



**COMMERCIAL  
FARMERS'  
UNION**

# **THE COMMERCIAL FARMERS' UNION OF ZIMBABWE**

**81ST ANNUAL CONGRESS - 2024**



**Sustainable Farming: Navigating Adversity with  
Unity and Innovation**

# Commercial Farmers' Union of Zimbabwe Annual Congress 2024

## 81st ANNUAL CONGRESS

VENUE: ART Farm, Calgary Close, Off Alpes Road, Pomona.

**THEME: "Sustainable Farming: Navigating Adversity with Unity and Innovation"**



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# The 81st Annual Congress of **The Commercial Farmers' Union of Zimbabwe**

## AGENDA 26TH JULY 2024

08.30 – 09.00	CLOSED SESSION
09.00 – 12.45	<b>OPEN SESSION</b> Welcome & Opening with scripture reading & prayer
09.00 – 09.30	Official Opening
09.30 – 09.45	Question & Answer
09.45 – 10.30	<b>TEA</b>
10.30 – 11.00	Address to Congress by the President of the Commercial Farmers' Union 2024 and Adoption of Report
11.00 – 11.25	Guest Speakers
11.25 – 11.40	Debate/questions
11.40 – 12.00	Presentation of Farming Oscar <b>CLOSURE &amp; VOTE OF THANKS</b>
12.00 – 12.45	<b>FINGER LUNCH &amp; CASH BAR</b> <b>END OF FORMAL PROCEEDINGS</b>
12.45 – 13.20	POST CONGRESS COUNCIL MEETING

*“Sustainable Farming: Navigating Adversity with Unity and Innovation”*

## 2. Rules of Debate

### Order of Debate

- The Proposer will identify him/herself clearly.
- The Proposer will speak.
- The Secunder will speak.
- General Debate will take place.
- The Proposer will wind up the Debate.

**Note:** *If required, the Minister, Government representative or guest will be asked to reply at a time requested by the CFU President.*

### Length of Speeches

Proposer of Resolutions – 5 minutes

Secunder of Resolutions – 3 minutes

Mover of Amendments – 2 minutes

Other speakers – 2 minutes

The proposer of a resolution may reply at the conclusion of debate, limited to three minutes. Government representatives and guests are requested to keep their speeches as short as possible. The President may at his discretion allow an extension of these limits.

# 3. Past Presidents of the Commercial Farmers' Union

1910 – 1914 HON R A Fletcher, MLA  
 1914 – 1916 E Wilson, Esq  
 1920 – 1923 C S Jobling, Esq  
 1923 S M Lanigan O'Keefe, CMG  
 1929 – 1931 H B Christian, Esq  
 1932 – 1935 G N Fleming, Esq

## RNFU

1942 – 1944 John Dennis, OBE  
 1944 – 1946 Hon H V Gibbs  
 1946 – 1948 J M Caldicott, Esq  
 1948 – 1951 E D Palmer, Esq  
 1951 – 1954 J MacIntyre, Esq  
 1954 – 1956 M Chenells, Esq  
 1956 – 1963 E B Evans, OBE  
 1963 – 1968 T Mitchell, DFC  
 1968 – 1970 J W Field, Esq  
 1970 – 1972 R G Pascoe, Esq  
 1972 – 1974 M E Butler, Esq  
 1974 – 1976 C Millar, Esq  
 1976 – 1978 C J Strong, Esq  
 1978 – 1979 D R Norman, Esq

## Honorary Life Vice Presidents

A J Laurie, Esq  
 R G Pascoe, Esq  
 C J Strong, Esq  
 C G Tracey, ICD, Esq  
 C J Taffs, Esq

## CFU

1979 – 1980 D R Norman, Esq  
 1980 – 1981 D B Spain, Esq  
 1981 – 1983 J M Sinclair, Esq  
 1983 – 1986 A J Laurie, Esq  
 1986 – 1988 J R Rutherford, Esq  
 1988 – 1990 J H Brown, Esq  
 1990 – 1992 A D P Burl, Esq  
 1992 – 1994 A J Swire-Thompson, Esq  
 1994 – 1996 P MacSporran, Esq  
 1996 – 1998 N Swanepoel, Esq  
 1998 R D Swift, Esq  
 1998 – 1999 N Swanepoel, Esq  
 1999 – 2001 T Henwood, Esq  
 2001 – 2003 C Cloete, Esq  
 2003 – 2007 D S Taylor-Freeme, Esq  
 2007 – 2009 T R Gifford, Esq  
 2009 – 2011 D S Theron, Esq  
 2011 – 2014 C J Taffs, Esq  
 2014 – 2018 P Steyl, Esq  
 2018- 2024 A Pascoe, Esq  
 2024 - Date L Philp, Esq

## Trustees

Dave Bouma, Esq  
 Colin Cloete, Esq

## **History of the Commercial Farmers' Union of Zimbabwe Farming Oscar Award**

The Commercial Farmers' Union of Zimbabwe Farming Oscar Award has a long and proud history having been introduced in 1961 by the late Mr C. G. Tracey during his term as an award in recognition of "those people who have generally done well for agriculture".

This annual Oscar has become known as the "Farming Oscar" to be given to some person or persons who have given outstanding service to agriculture, and has been awarded to people who have contributed to the industry in its widest sense.

Over the years winners have been chosen from the practical and scientific disciplines of agriculture, as well as from the administration and leadership roles with the winners selected in recognition of having contributed significantly to the agricultural progress in Zimbabwe.

## 4. OSCAR Winners Award -



1961 E B Evans, OBE	1983 J M Sinclair Marchel	2005 Dr J Grant
1962 A Rattray, OBE	1984 J W Hayward	2006 D S Taylor- Freeme
1963 E R Campbell, CBE	1985 H J Quinton	2007 A Masterson
1964 R Stockil, KBE, OBE	1986 John & Jill Laurie	2008 D Drury
1965 A C Black	1987 Dr R W Mupawose	2009 R H Vaughan-Evans
1966 Dr I McDonald	1988 J Brown	2010 Mike Campbell & Ambassador Xavier
1967 Dr H Pereira	1989 R K Harvey	2011 B Oldrieve
1968 J R Southall	1990 P Millar	2012 Dr C Foggen
1969 W Margolis	1991 Dr S Hargreaves	2013 L R Bruce
1970 H R Mundy	1992 R Ternouth	2014 C J Taffs
1971 The Hon J C Graylin, ICDCMG	1993 Dr P Grant	2015 Dr D Bruce
1972 C G Tracey	1994 R Winkfield	2016 Dr J MacRobert
1973 Dr R C Elliott	1995 D Smith	2017 Mike Clark
1974 M E Butler	1996 M Edwards	2018 Pete Steyl
1975 N Spoel	1997 H Smith	2019 Nick Brooke
1976 R A Griffith, ICD, MBE	1998 V Hurley	2020 Ben Purcell Gilpin
1977 J R Humphreys	1999 N Swanepoel	2021 T de Jager
1978 D K Worthington	2000 P Lombard	2022
1979 C J Strong	2001 Dr L T V Cousins	2023 Dr Mario Beffa
1980 Max Rosenfels	2002 R Tattersfield	2024
1981 D R Norman	2003 Dr J Jackson	
1982 J W Field	2004 D Hasluck	

# 5. Resolution: Farmers' License Fees and Rules

The Council of the Commercial Farmers' Union resolves and recommends to Congress the adoption of an Annual License Fee for the 2023/24 year commencing 1 October, 2023 to become due and payable.

Council further resolves and recommends to Congress the adoption of a payment commencing 01 October 2023 and ending 30th September, 2024 applicable to all members as illustrated in the following schedule:

## CLASSIFICATION OF MEMBER FEE PAYABLE

**LARGE OPERATING LICENSE** - US\$2000 per annum or US\$200 per month

**MEDIUM OPERATING LICENSE** - US\$1000 per annum or US\$100 per month

**STANDARD OPERATING LICENSE** - US\$500 per annum or US\$50 per month

**SMALL OPERATING LICENSE** - US\$250 per annum or US\$25 per month

**ARAC SINGLE TITLE LICENSE** - US\$100

**ARAC MULTIPLE TITLE LICENSE** - US\$200

**CORPORATE (BUSINESS) MEMBERS** - US\$2000 per annum or US\$200 per month

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS** - US\$500 per annum

*NB: ZiG rates will be available from the office on enquiry*

## NOTES

- Large operating license turnover greater than US\$ 1million
- Medium operating license turnover between US\$500 000 and US\$1million
- Standard operating license turnover up to US\$500 000
- Multiple site operators to be treated according to size of each operation



# **6. President's Speech - CFU 81st Congress 2024**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great pride that I present this report to the 81st Congress of the Commercial Farmers Union.

My Presidency officially commenced on the 10th January 2024. With the unwavering support of my Vice President, Daniel Burger, the CFU Council and the CFU team led by Director Sam Miller we set out to reinvigorate the CFU. The Union had drifted over the years and the focus was no longer on commercial farming but leaning more towards the all consuming matter of compensation. Our first step was to commence farmer engagement to develop a new vision and mission for the Commercial Farmers Union which you will find documented in the CFU congress magazine.

It was very clear that the compensation matters had to be isolated from the day to day operations of the CFU to enable the Union the opportunity to focus on agriculture. A structure outside of the CFU was required to represent the broad base of TDH's who lost land under the FTLRP. Through the 'roundtable initiative' the various groups of TDH's came together around the table and worked to find common ground. The grouping has appointed new representatives to drive the compensation matter forward in pursuit of full and fair compensation for the disposed TDH's thereby allowing the Union to focus on the multifaceted agriculture landscape.

