agriculture must break the bonds of subsistence farming and move into a new area of competitive agriculture regardless of size breaking the association of African agriculture with that of poverty.*

*As countries we need to move away from state holdings where production incentives are limited, need for competitive excellence diminished, land utilization and protection generally unsustainable with the resulting inability to raise funding further increasing the culture of dependence perpetuating the very poverty we are trying to eradicate.*

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*To have a successful, viable, sustainable agricultural sector the farmers must be able to tap into the inherent value of the land. It is this inherent value that will drive an active land market which in turn will increase those very values which when mobilized can be placed directly into primary agricultural production, it is these values that will create confidence and security that will drive development, production as well as sustainability all needed for long term success.*

*Globally, countries that have adopted strong tenure policies placing the values in the hands of the producer are in the main food sufficient and those who have not are generally donor dependant and there are unfortunately many, many examples of this in Africa today.*

*With strong tradable tenure farmers can plan they can borrow with confidence from their banking partners, who can then lend with confidence, thus enabling a dynamic financial sector to develop in parallel. For agriculture to develop to its full potential a vibrant well established financial sector, specifically designed for agriculture, is essential and this can only be achieved if adequate security of investment is assured once tradable bankable tenure is in place structured funding can then become a reality. Long term funding, up to 25 years, is needed for land purchase and infrastructural development, medium term funding 3 to 15 years is needed for irrigation, dam construction, plantation development, live stock establishment, equipment purchase and of course, short term annual funding is required for annual crop inputs based against annual crop returns.*

*I stress again this can only be done by mobilizing the inherent value of the land, no other mechanism, although many have been tried gives the same collateral confidence rightly required by the banking sector to ensure mutual growth and investor protection once the fundamental aspects of tradable tenure are cast in stone agriculture and those who are involved in it can raise themselves in total from subsistence farming to farming for profit placing the responsibility to perform in the hands for the producer thereby promoting excellence, increasing production, creating diversification as well as giving a degree of independence to the producers themselves .*

*Once the value of the land is in the hands of the producer environmental issues so pertinent to Africa such as deforestation, erosion, over grazing and excessive burning can all be tackled as the owners are now directly responsible for the land usage and as such will face prosecution. In other words good sustainable land usage will naturally be promoted.*

*Furthermore symbiotic relationships between large scale and small scale commercial can develop whereby overhead costs can be carried by the larger producers through volumes of scale allowing the small scale producers to actively participate in crops value addition and marketing areas which they traditionally would have been excluded from. One of the tragedies of the Zimbabwean Agriculture Reform Programme is that the government never fully understood the strong relationships between large and small producers, when they destroyed the commercial farming sector the small scale sector suffered the collateral effects. Although they maintained their land holdings their production levels rapidly decreased as their whole support network traditionally carried by the commercial sector such as input supply chains, marketing, transport, seedling supply, road maintenance, schools, clinics all but disappeared.*

*On the back of this employment levels will increase, tax levels will rise, communities will be established with the resulting establishment of social support net works such as schools and clinics. With a vibrant agricultural sector developing investors will be happy to invest in private/public partnerships to develop infrastructure such as rail and road net works and electricity generation to name but a few. Supply industries will naturally have to develop to cater for the increasing agricultural input demand, manufacturers once confident that the real and regular supply of raw materials from the agricultural sector is a reality these industries will develop in tandem with the rise of agriculture further driving these Countries economies*

## REGIONAL AND CONTINENTAL

*African countries must now grasp the opportunities that are being presented, as mentioned before in terms of world food demand, if we do not they will be taken from us as the world will not be in a position to wait and as a result we can no longer sit back and be exploited on the back of donor promise, we must produce and perform in a competitive world, African governments must now actively work together to promote Africa by their actions and break the 50 year cycle of negative perception creating a new continental platform for investment with agriculture at its core. We must create policy whereby agricultural investment is a priority with common trade policies, integrated rail and road net works, integrated power generation and distribution policies, equal coast access to all through free trade corridors along which value adding industries can be established maximizing returns to those countries of origin.*

*With global financial markets currently in distress investors are looking for new frontiers and Africa is well placed to take advantage but with this comes responsibility, good governance, eradication of rampant corruption, as well as a full understanding that we are all part of a rapidly shrinking global environment and as a result can no longer act independently of each other to do so will guarantee our demise the opportunities are there it is up to us to take full advantage of them.*

*In conclusion the continent of Africa is blessed with abundant land, water and natural resources surely it is now time to take control and maximize these god given values for the benefit of all Africans and I firmly believe that by driving agriculture the development of Africa will be a certainty as there is one fact that no one can ignore and that is the world has to eat and we could be well placed to provide for that fact. As was quoted at a recent Zambian Agricultural conference held last month which I had the privilege of attending "no farmer, no food, no food, no future" these words are indeed a reality. On ending ladies and gentlemen Zimbabwe agriculture has been through a very rough period in its recent history, and as such Zimbabwe is a very good example of what happens to an economy when the fundamentals of bankable tradable tenure are tampered with. I have with me a DVD on what we feel could be a solution to our land question and I am happy to give this out to anyone who is interested as some of the ideas could be applied throughout the continent. I thank you."*

