

Keeping members

09 December 2011

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1. FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK (Charles Taffs)

As we come towards the start of another festive season, many of our members' issues remain unresolved, which on the face of it after many years seems hopeless and never ending. Let me assure you that as the President of the Commercial Farmers' Union that a solution is nearer now than it has ever been, never before have all parties, whether they be politicians, beneficiaries, farmers' unions, donors', Government or multi-nationals, begun to speak with one voice on the issue of land tenure. Through our continued and persistent "in your face" presentation of common sense proposals at long last recognition has become a reality.

Everyone now knows and understands that without a full, fair and final resolution to the land tenure question, Zimbabwe will forever be held to ransom with no real long term sustainable investment or development being allowed to take place.

The real facts on the ground are that Zimbabwe is broke; it's land value negated; it's real estate value untapped; it's manufacturing sector declining (as well as non competitive); it's mining sector subject to preferential influence and favour.

The question needs to be asked why? Simple - the disregard for property rights. Solve the property rights issue and the rest will fall into place.

There has been a move by various parties to promote a compensation package in total of 1 billion dollars to pay our farmers – are we really serious? This is an insult and will not be entertained.

Is this really the message that we want to send out to the external community? "Invest your money in Zimbabwe and when your investment is compulsorily acquired you shall receive 10 cents in the dollar. Come on, let us be real, fair and sensible.

There is a solution on the table that not only allows for acceptable compensation to take place, but it also re-values Zimbabwe at realistic levels, that will instil investor confidence, it will energize and create an active land market, which in turn will ignite all sectors of our economy, both public and private.

As a community we can no longer suffer detractors, and because time is not on our side I urge all to play their part and get on board and drive this issue to its finality – in the shortest possible time frame. The time for indecision and descent is long gone and our community, together with all the Zimbabwean people, as a whole, deserve far better, so let us get on with it and do it. It is within our grasp to turn Zimbabwe around and to deliver a level playing field on which we can all prosper.

Whether you are farming or not, living in Zimbabwe or abroad, the issue is the same for us all.

The current situation on the ground continues unabated albeit thankfully at a slower pace than before, but the reality is that Zimbabwean agriculture is being prevented from performing due to the unresolved issues, previously mentioned and we will again this year be totally reliant on donor support for our basic food requirement regardless of the weather.

Is it not time, that as a country we place our self imposed poverty to one side and re-engage sound economic principals upon which we can <u>all</u> thrive?

As the festive season is upon us please be aware of the increase of both petty and violent crime and rest assured that the Union and its staff remain committed to all our members at all times.

Take care and enjoy your well earned breaks.

2. EXECUTIVE NEWS

Apart from all the 'normal' problems facing agriculture in Zimbabwe at present the weather has been rather unpredictable these past weeks due to the presence of a large Botswana High Pressure Cell which has persistently covered most of the country. The pressure has been unusually high which has been seriously affecting the entry of any moisture systems thus keeping any widespread rains away.

So far the only 'general' rain that has fallen has been in the South East Lowveld and if you have observed the satellite weather pictures over the past week there has been a huge 'hole' over Zimbabwe. The ITCZ is also very far to the north over the Equator and it is usually only expected in early or mid February. What has been worrying many is the very scattered pattern of rainfall which has been recorded over our main dryland cropping areas where some farms have only received 32 mm of rain so far this season. There is also huge concern being expressed over the cool temperatures in the mornings in most areas – apart from the Lowveld anyway.

Although very hard to predict the satellite picture is looking more promising today as the cloud cover is moving in from our Western border. At the moment the prediction of the heaviest rain will fall in the middle of next week so at this stage we can only just hope and pray that the showers will be much more widespread and meaningful in the next few days.

As usual your office here in Harare has been extremely busy, and as expressed in the President's letter this week there is definitely an air of anticipation and confidence at the moment. We can only hope that something more tangible comes out of our present work.