This 81st Congress of the CFU marks a new beginning. It marks the passing of the baton from one generation to the next. I am pleased to report to you all that we are making good progress. Your elected Provincial and commodity representatives in CFU Council for the 2024/25 year are energetic, enthusiastic and generally younger than their predecessors. I would like to recognize the many years of service on the CFU Council by a number of the outgoing representatives. You held the Union together through trying times.

I would also like to recognize the commitment made by the newer members of Council who have stood up to lead their 'developing' Provincial farming structures forward in pursuit of our documented and common vision. I describe the structures as developing because as we are moving into the next phase of our strategy we actively strive to be more a more representative and engaging farmers Union.

We are in the middle of the worst drought in 43 years. Our National summer

harvest fell 74% short of initial forecast. We anticipate the worst is yet to come for the livestock industry as we run short of grazing to support the National herd in vast parts of the country. The extremely dry conditions continue to fuel veld fires that decimate the limited grazing.

Apart from the fallout of the 'national disaster' agriculture is facing many other challenges. Some are the result of unintended consequences of policy reform in pursuit of stabilizing the economy. We recognize this is a delicate balancing act. We are here to proactively engage with the authorities to provide sector specific recommendations whilst advocating for an enabling environment for agriculture to prosper.

The introduction of VAT on the primary producers in the livestock industry has had an incredibly devastating effect on the sector. Small farmers who are not registered on the new ZIMRA TARMS system face a 47% 'penalty' when marketing their cattle in the formal value chain. This is made up of 30% WHT, 15% VAT and 2% IMTT. The informal market on the other hand is thriving as a result of this policy. Informal value chains present a high risk to consumers not to mention the loss of corporate tax revenue for ZIMRA.

Again, the introduction of VAT on fresh potato, an important part of the staple diet, does not make sense in this period of food insecurity where potato is an alternative to maize. We appeal to the Ministry of Finance to review these new VAT regulations to restore the integrity of these crucial value chains in the face of food insecurity of an estimated 6 million Zimbabweans.

As the CFU we are committed to driving our sectoral growth in line with the Agriculture Food Systems and Rural Transformation Strategy launched by The Honourable Minister Masuka last year. The AFSRTS runs from 2023 to 2025 and is premised on the nexus that

- Agricultural development leads to rural industrialization.
- Rural Industrialization leads to rural development.
- Rural development facilitates and accelerates the attainment of Vision 2030.

The SIX objectives of AFSRTS are:

- 1.To increase Crop, Livestock and Fisheries production and productivity for national food and nutrition security, and for food sovereignty and build a USD13.75 billion agricultural sector;
- 2..To improve livelihoods for accelerated rural agro-centred development;
- 3.To build a modern, technology-driven, diverse, resilient, inclusive and climate-smart agriculture sector;
- 4..To broaden and diversify agricultural markets and trade;
- 5.To enhance value addition and beneficiation of agricultural produce

through aggregation and agro-industrialization; and  
6.To catalyse public and private sector reform and mobilise investments for accelerated agricultural development.

This strategy requires the collaboration and active participation commitment of all stakeholders in the agriculture sector. I am very pleased to report that under the leadership of the Hon. Min. Dr Masuka, effective platforms have been established for dialogue and sectoral development and engagement. The CFU actively participates at all platforms on behalf of our members.

At this point I would like to thank the Hon. Minister Dr. Masuka, for extending an early morning, 'open door policy' to me in my capacity as the President of the CFU. On behalf of Zimbabwean farmers, I would also like to recognize the team at the Ministry who work long hours behind the scenes keeping the wheels of agriculture turning.

To my Vice President Daniel Burger, the entire CFU Council, the trustees and the team in the CFU office who hold everything together, not forgetting Kevin Arnott, and Gerry Kaagman. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my gratitude for your tremendous support and enthusiasm as we rebuild our Union for purpose.

To our entire membership base who form our Union. I am grateful for your support and the trust you have placed in me to lead this great Union over the last seven months.

To those of you who are not yet members of the CFU. I encourage you to take a leap of faith and reinforce our ability to deliver the vision and mission of the CFU.

Most important to me personally, my family. Words can not explain how blessed I am to have your love, support, patience and understanding. Thank you!

I move my report for adoption

Yours sincerely

**Mr Liam Philp**  
**President**  
**The Commercial Farmers' Union of Zimbabwe**



# 7. Congress Reports

## Regional Reports 2024

### MANICALAND REGION CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT TO CONGRESS 2024

It is my pleasure to present the Manicaland Region Chairman's Report to Congress for 2024. This report aims to highlight the challenges faced and the progress made by our region since our return to representation on the Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) Council.

Firstly, I want to acknowledge the efforts and resilience of our members who have contributed to our region's advancements despite the relatively short timeframe of eight months between the delayed 2023 Congress and the timely 2024 Congress. During this period, we have seen significant developments and notable achievements.

One of the most commendable achievements is the increase in membership within the Manicaland region. Our numbers have now surpassed 40 members, including both active farmers and those from the Agricultural Recovery and Compensation (ARAC) group. This growth is a testament to the region's dedication and the collective efforts of our members.

The effective use of virtual meetings and WhatsApp groups has been a game-changer in terms of communication. These tools have enabled us to bridge the gap between members, ensuring that information is disseminated quickly and efficiently. The President and Vice President of the Union have played a pivotal role in this process by facilitating the rapid transfer of information to newly formed groups. This technological approach is particularly appealing to our younger members and prospective members, who are more accustomed to digital communication methods.

However, it is important to acknowledge that transitioning the CFU into a modernized organization has been slow and, at times, frustrating for many members and prospects. Despite these challenges, the determination and efforts of the President and Vice President to visit Manicaland and engage with farmers have been fruitful. Their visits have fostered a stronger connection between the Union's leadership and our region's farmers, which is vital for our collective progress.

A significant and sensitive task that we face is the separation of active farming activities from compensation issues. Unfortunately, a reduction in membership

over recent years, has put pressure on the Union's finances. Securing sufficient membership is crucial not only for accountability but also for obtaining the necessary funds to support these changes.

The agricultural industry's scope extends beyond just farmers. It includes the support industry, which plays an essential role in the sector's success. It is imperative to encourage this industry to participate in financing the Union's critical role. A well-funded Union is capable of effectively representing farmers in various critical areas such as labor, energy, water, agriculture policy, grain reserves, and commodity trading, to name a few. The support and participation of all industry players are essential for the CFU to succeed in its mission to support farmers and Title Deed holders seeking compensation.

Rebuilding the agro-industry is vital for the national success of Zimbabwe. This endeavor requires the active participation of farmers, compensation seekers, the agricultural industry, and the Government. Our region, like many others, is currently facing the challenges of a drought. This situation underscores the need for collective participation to grow and sustain the industry. Now, more than ever, we need collaboration across the board to ensure the resilience and prosperity of our agricultural sector.

In conclusion, while we have made significant progress, we must remain focused on the challenges that lie ahead. Manicaland's growth in membership and the enhanced communication through digital means are positive indicators of our potential. However, the financial stability of the Union remains a critical factor that needs our attention and collective effort.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all our members for their unwavering support and dedication. Your efforts are crucial in driving our region and the Union forward. Let us continue to work together towards a stronger, more resilient agricultural sector that can effectively represent and support our farmers and the broader agro-industry.

Thank you.

**Suzie Heyns**  
**Chairperson - Manicaland Region**



## **MASVINGO REGION CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT TO CONGRESS 2024**

It goes without saying that the current 2023/2024 agricultural season has been one of the most difficult for many years, not only due to the El Nino weather phenomenon, which made it almost impossible to produce dryland crops but also the general feeling of apathy and despair amongst all citizens of Zimbabwe at the moment. Once again our currency has been changed, which has placed more difficulties and confidence with any form of investment. This is mainly due to the complete lack of trust that has developed in all sectors.

The rainfall itself was very patchy once again with the rain in February being the lowest in many years. This is the month when we normally receive our heaviest rains from the ITCZ, which did not materialize this year as we have seen with the lowest level for many years of our vital Kariba Dam. The rain effectively stopped in February with only a few more days of very light rain after that.

The water in Mtirikwi Dam was release early in the season in anticipation of floods as it was sitting at over 98%. Fortunately, the taps were closed when it was realized that the rain had not come, and the main rivers were not flowing at all this season. Although there is still a fair amount of water in the Mtirikwi Dam residents fear that most will be used once the new hydroelectric project has been completed. Fortunately, the Tugwi Mukosi has a much larger catchment and has been able to supply water for the Lowveld sugar industry. Overfishing continues in both dams due to the issuance of far too many netting licences.

As we now enter the dry season there is great concern about water supply in general as the pools in the major rivers and underground water will be drying up very soon.

This year we sadly lost Rob Beverley who passed away a month ago. Rob had been a real stalwart and legend in the Lowveld for so many years and will be sadly missed. Sadly, we also lost another cattleman from Masvingo being David "Voc" Coventry who passed away in Capetown to where he had moved since his family's farms were acquired. Also, this week another of our great cattlemen, Ian Middleton passed away in Zambia. Slowly the older generation are passing on and leaving us behind. Sadly, another Gutu farmer Johan Heymans also passed away this week and not forgetting Mwenezi rancher Ken Fraser who also passed away last year. They were all solid members of our great community who will always be remembered with compassion.