*In yesterday's press we came across the following article, which was quite encouraging and refreshing, which we wish to share with you all.*

*"Finance Minister: Zimbabwe Owes Debt to White Farmers*

*<http://www.voanews.com>*

*September 28, 2011*

*Peta Thornycroft | Johannesburg*

*Tendai Biti, Zimbabwe's finance minister, says white farmers who were evicted from their homes and farms by President Robert Mugabe's supporters must be paid compensation, but says the government can't finance that debt.*

*Biti told a meeting of his supporters in Harare earlier this month that it was ridiculous that evictions of white farmers continued long after the so-called land reform program ended.*

*Zimbabwe could still not feed itself, he said, adding that title deeds in the form of long leases, backed by the law and fully tradable, should be restored to land taken from white farmers.*

*That land is owned by the state and none of the so-called new farmers now on that land have security of tenure.*

*The land reform program initiated by President Mugabe was aimed at redistributing land that the president said was taken from the people of Zimbabwe during the British colonial era.*

*Biti criticized some of the new farmers, mostly supporters of President Mugabe's ZANU-PF party, for failing to restore Zimbabwe's once-robust agricultural output. He said some of them did not even live on the land they were given but operated their farms via mobile phones from town.*

*Biti, Secretary General of the Movement for Democratic Change party, also said Zimbabwe desperately needs a land audit following the chaotic land redistribution exercise, and that evicted white farmers must be paid compensation.*

*"We want to know who owns the land," he said. "How many women have benefited from the land reform? The second thing is the issue of compensation. We estimate that the genuine compensation to farmers is about \$3 billion, but Zimbabwe does not have the capacity of paying three billion dollars."*

*He said Zimbabwe could not pay \$7 billion in foreign debt inherited from the former ZANU-PF administration in 2009.*

*He suggested that compensation for white farmers could become part of Zimbabwe's sovereign debt and be settled at some time in the future when Zimbabwe achieved international recognition as a highly indebted state.*

*He also told supporters that settling the land question was essential to fix the economy.*

*"This economy will not grow at double-digits growth rates if we don't fix three things: if we don't fix our politics, our politics is ugly: If we don't fix the debt question, and we don't fix the land question," said Biti.*

*A land audit is one of the outstanding issues of the multi-party political agreement, which brought the current inclusive government to power 31 months ago.*

*Biti said that the redistribution of land ended in 2005 and that it was ridiculous that the 200 or so remaining white farmers were still being evicted from their land.*

*After about 4,000 white farmers who produced about 40 percent of foreign earnings were forced off their land, Zimbabwe's economy collapsed and the country endured record-breaking inflation that helped make the local currency worthless.*

*Things did not turn around until the inclusive government adopted the U.S. dollar and the South African rand."*

## **COMPENSATION.**

Needless to say, your Union continues to exploit any opportunity and to work tirelessly to bring up the matter of compensation and to push our vision of the way forward, which is why we are so gratified to be able to stimulate so much interest following President Taff's speech in South Africa and also to read in the press about the recognition of the problems facing our industry by our Minister of Finance, and others.

## **PUBLICITY.**

Whilst on the subject of newspaper articles, we must apologise for one or two misleading articles which may have been published without our consent. We have recently seen one or two published articles, some even quoting us as the source, or even going as far as saying that information was taken from "an exclusive interview" with a member of our team. Unfortunately, we have found that our otherwise reliable press may have unwittingly been sold false articles, which is also out of our control.

It has been reasonably quiet this week, apart from one or two incidents and court cases, which just keep continuing.

### **WEATHER INFORMATION.**

As the new season is upon us and the rains are, hopefully, approaching you may be wondering how to get a weekly weather forecast for your area. If you go onto our CFU website [www.cfuzim.org](http://www.cfuzim.org), look on the right hand side where it shows a weather widget of the Harare weather. Go right to the bottom of the last day shown and click on "Weather today in Harare". Then go to the top left hand corner and type the name of the main centre closest to you, e.g. Bulawayo and click on Search.

Looking at the forecast for Harare, it shows rain on Saturday and Monday, but several consecutive days of rain in Bulawayo. Let's hope their forecast is correct as the country could use an early rain to assist the grazing to improve from the huge numbers of fires again this year.

### **THE AGRIZIM MAGAZINE.**

We have finally received the Volume 9 of AgriZim for distribution to our farmers, and again apologise for the huge delays since our last copy appeared. Should you come into Harare from the districts please feel free to come in and collect copies at your Union for distribution throughout your district.

