

MARCH 2019



EBENEZER TRUST

NEWS



This month our second years ventured into Bulawayo for our annual Marketing Trip. They had a jam-packed day visiting markets, farms, shops and a hatchery. With input from many people working in different agricultural and marketing sectors, the trip is an excellent complement to their classroom studies and gives them a taste of the kinds of businesses and operations which they may find themselves working in or with in the future. It also gives them an insight into the value chain into which Ebenezer itself fits and the journey of the vegetables, chickens, eggs and milk which they help to produce whilst at Ebenezer.

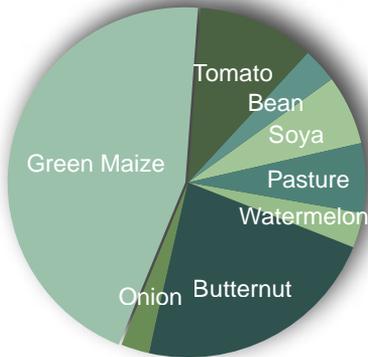
Another highlight this month was our annual Graduate Reunion Day where past apprentices gathered to catch up, enjoy fun and games together, and to encourage our current apprentices. A highlight of the day for many was the afternoon soccer match between graduates and current apprentices, and the Graduates were delighted to come away the winners!

This month we started a new series in our Family Night. With a focus on relationships, we are delving into the book of Ruth! Apprentices have been loving the dramas put on by Ebenezer staff and there have been some really good discussions coming out of the series. A highlight of the series has been some very frank interviews with staff members, based on anonymous questions from apprentices!

The end of March saw the deadline for applications for our courses starting this year. We have had over 130 applications and have been holding pre-selection interviews with all candidates.

CROPPING

31 hectares currently under irrigation



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This month 1.5 ha of tomato was planted along with 1 ha of butternut, 3 of green maize and one hectare of beans.
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Apprentices have been busy in March trellising our 3 hectares of tabletop tomatoes. As well as trellising, they have harvested a total of 34,120 kg of tomatoes and 7,270 kg of butternut.
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Our one hectare of sugar beans has also been doing well and we will benefit physically from this crop as it will supply 6 months of sugar beans to our kitchen!
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Our onion planting has been going very well and we have been using the techniques that we learnt during trials last year in our Kitchen Demonstration Garden.
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Field Coach Washington has been following up with 3 Ebenezer graduates, Mashero, Mike and Martin, who have been working together to grow a superb crop of tomatoes. It has been wonderful to see the standards they have maintained with their crop (see pictures right), despite challenges, and to see their crop succeed!
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LIVESTOCK



We were delighted that 11 calves were born in March, 5 of them female.



This month our dairy herd produced 21,869 litres of milk. At the start of the month we were milking 40 cows, a number which increased to 46 by month end. Our milking cows were producing an average of 14.2 litres of milk per cow per day throughout the month.

Our Dairy Coach has been particularly impressed with second year apprentice, Ishmael Sibanda, who is becoming known as the Dairy Doc due to his ability to identify sick cows!



In March our three layer flocks produced a total of 391,497 eggs.

The average lay-rate across our three layer houses was 80%. Our older flocks are laying to Hyline standards and we're pleased with the increased production of our youngest flock.

Within the layers section, apprentices have been impressively engaged and have been doing a great job of getting their heads around business calculations associated with farming layers.



Our latest batch of broilers continue to do fairly well, despite some issues with unseasonal high temperatures. Apprentices have been showing a lot of enthusiasm in their work with the broilers and we are enjoying having new Broiler Coach Alan Fure on board!