However, we have been blessed that we have a new much younger team representing us at the CFU and we thank them most sincerely for dedicating

their valuable time for their fellow farmers. Although the new team are resuscitating the farming sector in CFU we have been very encouraged to understand that Both CFU and SACFA have now joined with SAAI to make a stronger, united team, to reopen the dialogue on meaningful compensation, which is long overdue for so many of the country's elderly dispossessed farmers many of whom are now destitute and having to rely totally on handouts to survive. We also continue to thank the South African team who deliver food parcels which are gratefully received by the elderly recipients.

There are only a handful of our ex commercial farmers left on the ground in all of our districts so the growing of commercial crops are very few. Some farmers who foresaw the drought and simply did not plant a crop whilst many refuse to sell to GMB because of late and lower payments. As a result of the drought the price of maize has gone up from US\$5 per bucket to US\$8 per bucket with nothing being sold to farmers by GMB.

Smallholders who have small irrigation patches are all planting tomatoes, watermelons and cabbages which has caused a glut in those and other vegetables thus bringing the prices down which have made it unviable for commercial growers to grow vegetables for the market. This is due to the high labour costs and high costs of other inputs.

Another inhibiting feature this year has been the new VAT imposed on the sale of cattle. As a result of this double taxation the private abattoirs have found it very difficult to purchase or slaughter cattle within the confines of this new law. The private abattoirs are closed for most of the time and the only meat available is the lower grades of unfinished beef. This high taxation has virtually brought the Masvingo cattle industry to a halt whereas before this was the largest industry in our province, especially when CSC was providing meat exported to the EU. In those days the CSC slaughtered upward of 600 head of cattle a day, mostly for export. Now the massive CSC structure is a mere empty shell which only sells fuel. So much potential simply abandoned due to bad policies. CSC was also the largest employer in Masvingo, whereas now the city is simply overrun by unemployed university students who offer very little to the growth or running of the city.

Our one major poultry producer continues to be the main supplier of day-old chicks but unfortunately their supply is also far more than their demand with many hundreds of unsold chicks being gassed. This is because of the high cost of stockfeed and unavailability of maize as well as the lack of buying power by the average man in the street, most of whom are out of work having flooded in from both acquired farms and the communal areas to unsuccessfully seek assistance.

When the wildlife industry was taking off before FTLRP the late owner of Eaglemont Ranch in Chiredzi bought and successfully reared a large herd of

MD Free buffalo, which were carefully monitored by Veterinary Department. With FTLRP they were left in a small area on the ranch under control of the family. Sadly, this herd has now lost its value as an FMD Free status and have been moved off into a hunting zone elsewhere. Yet another casualty of 'Land Reform' as these buffalo were worth far more than wild buffalo as they could previously have been sold anywhere, or even exported.

Although we understand that the real electricity crisis is still yet to come, we have been experiencing an average of at least 100 hours without electricity per month this year. The cost of power generation when ZESA load sheds is effectively removing all the profit from any form of business. For example, the additional cost of generator fuel costs one company nearly US\$1 million per year or more. As a result, many businesses are considering folding rather than continue to run at a loss. This is particularly fresh food companies who must freeze meat etc. The average householder is also facing major difficulties never knowing when the power cuts will be or for how long.

To say that Masvingo roads are the worst in the country would be difficult to confirm as the roads in most of Zimbabwe's cities are an absolute disgrace causing constant damage to private vehicles and especially tyres. However, the new highway from Masvingo to Harare is now complete and is a pleasure to drive on. But from Masvingo to Beitbridge the new road is far from complete with very large sections almost undrivable as no work has been done on them for most of this year.

Although some of the new road is being fenced straying livestock are still an absolute menace and danger to traffic. Since FTLRP most fences both internal and external have either been stolen or removed therefore cattle are straying wherever they wish. When fences were in place Cattle Movement Permits were required but now cattle are simply moving where they please, completely destroying the natural habitat and grasslands.

Now that winter has started so the illegal tree cutting is once again becoming a major problem. This is not only during winter but trees are being cut and sold as firewood as an easy source of income on the acquired farms, most of which are now completely denuded particularly in the dry areas where crops cannot be successfully grown.

Once again, the RDC Unit Taxes are far too high, especially when compared with what the occupants of the acquired farms are asked to pay. Generally, this money is only being used to pay for staff wages and also councilor's sitting allowances as no actual work is being seen to be carried out by the RDC, unless it is donor funded.

Once again we wish to thank President Liam Philps, Vice President Daniel Burger and Director Sam Miller and staff for their extremely hard work on the



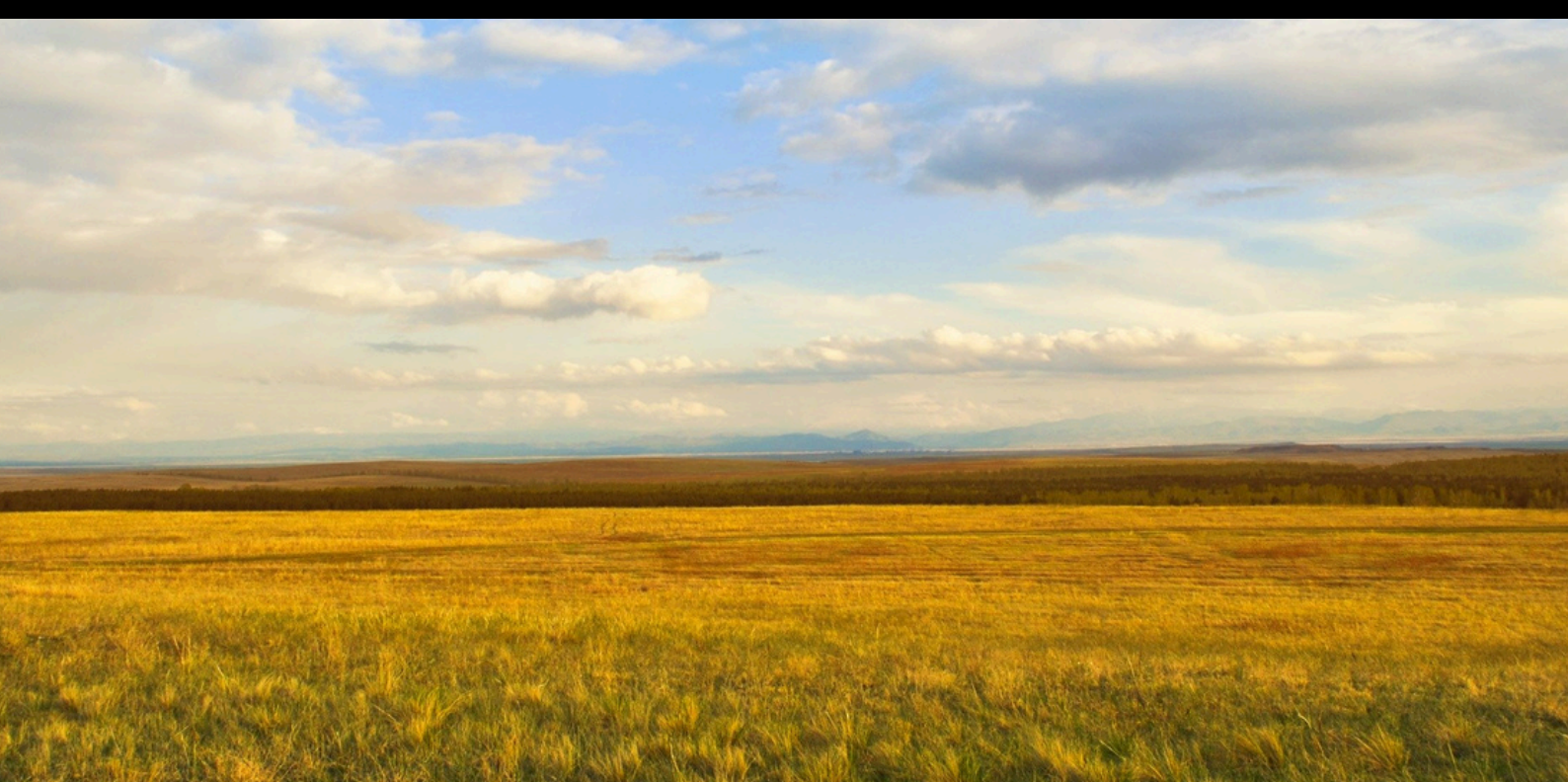
new initiative taken by our Union and we look forward to working with them over the coming year. We also thank our Minister for his open door policy.

We thank also their families for allowing them to give so much of their time to continue their commitment with such vigor.

To our Masvingo members and families we really do appreciate your unity and support over this last year and we urge each one of you to kindly jolt at least one other of our ex members into rejoining our Union. Thank you.

God bless.

**Jean Simon**  
**Chairperson - Masvingo Region**



## **MIDLANDS REGION CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO CONGRESS 2024**

The 2023/24 season for the Midlands area has once again been extremely difficult.

Rainfall for this last season has been variable but in the main has been poor. Most water sources failed to supply the summer programme fully and, for those that did, have left winter crops precarious, to say the least. Dryland crops were a failure, leaving people dependent on food aid to carry them through to the next harvest. Growth of grass and other fodder crops for cattle has been very poor. The value of hay is, therefore, high and in short supply.