### **FARMERS' MEETINGS.**

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** – next week

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

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

### **REGIONAL FARMING OPPORTUNITIES.**

There is a lot happening at your Union at the moment and we urge you all to attend so that you can keep informed on the exciting changes as well as being part of it.

Last week we spoke of opportunities in Malawi to take over leases on farms which are still operational and this week we have information on two farms available in southern Mozambique. Please contact Ben Gilpin for more information on them all.

### **BULK SMS SERVICE.**

The first test message on our bulk messaging system was sent out last week to test the system using some of the cellphone numbers which we have available to us. Do not try to reply to the number as it is sent by computer and not a cellphone, so it will not be received. However, we will need your assistance by responding when requested and also to please let us know when you have either changed your number or also recently acquired a new phone. You may respond to [mashc@cfuzim.org](mailto:mashc@cfuzim.org). As we perfect the use of this new system the opportunity and uses are boundless.

In another development we are working closely with the Financial Gazette in which we are placing a weekly insert of crop and livestock prices etc. In addition to this we are expanding the distribution of our popular CFU Classified by also distributing them weekly in the Financial Gazette who have a distribution of about 10 000 newspapers in Harare alone and 20 000 country wide. Initially they will be a loose leaf in the Harare distribution so this wider distribution will give advertisers a much wider spread than merely distributing on our email list and website. This development will mature during the month of October.

### **LADIES DAY**

Further to the invitation sent out previously regarding a ladies day for the pensioners/elderly. Please be advised of the following:-

Date :26 October 2011

Venue :CFU dining room – Cnr. Adylinn Roads/Marlborough Drive, Marlborough, Harare



Time : 10h00 – approximately 1:00pm

Theme : Is this Life?

Riesl Spies is a social worker in private practice and an art teacher. All the ladies have to bring is: a picture or photo of anything that has a positive feeling for them. They will make a memory board.

There is no charge and teas and eats will be served.

For catering and preparation purposes, kindly indicate your interest to attend on following e-mail address [louise@cfuzim.org](mailto:louise@cfuzim.org) or 04 309811-19.

### Hendrik Olivier

DIRECTOR

COMMERCIAL FARMERS UNION

### MEMBERSHIP CARDS

There are literally a few boxes of membership cards which have not been collected from your Union. Please check with the ARAC office and collect yours if you have previously come in to pay your subscriptions.

### DISCOUNTERS CLUB

The list of Partners and Members is growing rapidly. Make your cash stretch further and contact Debbie today about joining up on 0774 177 447 or 309 812-20 or [debbie@cfuzim.org](mailto:debbie@cfuzim.org) or visit our web site [www.discountersclub.com](http://www.discountersclub.com)

Discounters Club will be having a stand at the **Shopping Under the Stars** fair on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2011 from 3.00p.m. to 9.00p.m. at Old Georgian's Sports Club which is always a huge affair. If you are at the fair, call in at the stand and meet Debbie Mylroie who has recently taken over the Discounters Club. She will have updated hard copy lists of the Partners should you want one.

Should you wish to have a copy of the Partners Listing detailing where you can shop and receive your discounts, please contact Debbie on [debbie@cfuzim.org](mailto:debbie@cfuzim.org) and she will forward you a copy.

### ZIMBABWE CROP PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION

#### PRODUCER PRICES

Local Purchaser Trading Prices as at 28<sup>th</sup> September 2011 R8.11 - US\$

Commodity	GMB	Agrifoods	PHI Commodities	Staywell	Croplink	ProGroup
White Maize	285	Not available	Harare – 255 Byo – 265	240	245 – 260 Quality dependent	245
Yellow Maize	285		230	230	250 on farm	245
Maize Bran	-		150	165	160	150
Soya beans	500		630	600	600 on farm	600
Soya bean Meal	-		650 – 670	680	690	-
Wheat	466		Harare P – 475 S – 465 U – 450 Bulawayo	475	470	465



			P – 480 S – 470 U – 455			
Wheat Bran	-		180	n/a	170	180
Groundnuts	450 unshelled		800	n/a	800	-
Sugar Beans	800		1200	1200	800	1150
Sorghum	285		-	n/a	250	-

### Producer Prices

#### South African Grain Information Services (SAGIS)

#### South African Foreign Exchange (SAFEX) 28<sup>th</sup> September 2011

Commodity	Rand/tonne	US\$/Tonne	Import Parity Rand/Tonne	Import Parity US\$/Tonne
White Maize	1862	230	2022	249
Yellow Maize	1873	231	2033	251
Wheat	2950	364	3110	383
Soyabeans	3320	409	3480	429
Sunflowers	3895	480	4055	500

### International Gulf

Commodity	US\$/Tonne	Import Parity US\$/Tonne
Wheat	305	455
Maize	273	423
Sorghum	283	433
Soyabeans	477	627

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

The Regional meetings have now all taken place and support was generally good except for the Mash A meeting which had to be postponed due to a lack of support from members. This will now take place in three weeks time. Members were given an update on NADF strategies and a range of other issues were covered. Dr. Rachel Stewart gave useful presentations dealing with a wide range of veterinary issues. These were very useful as they developed into question and answer sessions. Rachel also reminded producers on the vaccinations that should be carried out in the near future. Veld fires have and continue to destroy valuable fodder for livestock with no signs of action being taken by those in authority.

