

AUGUST 2020



EBENEZER TRUST

NEWS



Fantastic news this month was the wedding of our Cropping Coach, Washington Ngirazi, to his fiancée Xolile!



A local facilitator of the National AIDS council this month introduced a young ladies program for our female apprentices. The Sister-to-Sister program seeks to engage young ladies to talk about life with their peers and the facilitator, with the opportunity to provide peer counselling. We are looking forward to the fortnightly sessions over the next few months.



Not wanting to miss out, our male apprentices have established their own Man-to-Man program, following the same idea and facilitated by Ebenezer staff members.



This month we once again welcomed DNA doctors, a free service offering consultation to any apprentices or staff needing a doctor. This visit was especially appreciated as continued covid-19 restrictions have made it hard for us to seek medical attention from our local clinic.

We have been running a fun challenge to complement our Agriculture and Business lessons - the Intwasa Challenge sees families competing against each other to grow a crop of maize. There is much debate about the most cost-effective ways to grow a great crop of maize with different families trialling different combinations of manure and fertilisation. Our apprentices are learning a lot about record keeping along the way, as well as managing their own compost heaps!

Our 1st year apprentices have been having fun getting their theatrical juices flowing as they prepared and performed skits based on the Bible stories they have been studying in class.

CROPPING

18 hectares currently under irrigation



August is the start of our summer planting season and we have had a great start to the season, despite challenges of inflation and expensive inputs. 15 hectares have been planted so far, including tomato, water melon, butternut and green maize.

The only crop being harvested in August was green onions. 11,173 bunches were harvested and they have been fetching an excellent price in the market.

Our green house tomatoes continue to grow well and we have now planted red and yellow peppers in the second green house.

August is always an eventful month with our pecans as we graft and plant. Over 1000 trees in our nursery have been grafted. For the first time we have brought in 2500 pecan seedlings from an organic nursery in South Africa. We will be planting some of these at Ebenezer, but also with our grower farmers around Matabeleland.

We have been really impressed with the work ethic of our new first years who have pushed hard in this new season and who are making good progress in their field work.



LIVESTOCK



This month we placed a new batch of 10,300 broiler chicks. Five second years have been growing this batch - a sudden cold snap means they have had to work hard to ensure the birds are kept warm.



We welcomed Ebenezer graduate, Felix Ngoma, onto our broiler team this month. He is working alongside our Poultry Coach Alan to help us get the best possible results from our broilers.

Exciting news in August was that our flock of layer birds in layer house 1 produced their first eggs. This is the flock we have raised from day-old chicks. It has been an excellent experience for our team to raise their own point-of-lay birds.



Two theft incidences in our layer houses this month mean we have had to increase the number of security guards at night. Work on layer house 4 continues with steel for the house having been purchased and our roofing structure being assembled.

This month our dairy started to trial the mixing our own dairy meal. Home mixing is the goal of many dairies so we are very fortunate to have the resources to trial this. We expect results in September.



We have also begun cutting and feeding the lucerne grass we planted in March. It is great to have this pasture at such a dry time of year!

Our cows produced a total of 12,619 litres of saleable milk this month.