Stockfeed prices are at their highest levels, making costs of animal production higher than normal. However, imports of both legal and illegal products have made local production unviable and under serious pressure. A serious effort by the government to seal our porous borders is essential to the security of the agricultural sector.

Financially, we have seen two very significant factors introduced into the mix this last year.

The first has been the introduction of VAT in agricultural products, most significantly in livestock and its products and VAT exemption introduced to the dairy industry. This has driven huge sectors of the beef and other livestock products away from the formal sector to the unregistered sector where VAT, Income tax, NSSA, Company Tax, Levies to mention a few are not part of the cost structure making it totally unviable for registered companies to compete and stay productive. This is a very serious consequence that requires a major effort by the authorities to curb immediately or to remove the VAT as a matter of urgency.

Secondly, the introduction of the new ZiG currency has seen a significant reduction in inflation of the local currency. However, the forced exposure of producers to this new currency before inputs are equally affected has once again impacted agricultural producers first.

The wheat producers have been negatively impacted by the extremely slow payment by GMB for last year's crop. We hope that this issue is resolved going forward.

Electricity supply has remained challenging, and the cost has risen significantly. New smart meters remain a challenge with consumers complaining that the readings can be incorrect and do require monitoring.

We hope and pray that the year 2024/25 sees some stability and profitability return. We look forward to good rainfall and happy times.

**Kevin Franceys**  
**Chairman - Midlands Region**



# **MASHONALAND EAST REGION**

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO CONGRESS**

### **2024**

#### **Weather**

The raining season started late and finished middle of February. Below annual rainfall was experienced with Beatrice District receiving 300mm. The temperatures were very high. No run off into rivers. Warm Winter until early June, when first frost was seen.

#### **Land**

There are still farmers waiting for their 99 year leases.

#### **Crops**

The Tobacco season saw good Tobacco crop, but prices were below expectation. Dryland crop did not do well.

#### **Dairy**

Dairy producers are facing a shortage of roughage hence there has been a lot of baling being done on neighboring A2 farms.

#### **Soybeans**

The yield was down where there was no irrigation.

#### **Dryland Maize**

1.5 ton a ha. Most of the maize in Beatrice was made into silage.

#### **Cattle**

There are a few commercial beef herds and they have done well as grazing was of good quality. There is going to be a shortage of grass and water as rivers and dams are drying up.

The 15% VAT has destroyed the viability of the livestock industry. The drought and viability could destroy the industry. Cattle prices are down at abattoirs and auctions.

There are a number of Pedigree breeders in the Province and the prices have been firm for seed stock. The National Breed Sale on the 26th July 2024 could be very interesting.

## Security

There have been theft of fertiliser, chemicals and fuel on farms. Also some livestock.

The TDH are very concerned at PROFCA trying to appease Government and trying to get old people to accept the new deal negotiated by them. Government cannot pay for last year's wheat crop and seed maize for the last 4 years. How are they going to pay compensation?

Thank you to the CFU President, Liam Philp and Dan Burger for stepping up to man the CFU into its rightful place in Agriculture.

Thank you to Sam Miller and Louise O'Connor for all the hard work done.

**Dirk Odendaal**  
**Chairman - Mashonaland East Region**



## **MASHONALAND CENTRAL REGION** **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO CONGRESS** **2024**

I would like to welcome everyone to this meeting and thank you all for making the effort to attend. Over the past year there have been several members from our district who have passed away, may their souls rest with the Lord in peace. I would also like to convey my sincere condolences to all the families', friends and relatives who have lost loved ones..

The farming environment has remained extremely challenging during the past farming season. Farmers are facing a myriad of financial, climatic, logistical, and political constraints. However the overriding problem during the past rainy season was the effect of the El Nino weather pattern, which caused severe drought in the whole of Zimbabwe. This has probably been the worst drought experienced since the terrible drought of 1992/93. The rains in Mashonaland Central for the 2023/24 season's started normally, towards the end of November. During December and January, we received relatively normal rains, however, after the 27 th of January, virtually no significant rains fell until the middle of April. The lack of rain towards the end of the season and the unseasonably high temperatures resulted in a very short growing season and very poor grain fill. This affected the late plantings and dry land crops especially, leading to extremely low yields and, in many places, no production at all. The meagre rains we received also resulted in little run off and failed to provide inflow to most of the dams in the province. This has hampered water reserves needed for the winter irrigation programs. The current climatic changes we are experiencing with unseasonal weather extremes, only goes to show how important it is that we invest and develop water security, irrigation, and other high-tech methods of production.

The inability for farmers to access finance, is one of the most serious problems facing all producers today and this extends to all formal businesses across Zimbabwe. Commercial banks have very little appetite to lend money to agriculture, unless off farm collateral is provided. Agricultural land currently has no value because of the present land tenure system where land is not tradable. Due to the high risk associated with agriculture, bank interest rates are exorbitant. The current interest with the banks linked to the Agro Yield program are 12% per annum, plus a 0.5% establishment cost, 1.0 % Distribution and 1.0 % insurance, totalling 14.5%. The business environment in Zimbabwe is complex and time-consuming, added to which we have a 2% IMT tax (Remember this is not tax deductible) on all bank transactions to name a few. It is no wonder that Zimbabwe has a growing informal economy, and that the viability of farmers is precarious.

I believe the free-market system has always worked well for farmers in Zimbabwe, and GMB should be the market of last resort. The delay in announcing producer prices by GMB, which is the base line for the industry, has however allowed contractors and middlemen to pay unrealistic prices for commodities produced by farmers. GMB have once again delayed the payment for wheat delivered in October 2023 and only paid the NOSTRO portion in May and June 2024 (7 months late). With the current liquidity problems this severely impacts the ability of farmers to plant next seasons summer crops on time. Farmers cash flows are extremely tight and without the ability to obtain bridging finance, producers are forced into agreements with contractors in order to access inputs and funding, thus further eroding producers' viability. I would encourage GOZ to allow, or at least investigate the

possibility of allowing GMO varieties into the agricultural sector. We see in neighbouring countries how the use of these varieties has in most cases doubled the production in crops such as maize and soya.

The current winter seasons cropping has been one positive area for those who are fortunate enough to have access to irrigation and wheat and barley crops are generally looking good. Load shedding and faults on the dilapidated and poorly maintained ZESA electricity distribution grid, together with the ever-increasing vandalism and theft of ZESA infrastructure is one of the major limitations to growth and development in Zimbabwe, not only in agriculture but in all areas of commerce, manufacturing, and industry.

Farmers need to be made more aware of being proactive and preventing environmental degradation. A serious concern this season has, once again, been the massive surge in uncontrolled fires, burning up scarce grazing for livestock and damaging infrastructure. This is coupled with the huge deforestation of large tracts of indigenous woodland, used for domestic fuel and tobacco curing. Unfortunately, the burning is rapidly causing irreparable damage to top soil, excessive soil erosion and the siltation of water courses and dams in many areas. Conflict between alluvial gold panners “Makorokoza’s” and farmers over land is on the increase and their presence is quite often a major security concern for the rural communities.

The land tenure system, where most commercial farmers are required to enter a Joint Venture with resettled land holders to obtain access to agricultural land, is generally problematic and short termed. With the new political environment, it is hoped that the Zimbabwe Government will start to re-establish proper land tenure, which will allow all Zimbabwean farmers the opportunity to get serious about productivity and job creation. Investors, both local and international, need real security and stability on the land before they make much needed long-term investments, especially in relation to expensive fixed improvements and high value export crops, which is something the country would really benefit from.

It remains for me to thank the CFU team, especially the outgoing CFU president Andy Pascoe for all his hard work, and to congratulate Liam Philp and Daniel Burger as the new Presidium. I encourage all our members to support their endeavours and the work that they put in behind the scenes, in keeping current farmers and the compensation issues relevant in Zimbabwe today, and to pray God’s blessing on all farmers and their families for the coming season.

**Angus Guthrie**  
**Chairman - Mashonaland Central Region**



# **MASHONALAND WEST (NORTH) REGION**

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO CONGRESS**

### **2024**

#### **Overview**

The 2023/24 season was characterised by extremes that seemed to be at work at all facets of production on the farms. The district started with reasonable rains to start the season, but this soon turned to drought. Some crops were planted well into January after the normal planting time. Those who had finished planting before Christmas were severely affected and those who planted later had a modicum of success with their dry land crop with the later rains. Irrigated crops were average with the high temperatures that were experienced. This however depleted dams.

The demands being made on those leasing land from offer letter holders are becoming totally unreasonable and is causing a lot of uncertainty for the future of farming. This makes long term commitments almost impossible thus jeopardising food security for the country.

Marketing and delivery of crops appeared smooth with lower volumes being marketed, prices being offered by the GMB and traders have been firm. The dams are generally low which affected irrigation for the winter crops being grown. A small, irrigated tobacco crop may be planted due to shortage of water in the dams.

We are yet to see what inputs will be made available for the 2024/2025 season as up to now there does not appear to be any available. This is worrying as those still farming should have already made their preparations for the season to come.

#### **Crops**

Generally, there has been mixed feelings shown for the past season with some particularly good, irrigated yields of tobacco and some few row crops reported. Dry land was poor and as always, the timing of the onset of the rains being a critical aspect. Winter crops are down in hectares with farmers choosing not to move their irrigated land into wheat production as the dams are so low.