Producer viability, especially for the small to medium size producers, is of concern and needs to be addressed.

### 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

**Sheep and Goat Handbook** @ US\$25.00 each

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

**RIFT VALLEY FEVER VACCINE.**

The new OBP Clone 13 Rift Valley Fever vaccine is now available in Zimbabwe. This live vaccine is known to be safe for use on pregnant animals. The vaccine was developed by the OBP and French partners.

For further information please contact your vaccine supplier.

**C.P.A**

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

Beef producers are reminded to plan their vaccination programmes now and to secure their vaccine requirements from their traditional suppliers.

We are working on obtaining data from abattoirs for current slaughter prices.

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

VENUE	MT. HAMPDEN	
DATE	26.09.2011	
	AVE. PRICE	AVERAGE
GRADE	NO. OF CATTLE	PER KG LV WT
SUPER	8	1.92
CHOICE	N/A	N/A
COMMERCIAL	20	1.67
ECONOMY	24	1.46
MANUFACTURING	33	1.41
WEANER HEIFERS	19	1.8
BULLING HEIFERS	N/A	N/A
WEANER STEERS	50	1.75
LONG WEANER HEIFER	13	1.8
LONG WEANER STEER	23	1.86
FEEDER STEERS	35	1.93
COMM WEANER STEERS	N/A	N/A
COMM WEANER HEIFERS	2	1.01
BULL	7	1.51
BRAHMAN BULLS	1	2,500.00
COWS & CALF	4	2.02

**REPORT ON NAMACO (National Manpower and Advisory Council) Workshop on the Agriculture Sector *From the Desk of Marc Carrie-Wilson***

The National Manpower Advisory Council (NAMACO) is a private public sector partnership established by an Act of Parliament (section 19 of the Manpower Development Act [Chapter 28:02]). Its role is to of its own accord, or at the request of the Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education investigate and make recommendations on any matter affecting National Manpower development Training. NAMACO has put in place 15 sub committees for various sectors of the economy. One of the latest sectors to receive attention from NAMACO is Agriculture.

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On the 21<sup>st</sup> of September a Workshop was convened by NAMACO bringing together a variety of different stakeholders in the Agricultural sector. The purpose of the workshop seemed to create awareness around NAMACO, and to discuss the possibilities of employers in primary agriculture contributing to the Zimbabwe Manpower Development Fund (a public fund established in terms of section 23 of the Manpower Development Act [Chapter 28:02]). Other issues surrounding the skills deficit in agriculture today were discussed. I made the following points which appeared to be well received by the workshop:

#### Skills and Manpower development in Agriculture (2011)

- Agriculture is the backbone of the Zimbabwean Economy. There is a skills and technology gap and addressing this gap is therefore essential
- Investment in appropriate skills development is needed to boost agricultural production
- The approach needs to be holistic i.e. the whole value chain of the various agricultural commodities should be analysed to identify the skills gaps.
- An assessment of appropriate and best practice techniques needs to be identified and mainstreamed. E.g. Conservation Agriculture can maximise the yields of smallholder farmers.
- There needs to be a cultural revolution to change perceptions of farming in two regards:
  1. Farming amongst smallholders is associated with poverty, a lack of resources and other negative aspects. Young people may wish to move away from agriculture because of this perception. Farming is first and foremost a business. Farmers need to learn business acumen, focus on the commercialisation and discover the joy of farming. Farming can have rich professional and financial rewards if the right approach is taken.
  2. Farming is an activity that can be done by anyone. This is not an accurate perception. It takes years of intensive training and apprenticeship to foster a successful commercial farmer who must be familiar with a wide range of skills over and above the knowledge of agriculture (e.g. vehicle maintenance, logistics, electrics and the like). The profession is also entrepreneurial in nature and knowledge of basic business, time management and finance is essential.

#### NAMACO Levy

- At present the Zimbabwean Agricultural Industry is not regionally or globally competitive.
- Farmers are facing extreme viability constraints.
- Currently farmers pay many rates taxes and levies including Rural District Council, Environmental Management Agency, Standards Development, NEC, ZINWA, ZESA and so on.
- To ask farmers to pay yet another levy is not sustainable at this time particularly if the levy is substantial.

## **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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