

Update: Horticulture Wage Increase

Members are advised that the Horticulture wage has been **increased by 5%** with effect from the **1st of December, 2014**. The new schedule is as follows:

GRADE	OLD WAGE	NEW WAGE
A1	78	82
A2	84	88
A3	91	96
B1	98	103
B2	105	110
B3	113	119
B4	123	129
B5	132	139
C1	143	150
C2	154	162

For those employers in the Horticulture sub sector who are unable to afford this increase I advise you to apply to the NEC for an exemption without delay. Should you require assistance in this regard, please do not hesitate to contact me on marc@cfuzim.org

On Friday the 5th of December, 2014 I attended the first Horticulture wage negotiation meeting at the NEC to represent the interests of CFU members.

The initial position of the employers was that in light of the very bad state of the economy generally and the poor viability of horticultural production particularly there was no room to offer any increase.

The employees through their Trade Unions on the other hand presented an eloquent paper demanding an increase to a minimum wage of US\$ 100.00 based on the poverty datum line for an individual which they claimed to be US \$ 154.00. However they made it clear from the outset that they were open to negotiations. After much pontificating and haggling, the Trade Unions made an informal offer of US \$ 82.00 as the minimum representing a 5% increase.

After much deliberation and based on the following factors this offer was accepted:

- If the matter had deadlocked it would have been referred to arbitration and an award would have been much the same with an element of back pay, I therefore believed that this was probably the best outcome that was possible in the situation,
- There was some pressure coming from the other employer groups and an officer from the Ministry of Labour to accept the offer,

I stressed the point that the acceptance of the proposed increase be conditional on no demands for back pay and that the way be left clear for those employers in genuine trouble being able to apply for exemptions.

Marc Carrie-Wilson

Deputy Director

Commercial Farmers' Union of Zimbabwe

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