This week there have been several meetings held, both inside and outside the building. The first was the Open Farmers' Meeting which was held at Wingate Golf Club. This was very well attended by at least 70 farmers and their wives with many more who had missed the meeting arriving later for the social event which was held afterwards. What was really appreciated after the meeting was Mr Keith Louw of Radzim's sponsorship behind the bar, which certainly put a lot of people in the real Christmas spirit!

President Taffs presented the skeleton of the current proposal which he is working on to the meeting where it received full support. The basic outline is covered in his letter above and could be summed up as follows:-

"Put the value of the land in the hands of the producer", which could almost become our new motto, as it says it all.

On Wednesday an extremely constructive and informative EXCO meeting was held and this was followed by CFU Council on Thursday, both of which fully endorsed the new initiative which is being formulated. Both committees were also briefed on the proposals for the possible sale of Agriculture House, which will only be finalised with full agreement of all parties concerned. At the Open Farmers' Meeting our legal advisor, Alex Masterson, assured the audience that all due process was being followed correctly and that the asset value would be fully protected and carefully invested should the proposal be finally concluded. There were no objections received from the floor.

The message which came from those who are still farming was that absolutely no finance had been available to them to grow their current crops and that in many cases the margins were extremely tight due to the high cost of inputs. Be assured that this is a challenge that your Union is aware of and has been trying to resolve. Although it is a multifaceted problem it all boils down to the respect of property rights which is the basis of the revised proposal which we are currently working on.

Towards the end of the President's letter this week he sent out a warning to people to be extremely vigilant with regard to personal and household security. He was in fact speaking from the personal experience of his wife this week who was robbed of her handbag at a popular shopping centre in

Harare, where her car window was smashed soon after she got back into her vehicle. Although the handbag and important contents were later recovered intact the cash was missing.

As usual the matter of communicating with our members came up and in response there was the admission that a lot of this was caused by the breakdown of our structures out there. As a result it was agreed that early in the New Year the President and a team will undertake a country tour. The biggest hindrance to this being undertaken over the last 12 months has been firstly financial constraints and secondly that there are just so few of us here at head office and the workload is tremendous. However, we are a membership based union and have made that commitment to get around the country soon to keep our members informed.

We are of course also funded by our members and we once again make the appeal to everyone out there, whether farming or not, to come back into the Union to firstly show your full support of what we are doing on your behalf and secondly to provide the necessary finance for us to continue operating. As the President said at his recent meetings we are defending at least 5 500 title deeds belonging to our members and if we could receive US\$ 100 for each title deed it would be the best investment any individual could make.

Should any of you have any other 'outside of the box' ideas on how to raise money to keep your Union afloat please contact President Taffs directly.

Since we have revamped the **CFU Calling** a few months ago we acknowledge that the email capacity of the document has increased somewhat significantly. Despite the ongoing discussions with the computer specialists we have not yet managed to diagnose the problem for which we apologise. Although, generally, our recipients have been very complimentary of the new look we have tried other programs which we can send it out in at a much lower size, albeit without any frills.

Last week's bulletin went out at 720KB and with our experimental no-frills attachment we could send it out to you at 120KB. Should you be having difficulty with downloading speeds and wish to have the "no-frills" version sent to you every week please email mashc@cfuzim.org so that we can put you on a special email group to allow you to download at a much shorter time.

Richard Winkfield's book, **The Bottom Line**, is selling like hot cakes so don't miss out on buying one for an ideal Christmas present. They are available from Mike Clark at your Union office.

RABIES ALERT

There have been an increasing number of Rabies infection in the stray dog population in Harare – more than 10 cases this year from most areas of Harare – Greystone Park, Mandara, Chisipite, Highlands, Greendale, Umwinsidale, Borrowdale, Pomona, Alex Park and Haig Park. These have mainly been rabid dogs, but also horses, a zebra, squirrel, bat and a duiker.

Rabies is an acute viral encephalitis, characterized by altered behaviour, aggressiveness, progressive paralysis and death. It occurs in all animals, including horses, wildlife and of course in humans. It is spread by a bite from (or even contact with saliva from) an infected animal. Once clinical signs develop, there is no cure.