#### **Cattle**

The commercial herd is down significantly in numbers and there is a perennial challenge with running a herd due to fences being stolen, keeping grazing

intact and fires under control. There are however a few cattle producers left in the district that are committed to keeping their herds running and there are also the pedigree herds that are so important to our future in beef production. The drought and shortage of grazing is a major worry for cattle producers.

## Other

Unfortunately there remains to be very little production of chicken, pigs, sheep and goats. Although there is good potential for growth in these sectors this is being held back by the fact that investment is needed to boost them, and the finance is not readily available.

## Security

Sadly the theft of maize from the land this year was extremely serious and uncontrollable with little help from the authorities.

## General

In conclusion, 2023/24 has been a difficult season, with the farmers out there continuing production under less-than-ideal circumstances. It has been widely agreed by those older farmers that this year was more severe than the drought of 1993. There are large areas of unutilised and underutilised irrigated land that has the potential to produce this country hundreds of thousands of tons more food and exportable crops. Mash West like the rest of the country should be looking at production as our primary goal and set aside the counterproductive rhetoric and policies that are hindering the progress of agricultural production in Zimbabwe. To the farmers in Mash West and the rest of the country, well done for the production and commitment to the past season and let's hope that 2024/25 is peaceful, productive and the good rains predicted materialise for all of us, whether Commercial, A2 or A1 farmers.

**Roy Linfiled**

**Chairman - Mashonaland West (North) Region**





# **MASHONALAND WEST (SOUTH) REGION**

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO CONGRESS**

### **2024**

#### **Crops**

##### **Season Overview**

The 2023-2024 farming season in Mashonaland West South has been markedly challenging due to the impact of El Niño. The season began with significant dry conditions, delaying meaningful rainfall until late December. Within two weeks, 65% of the season's total rainfall (470mm) was received, causing complications. Initially, the lack of rain prevented planting, and the subsequent heavy rainfall resulted in overly saturated fields. This sequence of events led to reduced plantings overall, as the window for optimal planting conditions was extremely narrow.

##### **Dryland and Irrigated Crops**

Dryland plantings have been a complete loss this season. After the brief period of intense rainfall, no additional rain was received from mid-January until mid-April, causing these crops to fail. In contrast, irrigated crops, particularly seed maize and soybeans, have fared better. These crops benefited from controlled watering and experienced fewer disease pressures than usual. However, there is no significant commercial maize production to report in the area due to the adverse weather conditions.

##### **Weather Events and Crop Damage**

The region experienced several extreme weather events that further impacted crop viability. Notably, center pivots were blown over by strong winds, and hailstorms caused damage to wheat crops in 2023. These adverse weather conditions struck again in mid-April, damaging summer crops. The recurrent extreme weather has compounded the difficulties faced by farmers this season.

##### **Financial and Infrastructure Challenges**

The viability of row cropping has been severely impacted by the lack of wheat payments from the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) as of the first week of May 2024. The delayed payments have increased the cost of financing, making it difficult for farmers to sustain their operations. Additionally, reduced water levels in dams and the looming threat of load shedding due to low water levels

in Lake Kariba have further discouraged planting. Consequently, the area devoted to winter crops in 2024 has decreased by about 50%.

### Conclusion

The 2023-2024 agricultural season in Mashonaland West South has been fraught with challenges. The delayed onset of rain, followed by an excessive downpour, has resulted in significant planting issues and crop losses. While irrigated crops have shown some resilience, the overall crop production has been adversely affected. Extreme weather events and financial strains, exacerbated by delayed payments and infrastructural concerns, have further diminished the prospects for successful farming in the region. Moving forward, addressing these multifaceted challenges will be crucial for improving agricultural outcomes in Mashonaland West South.

**Marius Grove**

**Chairman - Mashonaland West (South) Region**



## **MATABELELAND REGION PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO CONGRESS 2024**

Good morning fellow farmers and Title Deed Holders

Matabeleland North and South have been subjected to a devastating drought, from patchy showers in some areas to less than 100mm in others for the season. This has resulted in almost no dry land crops and very little grazing. The effect of this will be drastic for cattle farmers, commercial and communal. There will be a great loss of livestock until the next rains.

The same goes for the wildlife industry, with the lack of grazing, browsing and water. I would not like to guess the loss of animals this industry will suffer.

On a different subject, industry is being subjected to massive City Council

rates. There are many businesses going on to a 4-day working week. This is also the result of the downturn in our economy.

Finally, we all have to put our differences aside as Councillors. The division since post-Congress is an embarrassment and counterproductive.

I wish you all the best under the environment we live in.

**Cedric Wilde**  
**President**  
**Matabeleland Region**



# Commodity Association Reports 2024

## Horticulture Development Council Report

Horticulture in the 2023/24 season has encountered similar challenges to other crop programs, largely due to drought conditions limiting irrigation availability. This environmental factor has had a significant impact on the local vegetable supply, leading to reduced availability in the market. However, one positive outcome of these conditions has been more favourable prices for horticultural produce.

Electricity continues to pose a significant challenge for horticulture, particularly due to the difficulty in managing advanced irrigation systems without consistent power supply.

Potatoes have seen significant volatility in 2024, initially driven by very high prices due to seed quality issues originating from South Africa earlier in the year. While prices have stabilized in recent weeks, they continue to remain favourable for high-yielding producers.

On the export front, the HDC continues to collaborate closely with the Ministry of Agriculture to expand export production initiatives.

Zimbabwean blueberries maintain their reputation for quality, and their production window remains attractive for global markets. However, the cost of finance continues to be a constraint for local expansion efforts. The crop is expected to be later than usual this season which may clash with Peru in the global market.

Mange Tout and Sugar Snap Peas have experienced a delayed production schedule this year, though air freight prices have remained higher than usual for an extended period. Currently, the market is trending towards lower pricing, prompting most growers to shift towards sea freight. This shift is also advantageous for the European market, which prioritizes lower carbon emissions in its imports.

Export pepper production has maintained consistency compared to the previous season. However, pricing in Europe, particularly in countries like Germany, has been adversely affected by the ongoing war in Ukraine. There is optimism that these market conditions will improve in the coming months.

Export chilli production was significantly hindered last season due to

interceptions of False Codling Moth (FCM), making it challenging for growers to obtain export licenses this season. As a result, there has been a considerable reduction in production. FCM continues to be a major concern for several export crops, sparking extensive debate and efforts to mitigate its impact.

As citrus exports conclude for the season, most growers have reported above-average yields, and exports through Durban port have proceeded relatively smoothly. While there was some concern over late False Codling Moth (FCM) issues in lemons destined for Europe, overall, pest control measures have been effective.

Progress has been notable on the logistics front with the development of Beira as a prominent hub for fresh produce exports via sea freight, focusing especially on citrus and blueberries.

The HDC has been actively developing Phytosanitary Protocols for several export crops destined for China, a move expected to unlock significant potential for Zimbabwean produce in the Chinese market. Additionally, discussions are underway with India as a prospective future trading partner. The government continues to uphold its 25% liquidation policy on export produce proceeds, despite ongoing pressure from producers to repeal it. In 2023, some growers capitalized on the opportunity to borrow from foreign investors, enabling them to repay loans without being subject to the liquidation policy. However, this option has since been discontinued.

Extensive discussions with Zinwa have centred around securing water rights for long-term orchard crops, highlighting the crucial necessity of ensuring consistent water availability to enhance investor confidence in these sustainable production models. Efforts are underway to refine policies in order to facilitate and encourage such initiatives.

Horticulture growers are increasingly challenged in managing labour relations, worsened by their limited representation at the National Employment Council (NEC) for Horticulture, despite continuous efforts by the HDC to engage with the NEC. Wages within the horticulture sector are rising unchecked, sparking concerns that Zimbabwe's horticulture industry could lose its competitive edge, especially compared to South Africa, if this trend continues unchecked.

Horticulture undeniably holds significant potential for export revenue in Zimbabwe. However, access to affordable long-term finance remains a major hurdle and a primary focus for the HDC and its members. There is optimism that the sector will thrive as stakeholders work towards creating a more conducive business environment.

**Peter Sole**

**Horticulture Development Council Representative**

## **Cattle Producers Association Report**

The drought of 2023/24 has been declared a National Disaster. The effects on the cattle industry will be felt for many years to come.

### **Impact of Drought**

**Stock Losses:** Significant stock losses have already occurred due to poverty and lack of water. Stock may have to survive another 150 to 200 days until substantial grass grows. **Grass Preservation:** Immediate action is needed to save the remaining grass and browse left in the veld to prevent further cattle losses.

### **Fire Damage**

**Extent of Damage:** By mid-June, EMA reported that 585,000 hectares of veld had been destroyed by fires. The question remains: how many more hectares will be destroyed before the rains arrive?

**Preventive Measures:** Serious action should be taken against arsonists to discourage others from burning the National Herd's food. Arsonists could be reported to traditional authorities like local leaders and chiefs.

### **Feed Shortage**

**Scarcity and Cost:** Feed/roughage is in short supply and has become very expensive, making it difficult for farmers to afford to feed their livestock.

### **Tax Burden**

The producers have been hit with a 15% tax on all live sales. This tax ultimately affects the producer, wholesaler, and retailer, all must charge and collect 15%.

