

FRIDAY BRIEF

WEEK 08, 2016

THIS Week's Highlights

- **COMMUNIQUE OF THE ZNFU SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING**
- **ZNFU AND TAZ MEET ZRA DOMESTIC TAX COMMISSIONER TO DISCUSS VAT OFFSET ON TOBACCO**
- **PRESIDENT EDGAR LUNGU PLEDGES TO SUPPORT THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR**
- **FARMERS WELCOME ZESCO TARIFF REVERSAL**
- **WATER HARVESTING PROJECT HOLDS PLENNARY MEETING IN ZAMBIA**

..... SEE DETAILED UPDATES BELOW.....

INDUSTRY UPDATES

COMMUNIQUE OF THE ZNFU SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

The Zambia National Farmers' Union (ZNFU) held a Special Council Meeting on February 15, 2016 at Mulungushi International Conference Centre in Lusaka.

The purpose of the Special Meeting was to:

- a) Inform the ZNFU Council members of the background and current status of the on-going special audit at ZNFU
- b) Consider the road map of finalizing the on-going audit as proposed by the meeting of the ZNFU board and Co-operating partners on February 5, 2016.
- c) Agree on the way forward of expediting the winding up of Lizara Investment Ltd.

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The Special Council Meeting reaffirmed ZNFU's commitment to upholding the highest standards of transparency and accountability of all ZNFU and Donor resources. The Council also reassured all ZNFU members, Co-operating partners and Stakeholders that all necessary, appropriate and legal measures within its mandate, will be taken to resolve any audit finding that will be contained in the Final Report. The Council RESOLVED the following:

- (i) The Council reiterated the need to speed up the conclusion of the on-going audit so that the final audit report is used to provide the basis for the Council to make necessary decisions and/or take appropriate action(s) at its next ordinary meeting scheduled for April/beginning of May 2016.
- (ii) The Council requested the ZNFU management to provide responses to the second formal draft audit report as requested by and agreed with the co-operating partners.
- (iii) The Council requested the ZNFU board to follow up with the Zambia Institute of Chartered Accountants (ZICA) and obtain a response on the progress made this far on the request by the ZNFU Board for ZICA to review the entire audit process and the findings of the preliminary audit report.
- (iv) The Council urged the ZNFU Board and management to continue engaging the cooperating partners until the audit process is completed.

On Lizara, the ZNFU Council reaffirmed its 2014 resolution to dissolve Lizara Investment Ltd and requested the ZNFU board to seek legal representation to expedite the winding up of Lizara and the transfer of Zanaco shares to ZNFU.

Issued By
Dr Evelyn Nguleka

ZNFU AND TAZ MEET ZRA DOMESTIC TAX COMMISSIONER TO DISCUSS VAT OFFSET ON TOBACCO

ZNFU and Tobacco Association of Zambia (TAZ) on Friday 19th February 2016, afternoon met the Commissioner for Domestic Taxes, Mrs Banda at the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) head office in Lusaka to push for the extension of the VAT offset system on tobacco. ZNFU and TAZ appealed to ZRA to grant the VAT offset system in order to protect the subsector from collapsing as a result of an unfavourable tax regime that makes Zambian tobacco expensive compared to other countries in the region such as Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mozambique. ZRA was also informed during the meeting that tobacco subsector is currently employing over 40,000 people and is a major contributor of forex to the national treasury.

In response, ZRA indicated that they will look into the issues raised over the request for extension of VAT offset arrangement and would provide feedback to the Union in due course.

PRESIDENT EDGAR LUNGU PLEDGES TO SUPPORT THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR

His Excellency the Republican President of Zambia Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu visited Namwala district on 13th February to check on developmental projects in the district. Among the projects the President visited were the district hospital, the Niko-Monze road in Bweengwa area and the construction of the Artificial Insemination Centre. The President was accompanied by the Minister of Agriculture Fisheries and Livestock Honourable Greyford Monde. The president later addressed a rally at Namwala down town ground where he pledged to continue supporting the livestock industry.

