

**ANNUAL
REPORT**
2019



EBENEZER TRUST

Staff



Note from the Team: Ebenezer remains an appropriate name for us, for at the end of each year it seems we look back and can say 'thus far the Lord has helped us'. 2019 was a challenging year starting with a week-long national stay away in January and continuing with rising inflation and various shortages throughout the year. In the midst of this Ebenezer has continued to be a place of hope and growth. There has been improved agricultural production, the first pecan trees grown from seed at Ebenezer planted out and more beehives put up. We have started using tablets and game-based learning and have seen our training enhanced as a result. We have had closer contact with our graduates than ever before and are pleased that many of them are productively engaged and part of local churches. We have also hosted more visitors than ever before with over 1,500 small-scale farmers coming to Ebenezer for short training courses as well as many visits from school and church groups. These are a few highlights that gave hope in 2019.

We were sad at the end of 2019 to be saying good-bye to the Tapedzisa family who are moving to Nairobi to be part of OneTribe Church. It has been a blessing having them at Ebenezer the past three years and we will miss them. However, they have laid amazing foundations of faith in the team which we believe Jesus will continue to build on.

As we look to 2020 the circumstances look as challenging as the previous year but we continue to remember that our hope is in the unfailing love of the Lord. Psalm 33:18: 'But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love.'

"A highlight of 2019 for me was seeing us sell our first pecan nut trees to out grower farmers. These trees were planted as seeds here at Ebenezer 3 years ago; to see them being planted out is an encouraging sign of our growth."

Brilliant Khoza, Trainer & Pecan Coach

"One of my many 2019 highlights was seeing our Coaching staff grow in their management skills. I was also encouraged by moves towards the establishment of a local secondary school which will serve our community well."

Mr Nyams, Ebenezer Father

"An answer to prayer in 2019 was the appointment of new staff to the team who brought much-needed expertise. It has also been really encouraging to see fruitful results from our intentional graduate follow up this year."

Renée Cunningham, Team Leader

24 full time coaching & admin staff

Support staff and Farm Team of 19

3 attachment students of Agriculture

Apprentices

January:
106 on site

June:
96 graduates

July:
65 intake

December:
103 on site

- 29 Advanced Agribusiness
- 11 Advanced Practical Agriculture
- 35 Intermediate Agribusiness
- 21 Intermediate Practical Agriculture

"My highlight of 2019 was learning how to plant tomatoes for the first time. It was fun but it was hard work too!"

Thandazani Ngulube

"I really enjoyed the Sports Tournament that we had in November against other teams from outside of Ebenezer. I was very happy that the Ebenezer team won!"

Sibusisiwe Murambinda

"I have learnt many things since I came to Ebenezer in July 2019: how to communicate with others, how to depend on God and how my work is worship. I am enjoying the Bible lessons where we are learning more about Christ and to reflect him as we are made in his image."

Shadreck Chauke

"My highlight of 2019 was attending my first church camp. I loved all the games and activities and spending time with others from my church."

Precious Sibanda

Ebenezer Africa



Apprentices, Ebenezer Mozambique

2019 has been a year of continued expansion and growth for Ebenezer Africa. Ebenezer Mozambique were glad to be able to welcome lady apprentices after two years of only being able to accommodate male applicants. They also commissioned a second broiler shed this year, increasing their onsite capacity to 21,000 broiler birds! With the dreadful aftermath many regions of Mozambique faced following Cyclone Kenneth, the Ebenezer Mozambique apprentices were united in their decision to donate their maize crop to the relief effort, a wonderful thing to be able to do and a testimony of their deepening spiritual maturity.

Exciting steps were also taken this year to establish Ebenezer Zambia. In partnership with an already up-and-running farm situated outside of Livingstone, building work is now underway and we hope to be welcoming our first apprentices to Ebenezer Zambia in 2020!

In Zimbabwe, we have had a significant ongoing involvement with Turning Matabeleland Green (TMG), a church-based initiative with a vision to unlock the productive potential of small scale farmers across all regions of Zimbabwe. In 2019, Ebenezer hosted TMG trainings for over 1,500 small scale farmers who benefited from both the expertise of our staff and the practical demonstration modelled at Ebenezer. Another significant outcome of our relationship with TMG has been the provision of quite a few employment opportunities for Ebenezer graduates who have gone on to manage farms with TMG farmers.

Training & Discipleship



A major development in our training in 2019 was the introduction of game-based learning using 'Farming Forward' a tablet-based game customised especially for the Ebenezer context. Simulating the real-life agricultural and business challenges that Ebenezer graduates experience, Farming Forward is an excellent agribusiness training tool which not only enables gamers to become familiar with business concepts, but also encourages creative thinking, forward planning and collaboration, all of which are key skills for our apprentices to develop.