However, animals and people can be protected from infection by vaccination. People do not need regular vaccinations if their animals are vaccinated; however if they come into contact with an infected or rabid animal, vaccinations are essential as soon as possible.

In Zimbabwe, all dogs by law must be vaccinated against Rabies, starting at three months of age, then one year and thereafter every three years. Cats are vaccinated every year. The veterinary profession encourages the public to act responsibly, making sure your pets are adequately vaccinated so that you, your family and neighbours are not at risk.

Stray dogs are often picked up by members of the public and taken into SPCA or local veterinary clinics. These people are at risk of getting infected if the stray is sick with Rabies so extreme caution is needed. If a dog is seen behaving strangely, it is better to call SPCA (04-576357; 04-581347; 0712 211 900) or VAWZ (0774 168 218) to collect it than intervene. Once a diagnosis of Rabies is made by the Government Veterinary Department, everyone who has been in contact with that dog is contacted so that they can go for a course of rabies vaccinations.

3. **SECURITY**

Although the situation has remained relatively quiet again this week there have been a few more incidents which were reported this week. Please keep the reports coming in on any incidents on your farms, either by phoning Mike Clark directly or else by emailing mashc@cfuzim.org It is extremely important that we continue to record everything in full detail.

This week we again sent out individual appeals to selected people whom we thought may be able to assist us in following up on **unsolved cases** of murder, robbery and assault. We have a new route which has only recently been opened up for us to take to follow up on these old cases which feel may not have been satisfactorily investigated and the accused never being brought to book.

What we are requiring in order to follow up on these cases is the following:

- Case Number and date RRB or CR numbers
- Name of Police Station which took the report
- Certified copy of original statement made to the Police

Should you be able to obtain the above please get them to Mike Clark or else scan and email to the above email address so that we can put a docket together for the investigators.

Our concern for a while has been that many of the cases involving our members have simply been allowed to go cold; or have been 'lost'; or have gone beyond the prescription period.

Initially we were only interested in murder, assault and armed robbery but we have found that there are many other categories of other criminal offences which we should also include.

BEITBRIDGE SCAM – FOREIGN PASSPORTS & ZIMBABWE ID / DRIVER LICENCES

The man responsible for taking bribes at the border has been identified, and removed from his post. Detectives in Bulawayo have begun recording Statement Affidavits as evidence against this man. If you or friends and family have had to pay a bribe please come forward so that a Statement Affidavit can be recorded.

TALKING ON A CELLPHONE WHILE DRIVING

This is an update to warn all motorists that you will no longer be fined or given community service, if you are caught talking on your cell phone whilst driving. Replacing the fine and community service is now JAIL. You will be arrested and taken to Court; you will then be sentenced to between 2-3 weeks in jail. That is now the sentence and you will now have a conviction and a Police Record. Please avoid using your cellphone when driving, as there is not monetary fine it is straight to Court.

4. <u>VALUATION CONSORTIUM NEWSLETTER 11/11</u> (From the desk of Graham Mullett)

A client and reader of our newsletter remarked pointedly a few days ago that we had not sent out anything for a while. True, but I confess that every time I start events overtake me. Unfortunately a lot of that which we would like to report is confidential.

Our dire predictions (July Newsletter) on the effect of the handful of farmers dealing directly with Ministry of Lands have proved more prophetic than we would have wished. The figures and methods have been given to the Donor and Diplomatic communities as the cheap way out. They are wrong and we are trying to set things right, sadly these self appointed experts persist and are really prejudicing the whole exercise. ARAC used the word "Nicodemously" to describe these actions, this strange word but valid, current mainly in Africa, means 'pursuing one's own agenda' or 'a secret adherent'.

Government used the same approach in Paris 2007 which we were able to counter having knowledge of all of the transactions and could argue the individual circumstances. This is not the case here and it is annoying that a few farmers can jeopardise the prospects of three thousand.

In the case of compulsory acquisition of immoveable property;

International conventions and Law are couched in terms of **equivalence**; simply put, after acquisition and compensation the affected owner should be financially NO better and NO worse off than before the compulsory purchase. No physical restitution is required.