### **Sales Decline**

Fresh meat sales of cattle, pigs, and poultry are down by as much as 25%. The feed pens, abattoirs and cold store are choked as a result. There is now extraordinarily little off take of live cattle as and when cattle producers need to dispose of their animals before they die of poverty.

**Impact on Small-Scale Farmers:** Over 90% of cattle producers are small-scale farmers who endure the most of this low off take of live animals.

## Cheap Protein Imports

Import Impact: Cheap protein, such as Mechanically Deboned Meat and Mackerel, is being imported into Zimbabwe. These imports are forcing the price and demand of economy beef down at a time when cattle farmers are most vulnerable and need fair prices for their livestock.

## Economic Strain

Multiple Pressures: The combination of drought, fires, feed costs, taxes, and cheap protein imports is driving cattle farmers, both large and small, into poverty. There is doubt about whether most will be able to afford or have the will to return to the cattle industry.

## Social Strain

Cattle are life for a rural farmer. They provide protein, milk, Draft Power and cultural and traditional connotations. If these animals are lost, so is a way of life.

## Recommendations

To mitigate the crisis, save the National herd and support cattle farmers, the report suggests:

1. Stopping all fires at once.
2. Restrict or better still, tax cheap protein imports as an alternative to taxing live animal sales.
3. Lifting the punitive tax on live sales.

## Positive Developments

**Indigenous Breeds Sale:** There was great excitement at the launch of the 1st National Indigenous Breeds Sale. Only Zimbabwe Bos Taurus breeds, Mashona, Nkone, and Tuli were exhibited and then auctioned at the new ADMA livestock pens. Prices were firm for these pedigree seed stock cattle.

**National Boran Sale:** Prices at the 9th National Boran Sale were also firm. The Boran breed inspector from South Africa made positive comments about the quality of the Zimbabwean Boran. An exchange of genetics is proposed amongst SADAC breeders.

The Cattle Producer Association Report 2024 underscores the critical challenges facing Zimbabwe's cattle industry due to the drought, fires, feed shortages, tax burdens, and cheap protein imports. Immediate action is essential to prevent further deterioration and support cattle farmers. Positive

developments in indigenous breed sales show potential for resilience, but comprehensive measures must be taken to ensure the industry's sustainability. The call to action for the Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) ministries is clear: implement the recommended measures to save the national cattle herd and safeguard the livelihoods of farmers.

**Mark Hook**

**Cattle Producers Association Representative**





# AGRICULTURAL RECOVERY AND COMPENSATION

## ARAC Chairman's report 27th June 2024

Mr. President, Lady and Gentleman members of ARAC, and the ARAC Sub Committee of the CFU;

Good afternoon and thank you all for attending personally or by Zoom.

On behalf of our ARAC committee it is my Honour to welcome you all to our 2024 and 13th ARAC AGM and Chairman's Report back.

IN 2010 Ben Gilpin, the then ARAC Manager reported "Financial survival is an unending challenge to many of our farming community. This is particularly so for the more aged. At the start of land invasions, the average age of our farmers was around 55; this puts many of our farmers now over 65 years of age. Most had put their life savings into their businesses and had no other provision for old age." We are currently fourteen years on, which makes our average age closer to 80 years old with all that that entails for health and financial wellbeing. Indeed, many of our Colleagues have passed.

We each will have our own cherished memories of loved ones who have left us. The past half year has seen the demise of some notable and iconic members of our communities. John Laurie, whom I have often highlighted and lauded his achievements in past reports, Rob Beverly of the low-veld and Nick Swanepoel suddenly, to mention just a few, and who have contributed so much trying to achieve a resolution to our compensation.

May I again call for a few moments silence while we remember our former colleagues who contributed so much to Zimbabwe's many past Agricultural successes?

Thank You.

Ladies and gentlemen,

### GRATITUDES

ARAC has been able to direct some of members to the Farm Family Trust who have sometimes cooperated with "Old legs Tours" to assist with medical finances. I cannot over emphasise our admiration for these two organisations and the work they have done easing many people's medical woes. I thank all of

you involved for the wonderful efforts you all put in to helping our aging constituency. Both organisations are worthy of your support to continue their missions. Please support them if you can.

Charles Taffs continues to fight his health issues and as we wish him to fully recover and enjoy his ever-increasing family. Charles, you will remember, led the CFU and later the CSC running up to the successful signing of the GCD of 2020. This was acclaimed by the vast majority of dispossessed farmers and the International Community. Thank you, Charles, for your service to us all.

I would also highlight Andrew Pascoe's service to the CFU and CSC over the past seven years. Thank you, Andy, for standing as President of the CFU for four years. In the absence of any other takers, you have filled an important role keeping CFU alive.

Liam Philp has been appointed as the new CFU President with Daniel Burger as his vice President. I thank them both for taking on these demanding positions and wish them all success in their drive to improve the service to "On Farm" Farmers. Their youth will stand them in good stead in this endeavour. Their stated intent is to ensure that Commercial Agriculture increasingly recovers into the Powerhouse it once was. It will require tact and perseverance and probably, a deal of time. I do hope all the active farmers can gather round and support them.

ARAC is a sub-committee appointed and duly recognised in the CFU Constitution. Its Chairman holds a single seat on CFU Council. However, substantially, ARAC can only recommend to Council and not dictate its wishes. This has led to a situation whereby CFU Councillors, who are in the main representatives of active producers and Commodity Associations, have the power to direct the policies of the CFU. The CFU has been criticised, with some justification, as having been too focused on Compensation issues. The focus of Council will now be returning to active farming matters. It is true, however, that ultimately Compensation is closely related to successful Commercial Agriculture, and this is reflected in our name. Agricultural Recovery And Compensation ARAC.

Therein lies the nub of the New Strategy our incoming Presidium have proposed. The New Strategy proposes to separate the CFU council into pure agricultural considerations and away from the Compensation policies which, it is proposed, will be handled by a "NEW Compensation Steering Committee".

I commend Liam and Daniel for the efforts they are making to supply the services traditionally offered by CFU years ago. We need such young minds, if Commercial Agriculture is to thrive.

On the other hand, I am anxious about the proposed composition of the "New

compensation Steering Committee". The CFU is keen to be seen to represent ALL dispossessed farmers. I think this is right, but it will be a complex and difficult balancing act. With the advent of the GoZ's FCA 2023 offer to compensate all individual Farmers, after the rejection of the Former GoZ proposal to amend the GCD, there are many Farmers who wish to accept this arrangement.

Other Farmers, who have declined this offer ask, "What do the TDH, who do not wish to accept the Treasury Bonds offer, do?". I have no answer although there are multiple views being touted on social media. But I would ask "How are the CFU going to assist those its Members, who wish to accept the GoZ offer?". Surely, they should have a voice?

In the NEW strategy it has been proposed to effectively replace the Old CSC with a new body Comprising: -

2 x CFU representatives (It is unknown who and how they may be appointed. Maybe The CFU subcommittee ARAC Chairman perhaps?),

2 x SACFA representatives (Who have initiated litigation against GoZ and may have a conflicted Mandate),

2 x SAAI (Zim) representatives (Who appear to be self-appointed local Representatives of SAAI SA, as some Past Presidents of the CFU),

And 4 advisory professional persons (which is a very good idea if they are not too expensive or Pro Bono).

ARAC is not mentioned in The Strategy.

This seems to me to be a significantly unbalanced arrangement and may be liable to antagonise the Authorities with whom it will have to engage.

I would like to project my view of the division between TDHs. For a variety of reasons perfectly reasonable people are perplexed by the options TDH's have. On the one hand there is the latest Government FCA offer of 2023, colloquially known as the "PROFCA" offer. No one claims it to be a good deal. It is not.

On the other hand, and for a variety of reasons, there are those who choose not to accept it, particularly because of the Treasury Bonds settlement but also for other, often principled, reasons. It can only be for the individual TDH to decide his response.

When one asks, "What is it that you hope to achieve by not accepting this offer?" The replies include, "Better Values, better interest rates, no bond issues, restitution, respect for Property rights, change in the 2013 Constitution, better

Governance, Etc.” All laudable issues, we would ALL WISH FOR. The Elephant in the room is “What is the reality of achieving any of these wishes?”.

Make no mistake, the GoZ FCA 2023 Offer is not anyway nearly as good as the 2020 GCD Offer. But I ask what is the alternative? I am yet to hear of any credible, funded offer as an alternative on the table, let alone any hope for those Farmers in penury, now.

Claims that the majority of Farmers favour a particular course of action are currently fanciful. With only a 38% response to the CFU survey in April 2023, neither course of action could then claim to more than 20% support of the overall constituency. Time will tell.

Turning to the future, stabilising Land tenure must be the foremost of the aims of us all. Without a proper instrument assuring the Land-user of their tenure, there will little encouragement to invest let alone maintain properties. The New 99-year lease has not yet been published. It is to be hoped that it will at least offer Bankability and Universal Transferability, allowing Banks to lend funds to approved clients. Anything less will be unusable.

The question of compensation for Land is another major issue to be tackled. Preliminary discussions with various stakeholders indicate that there could be an appetite to support proposals under certain conditions. Success at the Three Pillar negotiations being one. In addition, it is clear that a proper land tenure arrangement must be in place. In July 2020, the GoZ signed a little-known agreement together with the GCD. It effectively states that GoZ will not pay for Land, but it will not hinder farmers seeking funding arrangements for Land compensation nor challenge the valuation by ValCon.

