

FRIDAY BRIEF

WEEK 43, 2016

This Week's Highlights.....

- FARMERS CONCERNED WITH THE GENERAL OUTLOOK OF THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR
- ZNFU AGRIBUSINESS MEMBERS TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING THE ZNFU LIMA CREDIT SCHEME
- FISP E-VOUCHER DELAYS WORRY COPPERBELT FARMERS

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

INDUSTRY UPDATES

FARMERS CONCERNED WITH THE GENERAL OUTLOOK OF THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

Farmers in Mkushi and Chisamba district are concerned with the general outlook of the agriculture sector and have observed that the sector is heading for more challenging times. They have indicated that most farmers will remain poor as it is becoming extremely difficult for farming to make economic sense in the country. Sharing experiences during the Mkushi and Chisamba Annual General Meetings held on 19th and 20th October, 2016 respectively, the farmers observed and highlighted the following;

- That the beef sub sector is experiencing huge difficulties and challenges. This is mainly due to the fluctuation of the Kwacha in relation to the USA dollar, the reduction in rainfall in 2015/2016 season, low beef market prices, high cost of production, high inflation rate and high occurrence of cattle rustling.
- The 34% increase in the price of fuel will significantly increase the cost of production and reduce net income because the price for agricultural commodities does not increase with the increase in line with the increase in the production costs and are usually far below import parity prices.
- The anticipated increase in labor wages by more than 15% will also make it difficult to maintain workers.
- That unfriendly policies under WARMA where unnecessary penalties are charged on farmers will affect the sector. They also called for ZNFU influence and representation on the WARMA board.

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- The expected increase in electricity tariffs by an excess of 200% if not implemented in phases will add huge costs to the sector.
- Recurrent and multiplicity of Grain and livestock levies in different district councils is also exerting huge financial pressure to the farmers.
- Persistent importation of chicken portions by the chain stores which are directly competing with the local products being produced by the small-scale farmers when the country has more than sufficient to supply the domestic and export market is a source of concern.
- New regulations under Zambia Medicines Regulations Act (ZMRA) will have a ripple effect on the livestock value chain among others as the costs of key inputs are likely to go up due to new fees and charges being imposed on the industry by ZMRA.
- low wheat contract prices offered by millers are also a source of concern and a threat to the subsector.

Meanwhile the ZNFU acting President, Richard Lisimba, gave detailed information on the ZNFU position on the ongoing audit issues surrounding the institution and assured farmers that the ZNFU is still actively lobbying for the sector and called for continued support from the farmers as the audit process goes on. He indicated that the Union had fruitful discussions with the Minister of Agriculture among others on a number of concerns affecting the sector and hoped for a positive outcome.

Mkushi DFA Chairperson, Nico de Kock emphasized the need to reduce the cost of doing business and the need to reduce unnecessary road blocks.

And the outgoing chairperson for Chisamba DFA Mr. G Ménage praised the farmers for their support in the 4 years of his leadership and urged the ZNFU to remain focused and continue with its mandate of lobbying for the agriculture sector. Mr. Andreas Spyron was elected as new chairperson for Chisamba DFA replacing Mr. Ménage.

ZNFU AGRIBUSINESS MEMBERS TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING THE ZNFU LIMA CREDIT SCHEME

Members of the Agribusiness Chamber have told the ZNFU that they will continue supporting the Lima Credit Scheme to accelerate participation of private sector players in inputs market and help promote financial inclusion of smallholder farmers. The members said this during a meeting held at ZNFU Head Quarters on Thursday 20th October 2016. On the FISP e-voucher program, members urged ZNFU to ensure that cards are distributed early and also to limit participation to agro-dealers with good reputation.

However, Agribusiness Chamber Members were concerned with unpredictable grains export policy by government. Members asked ZNFU to continue lobbying government for predictable export policy in order to stimulate production and investment in the agriculture sector.

FISP E-VOUCHER DELAYS WORRY COPPERBELT FARMERS

The delays in processes associated with the newly introduced electronic voucher system under the Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP e-voucher) has caused worry among many beneficiary farmers on the Copperbelt. The farmers have expressed doubt as to whether the system will work this farming season as very little seems to have been done so far. The farmers in Luanshya district expressed worry that not even the farmer contributions of K400 per pack have been accepted for deposit as is the case with the districts where the old system of dispensing inputs is still being used.