I have just spent some time reviewing the 24 Newsletters sent out since the beginning of 2009. Not quite monthly!

In some ways this was a disappointing exercise, our expectations with the Government of National Unity (GNU) have been dashed and the Bad Guys are still firmly in control. The credit crunch and Global financial problems have impacted on our expectations. Progress has been much slower than we hoped.

We have good news in that we have been involved in discussions with the relevant bodies, Zim Govt, Donors and World Bank and the principle of Compensation has been firmly established. The bad news (which always follows) is that the proposed donor input will be much lower than we hoped. This issue will be linked to other land issues such as the Land Audit and the work of the Land Commission as part of a plan to create Land Tenure and allow for new agriculture. The delays are all on the part of the Zim Govt and this is frustrating our benefactors who want to see the country move forward.

When we brought up the issue of Restitution with the Principal Donor we received a very cold answer. Restitution they said is a double edged sword and while we talk of restitution for dispossessed farmers they talk of restitution for the indigenous occupiers displaced by the white farmers. This political stance however fallacious has been adopted as an expediency to avoid the issue which will not be addressed by any Zimbabwean Politcos.

M Redfern comments; Restitution. I am sure that my case has been, or will be described by thousand others. "Restitution for the indigenous occupiers displaced by the white farmers "Pah! When I bought my property in 1988 there was not even a squatter camped on it. Bought in terms of Govt of Zim legislation, mind you, but I suppose that if the Principal Donor can trace the original squatters/occupiers displaced by Lionel Cripps/ C. J. Rhodes esq. in 1895 or thereabouts, then no doubt a suitable bun fight can be entered into.

I am sure this reflects the general feeling so end of discussion.

The upside of the same conversation was that future rural land tenure will not be restricted by race or creed in the new system, Zim nationality or residence however may be a criterion. Our time schedule for compensation has now slid forward to 2013 or 2014.

VERIFICATION (as per previous newsletter but important)

We are in the process of verifying all the information on the database using satellite imagery within Google earth pro, there is a timeline so we can look at older imagery. This is particularly helpful for

farms that were registered within the last few years without a previous valuation or access to the actual property for verification.

If you have not done so please come in and arrange to sit down with our technicians and identify the improvements on their properties, this would assist us greatly and help complete the process a lot quicker. Please contact Dyllan or Shallon by either replying to this Email or by calling the office: ± 263 (4) ± 746654 .

If you are not able to come in because you are out of town or country, we can email you an image of the improvements on your farm for identification and can then verify sizes etc at our offices.

For the more IT savvy you could use a Photoshop program and overwrite the image or even create your own using Google Earth or similar with your own overwrite showing details such as fencing and pipelines. These would be on the basis of what was on the farm before the current depredations.

5. TRAUMA COUNSELLING

Over the years your Union has held a number of workshops, or meetings, where volunteers have come forward to help farmers and their families deal with the horrors of what has happened to their lives over the past 11 years with their dispossession of their homes, businesses and farms etc.

Whilst these workshops have been incredibly useful and very appreciated it has been felt that these short term counselling sessions have offered only a temporary fix to many people who are still suffering the effects of the trauma and how to deal with it so many years later.

We are therefore very pleased to have been offered the services of a fully qualified psychologist who has volunteered to offer the service free to anyone who is in need of counselling. If there is anyone who would like to take advantage of this service please contact either Ben Gilpin or Mike Clark at the Union where requests for information on the counselling will be treated in the strictest confidence.

6. CHRISTMAS SHUTDOWN

It has come to that time of year when both your elected leadership and the CFU staff are making plans to enjoy a well earned break over the Christmas period. In order to allow a few to go off earlier for an extended holidays with their families during the School Holidays a few have already gone. However, we are maintaining a skeleton staff to keep operations running smoothly until **21 December 2011** when the office will be closed until reopening on **3 January 2012**.

Starting next week we will publish a list of contact numbers of whom you will be able to contact, in case of problems occurring during the shutdown period.