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FARMERS WELCOME ZESCO TARIFF REVERSAL

Farmers in Mkushi have welcomed the move by government to reverse the ZESCO tariffs which had suddenly risen to uneconomic levels. During farm visits, farmers explained that the sharp increase in electricity tariffs heavily affected the cost of production on the farms. Meanwhile, Mkushi Farmers Association chairperson Mr. Nick De Kock has called on ZNFU to engage government and come up with a progressive incremental approach which will be favourable to the agricultural sector taking into consideration the prevailing economic situation.

WATER HARVESTING PROJECT HOLDS PLENNARY MEETING IN ZAMBIA

The Water Harvesting for Rain fed Africa (WAHARA), a project investing in dryland agriculture for growth and resilience, last week held its plenary meeting in Livingstone. the WAHARA project which was launched in 2011 has been working on developing, exchanging, improving and sharing lessons on water harvesting techniques in 4 different sites in Africa namely Tunisia, Bukina Faso, Ethiopia and Zambia. During the meeting, presentations and discussions of the results of the project as well as extensive exchange of ideas and experiences on water harvesting with the participants was done.

The meeting also included field visits to the WAHARA study sites in Magoye and Batoka of Southern Province. The visits allowed the research team and the farmers to interact. The interaction also gave stakeholders an insight on the local uptake and adaptation of water harvesting techniques in areas that needed to cope with erratic rainfall. Farmers from all the four countries appreciated the meeting and the lessons drawn from various countries.

The WAHARA Project Coordinator, Dr Rudi Hessel, thanked all the stakeholders present for their support and contributions. ZNFU was represented by the Southern B Regional Manager, Lomadinga Kasauka.

ALERTS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

ZAMBIAN FARMER TV PROGRAMME

*Don't miss next week's episode of the **Zambian Farmer TV programme on Goat Production.***

The "Zambian Farmer" is a ZNFU sponsored programme which is aired every Monday at 18:25hrs and repeated on Thursdays at 12:30 hrs on the ZAMBIA National Broadcaster Corporation, ZNBC TV1. You can also buy DVDs of your favourite Zambian Farmer TV program episodes from the ZNFU Head Office or you can make an order through your respective DFA office

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1ST AKTC FARMERS' INDABA



AKTC cordially invites interested wheat farmers to its first Farmers' Indaba.

Fungicide and growth regulator strategies for wheat under irrigation with spreading of a cover crop

By Mr. Joseph Thoma, MSc. Agric. Science

Mr. Thoma is an experienced agricultural extension worker and works for the Smart Farming & Internationalization Agri-Services of BayWa AG Germany. In his presentation Mr Thoma will emphasize on the visualisation of relevant pathogens and the prevention and control of fungal diseases in wheat. He will give recommendations for fungicide use based on approved products in Zambia and the optimal spray technology. He will also advise on growth regulator use in wheat.

New to commercial farming in Zambia might be the use of cover crops e.g. in Soya. Mr Thoma will give an introduction to the benefits of cover crops. This topic is as well of special interest for farmers who keep cattle.

BayWa AG was founded in 1923 in Munich, Germany and is today with over 17,000 employees the leading trading and service group with the core segments agriculture, energy and building material. It works from over 3.000 locations in 30 countries.

The AKTC Farmers' Indaba will start with a presentation by Mr Innocent Maphango from the University of Zambia, Department of Agricultural Engineering:

Irrigation and how to achieve zero wastage of water

A panel discussion with Mr Thomas and Mr Maphango will provide room for further in depth discussions.

Target group: Farmers with the possibility of controlled irrigation during dry season.

Entrance fee: Free

Date: Thursday, 25th of February 2016

Time: 8:30 to 13:00

Venue: Conference Hall

Golden Valley Agricultural Research Trust (GART)
65km north of Lusaka along T2

Useful links: www.baywa.com

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Please register by sending an email to: registration@aktczambia.com

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

CENTRAL REGION

FARMERS CALL FOR REMOVAL OF GRAIN LEVIES

Farmers in Mkushi have expressed displeasure at Mkushi Council for the unstable position on a number of levies being charged on farmers. This follows recent information from the local authority that the committee on finance has thrown away the agreed revised rates on grain levies and livestock movement. In a meeting convened early this year to discuss the renewing of the MOU between Mkushi Council and Mkushi Farmers Association, it was agreed to reduce grain levies from K0.90 to K0.45 per 50 kg while cattle and small livestock movement levies would reduce from K15.00 to K10 and K7.00 to K5.00 per animal respectively. Sadly, these rates have been reversed without consulting the farmers. The farmers who interacted with the ZNFU this week are deeply saddened with Mkushi Council for lack of commitment to honour agreements and hence the call on government to remove the grain levy.