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Farmers have since appealed to authorities concerned to expedite the process of obtaining inputs under the new system because any further delays may result into late planting and ultimately affect overall production.

Meanwhile some districts on the Copperbelt which are not using the new e-voucher system have received all inputs. The inputs have already been delivered to various agricultural camps ready for distribution to the beneficiary farmers. The three rural districts of Mpongwe, Masaiti and Lugwanyama on the Copperbelt have confirmed receiving all inputs required for this season's FISP programme.

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

UPCOMING AGRICULTURAL HOLIDAYS

Independence Day 24th October

Christmas Day – 25th December

UPCOMING EVENTS

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ZNFU COUNCIL MEETING AND THE 111TH ANNUAL CONGRESS

DATES: 26th-28th October 2016

VENUE: Mulungushi International Conference Centre

ZAMBIA FARM EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATION UPDATE

ZFEA and NUPAAW have not reached settlement yet but an agreement is expected to be reached before end of October. The Unions have indicated that they would settle at 22%, and ZFEA have offered 12%. Existing minimum 2015/16 wages are still in effect.

THE 2016 ZAMBIA-CHINA PEOPLE TO PEOPLE EXCHANGE THROUGH CULTURE, TOURISM, TRADE AND INVESTMENT PROMOTION ROADSHOW

The Zambia Development Agency (ZDA) in collaboration with the Ministry Commerce, Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Tourism in Zambia, the Zambian Embassy in China with support from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs among others, will be undertaking a Cultural and Business Promotion Road show in seven (7) cities of China between 10th of October and 5th of November 2016.

The purpose of the road show is to enhance Zambia's visibility in China and deepen cooperation between Zambia and China in areas of trade, investment, tourism and culture as well further promote people to people exchange between the two countries. The show will run alongside the business seminars which will highlight Zambia's Tourism, Investment and Trade opportunities.

The Zambia Development Agency therefore has invited Zambia National Farmers' Union members to be part of the delegation that will travel to China to attend this important roadshow on the dates stated above. Kindly note that individual companies will have to meet their own accommodation and travel cost.

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Kindly confirm your acceptance of this invitation by contacting;
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And copied to Mr. Aaron Mutale of email: aaronmutale@yahoo.com

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

NORTH WESTERN REGION

SOLWEZI DC CHALLENGES AGRO-DEALERS TO MAKE THE E-VOUCHER A SUCCESS

Solwezi District Commissioner, Rose Kamalanga, has called on all approved agro-dealers participating in the electronic voucher program under the Farmer Input Support Program(FISP) in Solwezi to have a positive attitude in order for the implementation the e-voucher to be a success.

Mrs. Kamalanga said this at a meeting with agrodealers and stakeholders convened by the Ministry of Agriculture on Friday 14th October, 2016, held at the provincial administration offices for North Western Province. She urged agro-dealers to be mindful of the time they open their business premises (agro shops) so that farmers are served within the specified time.

The District Commissioner further advised agro dealers to present their challenges to the Ministry of Agriculture, the ZNFU or MUSIKA so that all problems encountered are solved within the shortest possible time. Mrs. Kamalanga further challenged seed and fertilizer stockists to stock enough inputs in different varieties so as to cater for the preferences of all small-scale farmer beneficiaries.

FUEL PRICE INCREASE SADDENS FARMERS

Farmers of Kasempa district are disappointed with the recent increase in fuel pump price effected by the government. Some farmers who visited the ZNFU Kasempa offices complained that the increase in the fuel price will also lead to an upsurge in production costs for agriculture commodities.

Meanwhile, a 50Kg bag of compound D fertilisers in Kasempa is being sold at K450 while a 50kg of Urea fertilizers is fetching at K430.

KABOMBO DAC MEETS TO ALLOCATE FISP INPUTS

The District Agriculture Committee(DAC) in Kabompo this week conducted a meeting to allocate agricultural inputs to co-operators under the Farmer Input Support Program (FISP). During the meeting, Kabompo DAC chairperson Christopher Matakala made an appeal to all the stakeholders involved in the distribution of FISP inputs to be proactive in executing their duties. The DAC meeting successfully allocated inputs to all agriculture blocks in Kabompo district. The meeting was held at the office of the District Agriculture Coordinator (DACO).