Emanating from the indecisive CFU survey of April 2023 and the expressed view of the vast majority of those attending the ARAC 2023 AGM, a voluntary Association known as PROFCA emerged as a home for all those farmers who choose to accept the GoZ offer of December 2023. It will be of interest to all Farmers, that so far, 28% of all Farmer Titles (4,820) have accepted the FCA 2023 deal while only 4% have declined. To date there has been a 32% response from all titles.

I do not propose to report PROFCA's activities. They are a voluntary association, independent of CFU and ARAC and focus entirely on the best interests of Farmers accepting the FCA 2023 GoZ offer. They have an opportunity to report back and answer questions, later in the agenda.

Later, this afternoon you will be asked to support two Resolutions. The first is “That ARAC AGM recommends to council, that ARAC remains as constituted.” This resolution refers to the New strategy proposed for CFU to deal with Compensation whereby ARAC appears to be sidelined. So, it appears that

ARAC has no place in this strategy (Other than perhaps as part of the CFU representation) despite having driven this process for over a decade and a half. I ask this forum, Is it your wish to discontinue ARAC after all it has done? This is the background to the Resolution before you later today.

Following that, and, as a consequence of, a successful outcome of the first resolution then “ARAC Proposes to Council that that the ARAC memberships subscription remain the same for the 2024/2025 term”.

## THE CFU COUNCIL

The CFU Council is largely made up of representatives of Regional Councils which have largely been decimated by poor membership support. A few gallant people have endeavoured to garner support to present their points of view in Council about Farming issues, as the regional representatives. However, despite CFU mandating the Compensation Steering Committee up to March of this year some members of Council have vigorously criticised CSC's actions.

Fundamentally, the issue is this. There is a divide in Council, as there is within the whole body of Dispossessed farmers, concerning the approach to Compensation. As mentioned earlier, there are those who believe that the Government offer is too small, has too small a coupon rate, is spread over too long a period and are uncertain about the risk of the Treasury Bonds performance. We probably all agree. So, the division arises between those who believe they can do something about it and those who believe that there will be no change to The Government's attitude and will accept what they can, now, and for all sorts of reasons.

Other former Farmer owners or if you like Title Deed Holders, wish for restitution and a change in the Zimbabwean Constitution Etc. They say they are prepared to sit it out for the long haul. For those of us born in the first half of the last century, this is not an option, unless you have an alternate income you hope to pass on to your heirs.

The above conflict and the proposed new strategy have led CFU Council to delay confirming CSC's mandate renewal in March 24.

## THE COMPENSATION STEERING COMMITTEE

Have done their very best to engage with GoZ to reach an improved deal. The FCA 2023 is the outcome. The CSC was formed over seven years ago by John Laurie. He initially Chaired it for two years, until he became infirm but who supported it to the end. He was followed by Charlie Taffs, leading to the Global Compensation Deed of 2020 which was acclaimed both internally and Globally. Charlie later stood down due to ill health. Finally, Nick Swanepoel bravely took

up the Chairmanship, until his untimely passing. These Chairmen, together with the other members of the CSC, have persevered, trying to balance Farmers requirements to GoZ's ability and will to pay. It has been a demanding long-term task, both mentally and physically.

Meeting weekly as a committee, sometimes daily with various Ministries, Diplomats, Bretton Woods institutes, Farmers meetings, ValCon, CFU Council Etc. it has been an arduous exercise. The significant costs for have been entirely born by the Committee members themselves. I would like to highlight John Ried-Rowlands enormous Pro Bono contribution. He guided us through the tortuous engagements and negotiations with GoZ lawyers in the early days. John has recently suffered the agonising tragedy of losing his home to fire. John, you have our entire sympathy, and we all hope you will fare better soon.

Few other people came forward to offer CSC their advice face to face, and no one accepted the invitations We extended to join the CSC. Of course there were alternate opinions voiced on Social Media, the less extreme were always considered but usually had been thought through by us and rejected by Government months if not years ago.

I would wish to express a deep appreciation by all of us, for all the CSC's efforts on behalf of us all, despite the outcome being unattractive to some of us. I have little doubt in my mind that without their dedication there would be no Agreement of any kind today. Thank you all very much.

ARAC has only held one Committee meeting this since our last AGM in September 2023. This while the CFU Council sorts out its New Strategy and amends its Constitution.

The following ARAC Committee members have indicated their intention to offer themselves for re-election: - Ian McKersie, Robin Wyrley-Birch, Toc Arnold, Byron Dardagan Stuart Beverley, Ian Kay, Ian Gibson and myself.

Many of us have served over five years and require a two thirds majority approval to continue. I hope you will endorse these dedicated people.

I have received proposals, passed to the Director CFU, from Len Thomas and Richard Taylor to replace Harry Orphanedes and Adrian Hosack who have both chosen not to stand for re-election to the ARAC Committee. In fact, Adrian resigned a couple of months ago. I am most grateful for the service they have performed indeed Harry has also been heavily involved with CSC. Thank you both.

This completes the Ten members allowed by our mandate from CFU. I have not been informed of any other proposed Committee members.

On a personal note, would like to announce that it has been an honour to serve you all for the past eleven years as your Chairman, but it has come to the time for me to stand down from that position. That being said, I have re-offered myself as a Committee member requiring a two thirds majority support.

Each of us are indebted to our wives for their encouragement and support. Thank you all

To the staff of the CFU, you have stuck to your tasks tirelessly for many years and, holding the ship together, you have enabled its continuation. Thank you for your continued loyalty under difficult times. I wish you every success supporting the Commodity council.

It only remains for me to thank you, our ARAC members and the ARAC committee members Andrew Pascoe (our Past Ex officio Vice Chairman), Liam Philp (our New ex officio vice Chairman), Byron Dardagan, Harry Orphanides, Robin Wryly-Birch, Stuart Beverley, Ian Kay, Adrian Hosack, Ian McKersie, Ian Gibson and Tok Arnold for their time, consistent effort, support and perseverance for the cause; all for no financial reward.

Thank you, Dandaro and Brian Forster-Mawer, for the use of your facility.

To you, our membership, your support is so appreciated as will be your updated subscriptions.

Thank you for your time and for your attention.

**Patrick Ashton**  
**Chairman - ARAC 27th June 2024**



## Economic Development Report

The global economy is projected to grow by 3.1 percent in 2024, maintaining the growth realized in 2023. In 2025, it is projected to grow at 3.2 percent, a slight increase from the projected 2024 growth. Sub-Saharan Africa is projected to grow by 4% in 2024, driven by strong performances in non-resource-intensive countries. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis are expected to continue negatively impacting the global economy. The rapid tightening of international monetary policies in response to decades-high inflation has slowed the global economic recovery.

The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, and the ongoing war in Eastern Europe have exposed vulnerabilities in the global economy. While a widely projected recession did not materialize last year and financial turbulence was quickly subdued, the outlook remains uncertain. The global economy continues to recover slowly from these setbacks.

### Domestic Economy

The Minister of Finance and Economic Development presented the 2024 Budget Proposal on 30 November 2023. Significant macroeconomic volatility during the first half of 2023 upended several assumptions that supported the 2023 budget, including low inflation, a stable local currency (ZWL), and rising electricity production. Due to fluctuating production costs, business activity was severely curtailed. Additionally, hyperinflation reduced the real value of earnings, decreased social service provision, and plunged many people into poverty.

<b>Zimbabwe Economic Growth Forecast (%)</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>IMF</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>World Bank</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>
<b>GOZ</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>AfDB</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>3.6</b>



The Zimbabwean economy in 2024 is projected to grow by 3.5%, down from 5.5% in 2023, largely due to the ripple effects of the El Niño weather pattern, which significantly impacted the agriculture sector. The resulting drought has created bottlenecks in the economy, affecting raw material supply for manufacturing and electricity generation at Kariba. The economy faces challenges such as inflation, exchange rate depreciation, unemployment, limited access to credit, and the impacts of El Niño.

## Key Economic Sector Developments

### Mining

The mining sector is expected to grow by 7.6% in 2024, driven by investments in PGMs, gold, coal, and lithium. The sector is expected to maintain growth momentum, with 4.9% growth in 2025 and 4.8% in 2026.

### Manufacturing

The manufacturing sector is projected to grow by 1.6% in 2024, supported by expected price and exchange rate stability, improved electricity supply, and increased local currency usage.

### Tourism

The tourism industry is expected to continue growing, driven by increased domestic, regional, and international tourist arrivals.

### Agriculture

The agriculture sector is projected to contract by -4.9% due to anticipated normal to below-normal rainfall in 2024. The El Niño-induced drought undermined agricultural production for the 2023/2024 season. The pricing of agricultural inputs in Zimbabwean Gold (ZIG) has become increasingly unaffordable due to a significant artificial shortage of the currency in circulation. Farmers often receive prices for their products that do not cover production costs, and delayed payments have compounded their challenges. Broader economic issues such as inflation, foreign currency shortages, and unstable macroeconomic conditions have significantly impacted the agricultural sector.

### Crop Production

The upcoming season looks promising, particularly for agriculture, with predictions indicating a likely La Niña phase for the 2024–25 season. Maize and

small grains production has seen reductions, while traditional grains have increased. Wheat production is expected to rise significantly, with government interventions and incentives supporting farmers.

## Horticultural Crops

There is an overall increase in horticultural crop production for the 2023/2024 season, with notable increases in Irish potatoes, onions, leafy vegetables, cabbages, tomatoes, blueberries, pecan nuts, and oranges. However, peas and tea production declined.