7. <u>ANTI-HIJACK UPDATE FOR NOVEMBER 2011</u> (Repeat from last week)

As the school holidays fast approaches and the festive season sets in, SAFETY, SECURE, & PEACE OF MIND stand out As the plans for relaxing and fun time with family and friends start taking shape please make sure the plans for home, work premises, staff and domestics pets are also in place. Check all security systems, remotes, gates etc are all in good working order, become more ALERT of surroundings and environments and report any suspicious loitering or disturbances in your area. Have a backup plan to have a responsible and reliable person/people to check on this if you are away. Do NOT leave tell tale signs of 'AWAY' this will be noted and taken full advantage of...... This is a warning not a scare!

House robberies are still ongoing, the gangs are not shy, and will harm you if you try to resist them. There have been some reports of the elderly being attacked, pushed around and tied up, the bottom line being CASH MONEY and at this time of the year with bonuses and 'extra' cash

around we are all vulnerable targets. Be careful at all times, do NOT have large sums of money stashed away.

- Keep gates locked at all times with a STRONG padlock.
- Never allow ANYONE onto your property without verifying their identity, this includes the Police, domestic staff should have a telephone number on which to contact you should they need to.
- Keep front & back doors shut and locked during the day if possible.
- Check your alarm systems every 2-4 weeks. Ensure the alarm is ON when you retire. Entry & exit doors should be shut and locked from 1700 hrs daily.
- Remove & replace old, rusty burglar bars with strong ones.
- Ensure mobile phones are with you when you retire to bed, not left in the living areas, you may need them. Keep emergency numbers handy.
- Ensure ALL windows are shut at night (except bedroom ones if necessary)
- Outside lights are a deterrent to burglars, power permitting leave as many on as you can afford.
- Dogs should sleep INSIDE the house. They are there to warn you, not save you.
- Do NOT allow domestics or guards to have keys to the house.
- Some homes are robbed at 0600 hrs, check the back door before opening it...
- If going out for the evening, leave inside lights on and a radio or the TV.
- If you have an electric fence, switch it ON when you go out.
- If your dogs don't come and greet you on your return, be suspicious.
- Install a metal grille across your doors leading out if you want to keep the doors open whilst you are sitting inside.
- If you have a remote for your alarm system, hang it round your neck whilst you are home during the day, you may need assistance in a hurry.
- Lock your cars at night even if they are in a locked garage.

Above all, if you suspect that there are intruders in your home at night, DO NOT GO AND INVESTIGATE. Try to move ALL into one room, lock yourselves in and use the phones to ring for help. If this fails, CO-OPERATE with the intruders, resisting or trying to fight back may endanger your life and that of your family.

Let's ALL fight this crime together - stay ALERT and SAFE!

ANTIHIJACK TRUST: Email: hijack@zol.co.zw or hijack@zol.co.zw

8. **DISCOUNTERS CLUB**

The Gary Bell Trust Golf Day held on 2nd December was well attended and a total of 18 Christmas Special Cards were issued to participants. The Discounters Club Team comprising of Richard Taylor, Charles Taffs, Jason Ridely and Ian Bishop looked very smart in their Discounter Club T-Shirts as did the team manning the stand. This proved to be a good platform to interact business with a little pleasure. More contacts were made and some of the golfers have asked to be contacted with regarding to signing up as partners and this is being pursued and followed up.

We look forward to receiving any of your comments or suggestions. We would like this to become a **MEMBER** driven organization, so let us know what you think and also who you would like to see become Partners of the Club in the future. We can then target these organizations and try to get them on board so that you can enjoy your discount savings when shopping at your favourite shops. Please e-mail rtaylor@cfuzim.org or debbie@cfuzim.org or robyn@discountersclub.com for any input.

The updating of the website has been concluded so visit www.discountersclub.com to see what savings you can obtain using your card when making purchases country wide.

Richard and Debbie would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very Blessed Christmas and peaceful, prosperous new year.