Weekly Family Nights have continued to be valuable times of spiritual growth and deepening relationships for both apprentices and staff, as we have shared food and fun together as well as delving into some interesting topics. A particular highlight of 2019 was a series based on the book of Ruth, with a focus on relationships. With weekly dramas performed by Ebenezer staff and some very frank interviews with staff members based on anonymous questions from apprentices, the series prompted some really good discussions.

In August, a group of 10 apprentices travelled to Harare for the Deep Life Conference. With a focus on evangelism and discipling others, the conference covered a wide variety of topics which our apprentices found interesting and engaging. They especially enjoyed the opportunity to hear from international speakers and interact with other young Christians from across Zimbabwe.

Poultry

A large group of yellow chicks in a farm setting, filling the left side of the page. The chicks are of various ages, with some appearing as fluffy downy birds and others as more developed young chickens. They are densely packed together, and the background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the birds in the foreground.

Throughout 2019 we had an average of 18,000 layer birds on site and we produced a total of 5,445,536 eggs. We are particularly pleased that the egg price kept pace with rapid rises in inflation over the year, meaning we remained in a profitable position with our egg sales. Our average lay-rate over the year was 81%, only slightly below target.

A broiler development in 2019 was the introduction of Sasso birds. We have been testing this new breed as an alternative for small scale farmers; they are hardy birds which can be grown as broilers or layers. We found that the Sassos were indeed stronger than the Ross birds we normally grow, however they take longer to reach market weights.

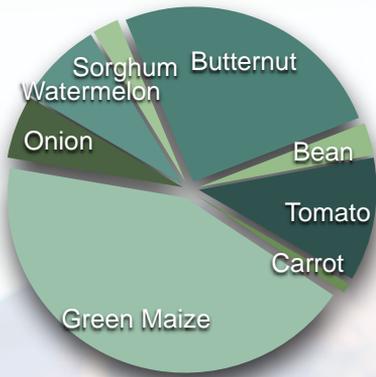
We farmed a total of 10 batches of broiler birds throughout 2019, eight batches of Ross birds and two batches of Sasso.

Our average bird weight was 2.38kg and our average mortality over the year was 12%. Our average food conversion ratio was 1.8 for the Ross birds and 2.3 for the Sassos.

"Poultry highlights in 2019 included installing an H-frame cage into Layer House 1 which has increased production. It has been with God's help that we have been able to continue running a poultry business in the critical financial situation we are facing in Zimbabwe."

Mncedisi Banda,
Poultry Team Leader

83 hectares planted in 2019:



Our biggest crops of 2019 were tomato, butternut, onion and watermelon. Over the year we harvested over 300 tons of tomato, nearly 200 tons of butternut and 38,000 bunches of onions. Watermelon has been a particularly successful crop, due to high demand in the market, and this year our cropping teams harvested over 15,000 watermelon heads!

Our cropping division has benefitted from our growing dairy which has become a good internal customer allowing us to produce maize and sorghum for animal feed. The good thing about maize and sorghum is they are excellent rotation crops for which we would not usually have a profitable market to grow in such large quantities. This has proved to be a great partnership between our dairy and cropping teams.

The implementation of a kitchen demonstration plot has been a great success. It has not only allowed us to enjoy a greater variety of fresh produce in our diet but also to demonstrate to apprentices ways in which many crops can be grown without inorganic fertiliser in a concentrated area for a community market.

Croppings



Dairy



Our dairy herd produced a total of 190,328 litres of saleable milk in 2019. An average of 45 milking cows were in production throughout the year producing an average of 12.7 litres of milk per cow per day.

We saw good herd growth throughout the year, with the birth 23 female calves and 29 male calves.

In 2019 our Dairy team grew as we welcomed Brierly Kuhudzayi onto the Ebenezer staff team as Dairy Team Leader. Brierly has been working alongside Dairy Coaches Nokuthula and Alert and he comments on the year: 'the team works well together and has been quite daring and innovative in coming up with solutions to complex problems.'

From August 2019 we began to supply milk to Dairibord, one of the biggest milk processors in Zimbabwe. From the milk samples they took from us we were delighted to discover that not only is our milk scoring highly on overall quality, it also has the highest fat content of any of their suppliers across the country!



2019 saw us starting a new graduate trainee scheme in which we welcomed back 6 graduates to be part of the staff team whilst receiving further in-depth training in leadership, management and technical skills. We have implemented this yearly 6-month long scheme with a view to raise up staff for Ebenezer and to further equip graduates for specialised roles within other organisations.