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NORTHERN REGION

MINISTRY OF GENDER AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT TO GIVE OUT 18 TRACTORS TO FARMERS

The Ministry of Gender and Child development is scheduled to give out 18 Tractors in Northern and Muchinga Provinces. 16 of the 18 Tractors will be given as grants to various farmer groups in Northern Province while 2 will be given to groups in Mpika District.

The beneficiary farmer groups are from 9 districts namely Mungwi, Senga, Kasama, Kaputa, Mbala, Mporokoso, Luwingu, Chilubi and Mpika. The objective of the program is to enhance agriculture production and productivity.

OVER 27,000 FARMERS TO BENEFIT FROM THE FISP PROGRAM IN KASAMA

The District Agricultural Coordinator for Kasama, Benny Tembo, has revealed that a total 27,721 farmers have been earmarked to benefit from the Farmer Input Support Program in Kasama district this year. The DACO said this at a meeting held with agrodealers in Kasama this week.

Mr. Tembo also informed the meeting that a total of 110 FISP e-voucher redeeming sites dotted around the 28 agriculture camps in Kasama district have been established to enable farmers access inputs closer to their areas. The DACO further advised the Agro dealers not over-price the farming inputs but strive to serve the farmers diligently.

Kasama is one of the 39 districts in the country where the e-voucher system will be used to dispense agricultural inputs for the 2016/17 farming season.

MPIKA DFA CHAIRPERSON ELECTED AS DAC CHAIRPERSON

Mpika District Farmers Association Chairperson, Kennedy Chola, was been elected as chairperson for the District Agriculture Committee (DAC) for Mpika district during the DAC elections held on 14th October, 2016.

Meanwhile, Mpika district has received all the D-Compound fertilizers for the 2016/17 farming season under the Farmer Input Support Programme. The total allocation for the district is 56,650 packs.

EASTERN B REGION

EVERY HOME FOR CHRIST (EHC) CONDUCTS FARMERS' FIELD DAY

Every home for Christ (EHC) a non-governmental organization based in Katete held a field day last week Friday 14th October 2016. The field day was held under the theme "*farming as a business.*" The event was graced by the District Commissioner for Katete, Joseph Makukula Nduma, who was the guest of honor. The DC emphasized on the need for farmers to seriously consider farming as a business for them to realize maximum profits from their livestock and crop enterprises. He further encouraged farmers to

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take advantage of the various services that *Every Home for Christ* is offering to the farming community such as the skills trainings and farming inputs.

The field day also provided a good platform for the NGO to explain to the farmers some of the activities that they are implementing in Katete and these included provision of skills training to farmers such as poultry farming, knitting and value addition to produce. EHC country director Dr. Richard Kawara further explained that since 2008 the organization has helped a total 3,200 farmers in the various programs that are being implemented in Katete district.

PETAUKE NUTRITION GROUP FORMS WARD COORDINATING COMMITTEES

Petauke District Nutrition Coordinating Committee has embarked on forming Ward Nutrition Coordinating Committees (WNCC) in seven wards in the district. The WNCC's will be responsible for spearheading nutrition related activities within the wards in accordance with the nation's nutrition strategic plan of the first 1000 most critical days' minimum package which looks at the 14 key interventions such as vitamin A supplementation, deworming and nutritional sensitive messages in GRZ programs like FISP. The WNCC will comprise of rural community health workers, Information Centre leadership, women clubs, cooperatives and agriculture camp staff and will be formed in Nyika, Ongolwe, Manjazi, Chilimanyama, Msumbazi, Kaumbwe and Manyane wards.

FARMERS REFUSE TO RELEASE MAIZE TO ZCF IN NYIMBA

The Zambia Cooperative Federation has set up maize buying points in Nyimba district for their solar milling plants. The federation has since been buying and promising to pay the farmers within 7 days after delivering their produce but it is now over a month that farmers have not been paid for the maize they supplied. This sad development has since made farmers of Kabvuma buying point to stop the ZCF from collecting the maize which they delivered not until they receive payments for the commodity. Some of the farmers talked to expressed their disappointment with the way ZCF were operating and asked the ZNFU in Nyimba to intervene in the matter as time for them to prepare for the 2016/2017 farming season is approaching.