ZIMBABWE CROP PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION

PRODUCER PRICES

Commodity	GMB 🕾	Kurima Gold	Staywell	Croplink	Agrifoods	Pro Group
	04- 794079	04-745973/6/8	04-303021	04- 490810	04- 756101-5	04- 669400
White Maize	285	Grade A/B 240 payment 14 days transfer Grade A/B 230 cash Grade C 230 payment 14 days transfer Grade C 220 cash	255	240-250 quality dependent	250	255
Yellow Maize	285	-	240	230	250	-
Maize Bran	100	-	-	-	160	140/150
Soya beans	500	610 payment 14 days transfer	620	595	600	600
Soya bean Meal	-	-	-	-	630	-
Wheat	TBA	Premium - 410 Standard - 400 Utility 1 - 390 Undergrade – to be negotiated Payment all 30 days transfer	410	400	-	410
Wheat Bran	-	-	-	-	160	160
Groundnuts	400 unshelled	-	Grade A shelled 900	800	-	-
Sugar Beans	800	1150 payment 14 days transfer	1200	1000	-	1200
Sorghum	285	-	255	250	-	-
NOTES:	_	-	-	-	-	-

Producer Prices

South African Grain Information Services (SAGIS)
South African Foreign Exchange (SAFEX) 7th December 2011

Commodity	Rand/tonne	US\$/Tonne	Import Parity Rand/Tonne	Import Parity US\$/Tonne
White Maize	1862	231	2022	251
Yellow Maize	1873	233	2033	253
Wheat	2950	366	3110	386
Soyabeans	3320	412	3480	432
Sunflowers	3895	484	4055	504

International Gulf

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Commodity	US\$/Tonne	Import Parity US\$/Tonne		
Wheat	293	443		
Maize	258	408		
Sorghum	276	426		
Soyabeans	445	595		

10. BUSINESS CHAMBER (from the desk of Richard Taylor)

We wait for news from Afexim Bank. As soon as I hear from them I will be writing to all those that have submitted proposals informing you of the status with this facility

With the other options that we are pursuing for finance, we are moving forward with these, but we are learning that when it comes to Zim, finance and risk, this is a lengthy process. We do and will continue to strive to find avenues which will allow cheaper facilities for all business sectors.

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

This past week, Nestle Zimbabwe, held a handing over ceremony in Kwekwe where three dairy farmers were allocated 200 head of dairy cows between them. The animals were imported from South Africa and comprised a mixture of popular breeds. About thirty people attended the function which was well organised.

Milk deliveries to Processors continues to increase marginally month on month and was 400,000 litres above the intake for October 2010. Processors report that milk quality continues to improve. However, the threat of imported products remains a huge challenge.

We hope our producers have received, and will continue to receive adequate rain that will result in the veld and pastures greening up which always boosts production. The downside is that the wet weather normally results in increased incidence of mastitis and milk quality takes a dip.

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

12. CATTLE PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION

VENUE	MT. HAMPDEN		BULAWAYO SHOWGROUNDS	
DATE	05.12.11		02.12.11	
	AVE. PRICE	AVERAGE	AVE. PRICE	AVERAGE
GRADE	NO. OF CATTLE	PER KG LV WT	NO. OF CATTLE	PER KG LV WT
SUPER	26	2.32		N/A
CHOICE	N/A	N/A		N/A
COMMERCIAL	7	1.97		1.85
ECONOMY	45	1.68		1.75
MANUFACTURING	10	1.4		1.4
WEANER HEIFERS	10	1.69		3
BULLING HEIFERS	8	1.61		3.5

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WEANER STEERS	18	1.82	2
LONG WEANER HEIFER	22	1.73	N/A
LONG WEANER STEER	5	1.72	N/A
FEEDER STEERS	54	1.99	2.1
COMM WEANER			
STEERS	N/A	N/A	N/A
COMM WEANER			
HEIFERS	N/A	N/A	N/A
BULL	4	1.80	1.7
COW & CALF	N/A	N/A	N/A
CONDEMNED	10	1.21	N/A

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 dir2@cfuzim.org

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