SENIOR CHIEF CHIPEPO URGES ZNFU TO REMAIN FOCUSED

Senior Chief Chipepo of the Lenje speaking people of Kabwe district has urged the ZNFU to remain focused and continue fighting for the Zambian farmers. The Senior Chief said this when a team of officers from NATSAVE Bank and ZNFU paid a courtesy call at his palace this week. Senior Chief Chipepo who is one of the many beneficiaries of the ZNFU Bunjimi Asset Plus loan facility in the Province encouraged ZNFU not to be derailed by offensive media reports, but remain focused for the good of the Zambian farmers. He further urged a sizeable group of farmers that had gathered at his palace to register in numbers as members of ZNFU so as to benefit from a number of services offered by the organisation.

EASTERN A REGION

FRA OFFLOADS MAIZE TO THE PUBLIC IN CHADIZA

Due to increased food shortages in the district, the Food Reserve Agency in Chadiza has offloaded 600 by 50 Kilogram bags of Maize for sale to the public. A 50 Kilogram bag was being sold at K 80.00 and each person was only allowed to buy 2 x 50kgs bags. The demand for maize is likely to increase in the near future due to poor rainfall pattern which has been experienced in the district.

Meanwhile a 25 kg of breakfast Mealie Meal is selling at K 105.00 in retail shops which has forced most of the residents prefer to buy Maize instead of Mealie Meal. The residents have since appealed to ZNFU to engage government on their behalf and negotiate for more Maize to be offloaded by FRA for sale to the public.

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MUCHINGA REGION

NEW FUEL SERVICE STATION OPENS IN ISOKA

The first ever fuel service station has been opened in Isoka town by a private company named LPM Investments. The filling station which was commissioned this week has brought happiness to the people of Isoka who, for a long time, have been buying fuel from Nakonde, Chinsali, and from vendors as an alternative. Lack of a fuel service stations in the district has in the past been making the cost of doing business very high.

COMACO LAUNCHES S3P PROGRAM IN MUCHINGA PROVINCE

Community Market for Conservation (COMACO) in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture in Muchinga province this week on Tuesday finally launched the S3P program in Chinsali. S3P is a program which is aimed at promoting the productivity and marketing of Rice, Beans, Soya and Cassava in the three provinces namely Muchinga, Northern and Luapula. In Muchinga, the program will operate in 5 districts and Chinsali is one of them. The program has been funded to the tune of K27 million and is targeting not less than 18,000 beneficiaries in project area within the province.

The launch was attended by stakeholders from all the corners of the province. The Permanent Secretary for Muchinga, Bright Nundwe, was the guest of honor. Mr. Nundwe challenged farmers in the province to take farming seriously and become a food basket for the nation as the area is blessed with good soils and a good rainfall pattern compared to other provinces which are experiencing droughts. During the launch, senior lead farmers for COMACO were awarded with bicycles which are meant to help them with transport as they provide trainings and services to farmers.

NORTHERN REGION

MPULUNGU FARMERS HAPPY WITH S3P TRAININGS

Farmers in Mpulungu have expressed happiness at the knowledge they are acquiring from the Small Holder Production Productivity Project (S3P). Some farmers talked to from Kalongola and Kavumbu Information Centers of Mpulungu DFA said that the knowledge they are acquiring will help them adopt new agricultural practices and diversify into other crops other than maize.

The project which was introduced early last year by Zambian Government in the Ministry of Agriculture is being implemented in 5 agricultural camps in the district. This project is being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Funded by IFAD. The project aims at equipping farmers with the best agronomical knowledge and practices in order to encourage sustainable agriculture and promote household food security. The project is mostly focused on improving production of Rice, Cassava, Beans, Groundnuts and Maize.