## Livestock Production

The El Niño-induced drought caused significant cattle losses, but the national beef cattle herd grew by 1.3%, the dairy herd increased by 13.4%, and goat and sheep populations also saw growth. Broiler meat and table egg production increased significantly.

## Conclusion

The Zimbabwean agriculture sector has been hard hit by unpredictable climatic conditions due to global warming. Farmers face compounding issues such as unscheduled power cuts, high charges, and late payments, squeezing their cash flow. Without intervention, Zimbabwe's 2024 wheat production and food security could be negatively impacted by these challenges.

**Alistair Munyorwi**  
**CFU, Economist**



## Labour Affairs Report

### 1. Discipline management

The farmers need to be commended for this as a lot of the farmers are following the correct procedures in discipline management at the farm level. This has led to most disciplinary cases ending at farm level, except for two cases which went to the NEC. In the first case, because the farmer had followed the proper procedure and kept employment records, they were successful at the NEC. In the other case however, the farmer had not followed the proper disciplinary procedure according to section 5 of the seventh schedule of S.I 41 of 2022 (Principal CBA) leading to their decision being overturned at the NEC. This highlights the importance of keeping records and following the proper procedures in discipline management on the farm.

### 2. Enquiries

Proper discipline management is also anchored on the enquiries received during the course of the year. Numerous enquiries have been received from farmers on how to handle disciplinary issues among other issues and we have managed to assist the farmers to deal with many issues as provided for by the law. These enquiries are very important for the farmers as they allow them to comply with the dictates of the law after getting relevant assistance and not embarking on a journey into the wilderness of illegality, which has negative consequences. These enquiries also help us to identify areas where farmers need assistance, and we produce articles/reports in line with these enquiries which we provide to our member farmers through the CFU calling.

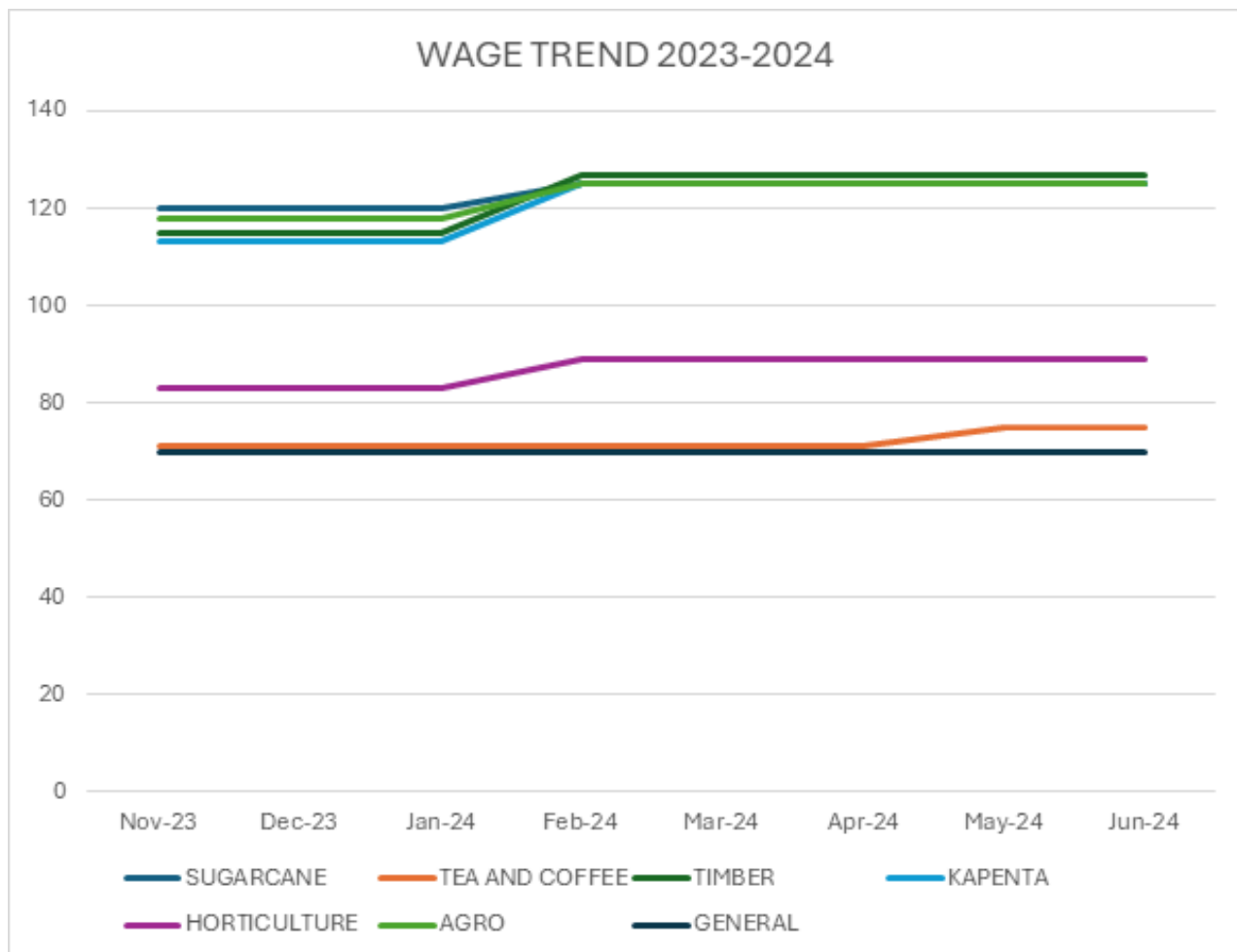
### 3. Collective Bargaining

The Labour Act in section 74, provides for collective bargaining between registered trade unions, employers and employers organizations. The collective bargaining continued throughout the year with several agreements reached in all the sub-sectors within the industry. Due to the reduction of the number of wage review meetings from four times per year to twice a year, we had wage review meetings for the period January to June and all sub-sectors reached agreements. This meant that there were not many changes to the wages as can be seen from the table below. The parties also agreed to the amendment of the NEC Constitution including the definition of sub-sectors. The parties are currently engaged in wage review negotiations for the second half of the year, that is, July to December.

## Tabular Illustration of Wage Trends for 2023 - 2024

	SUGAR CANE	TEA AND COFFEE	TIMBER	KAPENTA	HORTICULTURE	AGRO	GENERAL
Nov-23	120	71	115	113	83	118	70
Dec-23	120	71	115	113	83	118	70
Jan-24	120	71	115	113	83	118	70
Feb-24	125	71	127	125	89	125	70
Mar-24	125	71	127	125	89	125	70
Apr-24	125	71	127	125	89	125	70
May-24	125	75	127	125	89	125	70
Jun-24	125	75	127	125	89	125	70

## Graphical Illustration of Wage Trends for 2023-2024



## 4. NEC

### a. NEC Constitution

With the advent of the Labour Amendment Act 11 of 2023 promulgated in July 2023, all the National Employment Councils were directed to amend their constitutions by the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare. Of major importance in the amendment process is the allocation of voting rights according to section 56 of the Labour Act, where employer organisations and employee trade unions must submit their membership (employees) to the NEC to determine who gets voting rights at the NEC. The NEC constitution is currently before the NEC lawyers for amendments so that it aligns with the newly amended Labour Act.

### b. Definition of sub-sectors

The current NEC constitution has definitions for Agro and Horticulture sub-sectors only. There are no definitions for the remaining sub-sectors and as the constitution is being amended, the NEC has invited parties to submit proposals for the definitions of each sub-sector to be submitted to the lawyers tasked with amending the constitution. The aim is to clearly distinguish the sub-sectors in the agricultural industry so that farmers can easily be classified according to their farming operations.

## 5. Legislative developments

There have been no legislative developments that are labour related for the period under review. The only legislative development has been the change in the currency of Zimbabwe from ZWL to the ZiG which came into effect in April 2024. This has led to the artificial stability of the wages as the ZiG currency is artificially stable due to its shortage.

A wait and see approach is being adopted by the farmers especially during wage negotiations which has led to advocating for maintaining the wages at their current levels and formulations until it is clear how the economy responds when the ZiG becomes more available and widely used as the Government is driving for income tax to be paid using the ZiG currency.

We have managed to score some successes during this period as most of disciplinary cases are ending at enterprise level. More farmers are becoming aware of the provisions brought in by the Labour Amendment Act 11 of 2023, and our aim is to continue to make the farmers aware of the latest provisions so that they are knowledgeable of the new developments and are not on the wrong side of the law. The dynamics at the NEC are to change soon with the amendment of the NEC constitution currently underway.

**Joel N. Farirai**  
**CFU, Labour Affairs**

# **8. 2024 Congress Sponsorship**

The Commercial Farmers' Union would like to extend its sincere appreciation towards all those who have contributed in cash or in kind to the Union's Annual Congress for 2024. Without the generous support of these organisations, institutions, individuals and staff, it would not be possible for the Union to host such an event.

Please accept our heartfelt appreciation.

**Mr Liam Philp**

**President**

**The Commercial Farmers' Union of Zimbabwe**



## 9. IN MEMORIUM



The Commercial Farmers' Union remembers those members that have passed away during the last year and extends its heartfelt condolences to their next of kin.

### **Psalms 116:15**

*Precious in the sight of the LORD  
[is] the death of his saints.*





