

Zambia's leading outdoor agriculture expo



FRIDAY BRIEF

WEEK 7, 2017

This Week's Highlights.....

- **MINISTERS CONSULT THE PRIVATE SECTOR ON VAT ON TOBACCO**
- **FTF LAUNCHES SEED TRADE PROJECT**
- **CHURCH DONATES CHEMICALS FOR THE CONTROL OF ARMY WORMS**

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

INDUSTRY UPDATES

MINISTERS CONSULT THE PRIVATE SECTOR ON VAT ON TOBACCO

Government ministers comprising Minister of Finance, Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Commerce Trade and Industry met officials from TAZ and ZNFU to discuss the issue of exempting VAT on green leaf tobacco. The private sector informed the three Ministers that the VAT component made the Zambian tobacco uncompetitive compared to regional competitors such as Malawi, Zimbabwe and Tanzania where the crop is exempt from VAT.

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After some discussion, the Ministers agreed that tobacco should be exempt from VAT in the 2018 national budget and that government would work out an interim arrangement to offset VAT during the 2017 marketing season.

The meeting took place on Monday 13th February 2017 at Ministry of Finance, and was also attended by ZRA Commissioner General accompanied his senior officials.

FTF LAUNCHES SEED TRADE PROJECT

The Feed the Future (FTF), a United States Government’s Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative this week launched Seed Trade Project called FTF Southern Africa Seed Trade Project. This project will offer grants to interested companies/organizations to implement supporting of new technologies, skills/capacity, market opportunities, and innovations in the seed sectors of its FTF countries, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. This project was launched at the ZNFU Head Office on 14th February, 2017.

The Seed Trade project is a five-year project funded through the USAID Regional Economic Growth Office (REGO) in South Africa. It is designed to increase the availability of high quality seed of improved varieties to farmers in the SADC region to contribute to increased agricultural productivity and improved food security.

CHURCH DONTES CHEMICALS FOR THE CONTROL OF ARMY WORMS

The Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) under its wing called DIACONIA and with the help from an organization called Transform Aid has donated 1200 litres of the pesticide chemical to government meant to support the farmers affected by the Army worms and stem borers in Petauke district. Speaking during the handover of the chemicals to the District Commissioner Ms. Elita Tembo who is the Development Officer at DICONIA said that the support was meant to supplement government’s effort in combating the infestation that had rocked the district. The District Commissioner, Ms. Velenasi Moyo in her speech thanked DIACONIA for the good gestured and called all the stakeholders in the district to follow suit in offering social cooperate responsibility.

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

CONTACT THE ZNFU FOR ALL YOUR LOBBY ISSUES

For All Lobby Issues Affecting Members, please contact Mr. Humphrey Katotoka from the ZNFU Research and Economics Unit. Email: humphrey.katotoka@znfu.org.zm

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NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

COPPERBELT REGION

PRICES FOR TOMATOES DROP ON THE COPPERBELT..... AS LIVESTOCK PRICES GO UP

The price of tomatoes has considerably dropped and now ranging between K80.00 to K100.00 per box for the first time in more than one year on the Copperbelt. Inquiries at the border post in Kasumbalesa in Chililabombwe have also indicated a major slump in the commodity prices for the past two months. Some traders at the border have indicated that the oversupply of the commodity by farmers from central province has resulted in price drop. However, a snap check at most markets around Copperbelt also revealed price drops of the commodity. At main Masala market in Ndola a box of tomato is now fetching K90.00 a similar quantity which two months ago, was over K300.00.

On the other hand, Kasumbalesa border post has recorded an increase in prices of most livestock commodities and mealie meal which currently is selling at around K250.00 per 25kg bag. While small livestock such as goats are now selling at K600.00, the source has revealed.

EASTERN REGION

PETAUKE DFA CONDUCTS IC NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN SINDA DISTRICT

Petauke District Farmers Association in collaboration with Katete District Farmers Association this week on 16th February 2017 conducted a one day Information Centre (IC) needs assessment meeting for 68 ICs that are in Sinda district but belong to either Petauke or Katete DFAs. The objective of the DFAs to conduct this meeting was to familiarize themselves and get first-hand information on the challenges that the ICs are facing from the time Sinda assumed the status district. Among the notable issues that came out include; the non-participation on the government FISP program due to ineligibility of not having a certificate which bares Sinda District, need for capacity building trainings among the IC Contact Farmers, need for improved IC sensitization and awareness meetings and the reintroduction of the Lima Credit Scheme which was suspended last season. The Contact Farmers who attended the meeting expressed happiness and commended the DFA for coming up with such an important initiative of engaging the IC leaders as a fact-finding strategy.