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NORTH-WESTERN A REGION

MWINILUNGA COUNCIL UPGRADES URBAN ROADS TO BITUMINOUS STANDARD

The Mwinilunga District Council under the Ministry of Local Government and Housing has started upgrading approximately 16.1 kilometres Mwinilunga District urban or township roads to bituminous standard. The project is funded by the National Road Fund Agency (NRFA) and the local authority has engaged China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation Zambia Limited and Nakangea Construction Limited to do the road works.

DUPONT PIONEER TOGETHER WITH MUSIKA LAUNCHES THE ZAMBIA ADVANCED MAIZE ADOPTION PROGRAMME (ZAMSAP) IN SOLWEZI DISTRICT

DuPont pioneer in partnership with Musika on 15th February, 2016 launched the Zambia Advanced Maize Adoption Programme (ZAMSAP). The launch which took place at St. Francis in Solwezi district was graced by the new permanent secretary for North Western Province, Ephraim Mateyo. The programme is aimed at boosting productivity for smallholder farmers and provide market facilitation support that incorporates smallholder farmers into a strong commodity supply chain. The occasion was attended by heads of government departments and other stakeholders. The ZAMSAP project will be piloted in four district namely Kasempa, Mufumbwe, Kabompo and Solwezi and will run for a period of 4 years.

NORTH-WESTERN B REGION

FARMERS URGED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HIGH TOMATO AND VEGETABLE PRICES

Fruits and Vegetable farmers in Chavuma district of North Western Province have been urged to take advantage of the ever-increasing prices for tomatoes and vegetables to make good money. Speaking during a training that took place at Chavuma District Farmers' Association (DFA) offices on Wednesday this week, the DFA Fruits & Vegetables Commodity Representative, Pimpa Habenzu, said farmers needed to take advantage of the high tomato prices during this period. Mr. Habenzu said vegetables are hard to grow during this rainy period but very profitable to those that manage to grow them. Mr. Habenzu further said that it is better to concentrate on growing of Tomatoes than other crops because of the good price the crop is fetching on the market.

WESTERN REGION

ALL IS SET FOR THE SECOND CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE STAKEHOLDERS' INDABA

Concern Worldwide will convene a Conservation Agriculture Stakeholders' Indaba on 23rd February, 2016 to be held at the District Agriculture Coordinator's office (DACO) in Kaoma. This will be the second indaba in a series of 12 planned monthly stakeholders' meetings which have been planned.

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The main objectives of the Indaba are: -

- To enhance effective coordination and collaboration between the local stakeholders.
- To enhance the adoption of CA technology across the district and beyond.
- To provide increased opportunities for marketing of diverse improved seeds and fertilizers at local level.
- To identify opportunities for marketing of produce at community and district levels.

In the first indaba which was held last month, only 8 stakeholders were present, but the number is expected to double in the second meeting.

EASTERN B REGION

KATETE DACO HAPPY WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF THE E-VOUCHER SYSTEM

The District Agriculture Coordinator (DACO) for Katete, Robson Musendo, has expressed happiness with the introduction of the e- voucher system on the Farmer Input Support Program (FISP) in the district. The DACO said that the e-voucher system which was piloted in 13 districts last season has proved to be efficient and a safe way of doing business under the FISP program hence the need to continue implementing it in Katete as well as extend the program to other districts. This came to light when the ZNFU Eastern B Regional Manager, David Chandalala visited the DACO's office.

LONG DRY SPELL AFFECTS MAIZE CROP

The long dry spell in most parts of Petauke district has affected the maize crop to a great extent. The dry spell which has taken more than three weeks now in some areas has caused the maize crop to start drying up due to lack of sufficient moisture to support the crops. The dry spell came at a time when the maize reached a critical stage of tasseling where more water is required. This realization came as a result of the field monitoring exercise being conducted by ZNFU field staff in Petauke on Lima Credit Scheme farmers. Farmers are now worried that if the situation does not improve then hunger is eminent in the district.

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