SOUTHERN A REGION

FARMERS FROM CHOMA AND KALOMO URGED TO REMAIN UNITED

Farmers belonging to Choma/Kalomo District Farmers' Association have been urged to remain focused and united if they are to create an effective voice in the agricultural industry in the two districts and Southern Province as a whole. Speaking on behalf of the Provincial Minister during the official opening of the Choma/Kalomo Farmers Association annual general meeting held on 19th October 2016, the Assistant Secretary, Mr. Kapumo Luyanga appreciated the significant role the association was playing in engaging relevant institutions on issues affecting farmers such as; farm security, illegal settlement on titled land, ZESCO and WARMA issues among others, adding that the proactiveness of the DFA leadership kept the government well informed. He further counselled farmers not to despair and assured them that the Minister's office would help out by following up with specific institutions on issues of concern in the agriculture sector which were not yet resolved. He also urged the association to come

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up with positive suggestions on how best to run agriculture in the districts and ultimately move the nation forward.

In closing the annual general meeting, the DFA Chairperson Graham Mulders appealed to government to 'walk the talk' and resolve all issues which have a negative impact on the agriculture sector. He further emphasized that all the issues highlighted in the DFA report required serious attention, adding that if left unresolved, would have a negative impact on the farming community. He also appealed to ZNFU to continue engaging WARMA and government on the issue of water rights.

And having been at helm of the DFA affairs for many years, Mr. Mulders decided to step down and was replaced by Mr. Sean Davies as DFA chairperson.

SOUTHERN B REGION

CFU AND AFGRI CONDUCT MECHANISATION ROAD SHOW

The Conservation Farming Unit (CFU) working in collaboration with AFGRI conducted a successfully roadshow in Chikankata District this week on Thursday 20th October, 2016. The Zambia National Commercial Bank also took time during the roadshow to explain to farmers the modalities of the John Deere loan facility the bank is implementing in conjunction with AFGRI. The roadshow was aimed at helping farmers understand how to access financing for acquisition of different types of mechanised equipment such as tractors, boom sprayers, planters and rippers.

EASTERN A REGION

CHADIZA DFA CELEBRATES FARMERS' DAY

Chadiza District Farmers' Association (DFA) celebrated the 2016 Farmers' Day last week on Friday 14th October, 2016 under the theme "*managing the environment for sustainable growth.*" The DFA was celebrated Farmers' Day for the 4th consecutive year. Speaking during the celebrations, the chairperson for Chadiza DFA clarified that the district was ordinarily supposed to celebrate Farmers' day in August but due to political activities it was pushed to October. The DFA chairperson further said that the purpose of the Farmers' Day was to celebrate the achievements gained in the farming fraternity. He also said Chadiza DFA has formed a housing cooperative whose objective was to help improve the housing of farmers in the District and that 4 members of the DFA were sent on a learning tour to Zimbabwe to gain insight on how to manage the cooperative.

Meanwhile, ZNFU Director for Small scale, Joseph Lungu thanked and praised the DFA for being one of the DFAs that celebrates Farmers' Day apart from Luwingu DFA. He also thanked the DC for being supportive to the farmers. The Director called upon all the farmers to support the call by the President His Excellency Edgar Chagwa Lungu to make agriculture the number one contributor to the GDP of the Zambian economy.

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UNDP, MCTI AND ZACCI CONDUCT A PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON INDUSTRIALIZATION AND SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN CHIPATA

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry and the Zambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ZACCI) held a public discussion forum on Industrialization and Sustainable Human Development in Chipata on 19th October, 2016. This followed the launch of the 2016 Zambia Human Development Report (ZHDR) entitled "**Industrialization and Human Development: Poverty Reduction through wealth and employment Creation**". The objective of the discussions was to stimulate public debate on sustainable development in Zambia within the context of industrialization and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which would later lead to the development of 7th National Development Plan and the 2017 national budget. Speaking at the same meeting, the UNDP National Economist Ms. Elda Chirwa said that Eastern province has potential for establishment of agro industries that can process and add value to crops like Tobacco, groundnuts, soya beans and cotton among others and create jobs for the youths and women. And the Provincial Planner told the meeting that Eastern Province has identified Agriculture as number one sector for economic development for the province followed by tourism.

Meanwhile, ZNFU Regional Manager for Eastern Region A, Mr. Virgil Malambo has called for a functioning extension service and the rehabilitation of the farmers' training centers dotted across the province. He called on the government to support farmers in all spheres.

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