NDFA BOARD AND STAFF TRAINED IN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Nyimba District Farmers Association has been implementing the Oil processing project which is funded by USADF. The project has entered the second year and production is expected to be doubled in 2017. The NDFA have planned to develop a five-year business plan for the Association. In view of this, NDFA hired a consultant (RASSMATT CONSULTANCY) to train the Executive members and management in Business development and then come up with the Business plan. The training took place at Thula Lodge from 13th to 15th of February 2017. NDFA Project was also visited by Keeper Zambia Foundation and USADF representative from the United States of America. The visitors were very impressed and indicated

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that NDFA was the first of many organisations under the support who have managed to double the target group numbers within the first year of implementation. The donors indicated that they are willing even to scale up the support in future.

NORTHERN REGION

OVER 80% FARMERS UNDER E-VOUCHER RECEIVE INPUTS IN KASAMA

Farmers under E-Voucher system in Kasama have received farming inputs. Out of 20,874 beneficiaries for 2016/17 farming season, 18,332 farmers have received the inputs. This has been confirmed by the District Agriculture Coordinator, Mr. Benny Tembo. However, 19,213 farmers have deposited their money for the inputs and 19,190 cards have been sent for activation. This is the positive move despite the card distribution starting late in December, 2016 more farmers have accessed the farming input because the exercise was fast as compared to conventional way of receiving inputs. Meanwhile farmers have appealed to government to start the exercise early for 2017/18 farming season to allow them prepare adequately and also be able to access the inputs of their choice. Farmers have appreciated the system as it is one way of encouraging them to diversify.

FIRST DIP TANK BEING CONSTRUCTED IN MPULUNGU DISTRICT

Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock are constructing the first Dip tank in Mpulungu District. The Dip tank is being constructed in Chinakila area of Vyamba Block. It will be servicing all the Cattle farmers in Chinakila area where there is high concentration of Livestock. Farmers who are keeping cattle are excited to have the facility at the door step and their animals will no longer be dying from preventable diseases. Meanwhile, farmers have been urged to guard the facility jealously so that it can save the purpose. There has never been a Dip tank in Mpulungu.

FISH FARMERS IN MPULUNGU HAPPY WITH CEEC FUNDS

Fish Farmers in Mpulungu who got loans from Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission (CEEC) are happy that funds have started bearing fruits. Farmers who got loans last year in May to start fish farming last week conducted a partial harvesting in Vyamba area. Harvest was conducted on three farmers' Fish ponds and it was graced by the District Commissioner Mr. Dennis Sikazwe. The total of 1 ton in the selected fish ponds was harvested and the market is secured for all the farmers. Mr. Walusungu Banda Manager for CEEC thanked the Extension staff from the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock for frequency extension visits provided to the fish farmers. The total expected tonnage for 3 farmers is 8 tons from the two fish ponds. Each farmer was stocked with 12,000 fingerlings. Meanwhile, 6 more farmers will be stocked with 62,500 fingerlings. This is one way of encouraging diversification and transformation and farmers are able to raise household income.

SOUTHERN REGION

MONZE DFA PROMOTES CROP DIVERSIFICATION

Monze DFA has this 2016/17 farming season designed an out-grower scheme for cowpeas to its members. The DFA has sourced 200 packs by 5kgs which it's currently giving out to farmers to sow and after harvest the DFA in conjunction with the World Food Program (WFP), will buy all the produce from farmers. This is in an effort to promote crop diversification from the traditional crop maize, this will also help the DFA to retain its members and woo others to join the union.

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CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE SCALING UP (CASU) PROJECT WINDING UP

Conservation Agriculture Scaling Up (CASU) project sponsored by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture is coming to an end next month (March, 2017). The project has been in the District for 4 years and was implemented in 26 agricultural camps. The project was promoting Conservation Agriculture in order to help farmers cope up with the effects of climate change.

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