A fun development in the past year has been the installation of 8 bio-digesters at Ebenezer. They are currently supplying our kitchen with fuel for cooking and our long term aim is to increase their number so that all our staff houses are using them for fuel. The bio-digesters work by turning our chicken and cow manure into gas and liquid fertiliser. This reduces our fuel costs (in both money and firewood) and provides a great fertiliser for our kitchen garden. We are delighted to have been able to demonstrate that bio-gas actually works!

With record number of applications for our courses over the past couple of years, this year we overhauled our selection process in order to deal with the high demand and to ensure we are making informed selections. Preselection meetings have provided a great opportunity for potential applicants to find out more about Ebenezer before applying as well as giving us more opportunity to meet applicants and conduct informal interviews before our final Selection Camp.

Graduates



Of our 40 Advanced graduates in 2019, we are delighted that the majority have gone on to find good employment or sustainable business opportunities. One of those graduates is 21 year old Nobubelo Moyo who is working as a Field Officer for Turning Matabeleland Green (TMG). Based in Mbizingwe, near Esigodini, Nobubelo is responsible for overseeing 12 out grower chicken farmers in her area who are growing a new breed of broiler chicken called Sasso. Not only is Nobubelo responsible for providing training and expertise to these farmers, she is also overseeing the logistics and record keeping for all the batches of birds her farmers are growing. It is a challenging role and one that requires strength of character, good leadership and diplomacy.

However well we try to prepare our apprentices for life beyond Ebenezer, it is quite a challenge for them to step out on their own and implement what they've learnt in a new context. Nobubelo says, "at Ebenezer I was quite dependent - I was cooked for each day, there were rules to follow and I knew what was expected of me. Now I am

the one deciding what the rules are and if I will follow them. The good thing about Ebenezer is that the way I was disciplined is helping me make good decisions now."

It can also be a challenge for graduates settling into new communities and churches. From an environment of intentional discipleship and training, they are now often the ones leading and encouraging others. It is encouraging to see them continue to grow in their faith as they enter this new season, and for Nobubelo the challenges she has faced since graduating have shown her even more of God's faithfulness and his work in her life. "The past few months have encouraged me to trust God more and become even more close to him." As Nobubelo has settled into a new church, she is already overseeing the Children's Work, something she discovered a passion for whilst at Ebenezer!

We have so much to be thankful for when we see graduates like Nobubelo thriving where God has planted them. Our hope continues to be that all our graduates will grow in faith, family and fruitfulness as they journey through life with Jesus.

In July 2019 we graduated 40 Advanced apprentices, taking our total number of graduates to have completed our two year Advanced Course to 346. We have always made efforts to keep in touch with our graduates, but this year we have been particularly intentional in our follow up and it has been encouraging to see that many of them are actively involved in their local church and over 70% of our 2019 graduates are making a sustainable living.



Looking Forward

2020 looks to be a busy year of completing and instigating several building projects. In the coming year we will be doubling the number of layer birds on site as we build our fourth layer house which will house 20,000 birds! As well as new houses for chickens, building has already been underway to provide more accommodation for our growing staff team and this year we will be completing 3 new staff houses. We will also be establishing our own Ebenezer shop in the local community! For many years we have sold produce from our onsite stores, but this new shop will not only serve the local community but also provide a great opportunity for our apprentices to gain real experience on the frontline of marketing and retail!

As well as new buildings going up, other structural developments will include the installation of a 12 hectare centre pivot irrigation system. This will greatly help with growing fodder crops for our dairy and other crops such as onions which prefer overhead irrigation. Most excitingly, we plan this year to transfer all our water pumping from a diesel system to a solar pump! With the cost and availability of fuel presenting a continuous challenge, running all our irrigation from a solar pump will be hugely beneficial to us.

Alongside the physical developments we hope to see in the coming months, work will also be continuing to develop and refine our training and discipleship programmes. We are introducing a new series into our weekly Family Nights entitled "Why Work?" which looks at how our faith is worked out in everyday life. Our agriculture curriculum will continue to be reformatted and consolidated alongside accessible and pictorial-based training materials. We are also excited about evolving our Literacy curriculum into a Communication curriculum which will cover social and emotional learning, communication skills and practical life skills, all aimed at equipping our apprentices with relevant and appropriate skills for life beyond Ebenezer.



CONTACT US:

ebenezeratc@gmail.com

www.ebenezerafrica.org

facebook.com/ebenezeratc