

DECEMBER 2020



EBENEZER MATOBO

NEWS



As always, Christmas was a major highlight of December at Ebenezer Matobo! The Christmas and New Year break this year was especially precious for some apprentices who had their first opportunity to visit their homes in up to 18 months, due to the lockdowns of 2020. Apprentices and staff remaining on site enjoyed feasting together as well as much fun and games, including an exciting staff and apprentice cricket match!



Another highlight of the past month has been the consistent rain we have been receiving. Rivers close to Ebenezer have begun to flow and after 2 years of drought it is fantastic to see the Ebenezer Dam filling and overflowing!



More good news is that the thatch has been completed on our Dining Hall and we are enjoying the additional meeting space it provides with protection from the rain!

It was with much sadness this month that we bid farewell to Mrs. Thebe, who has worked in the Ebenezer kitchen for almost 10 years. Mrs Thebe is one of our neighbours and a community health worker so we look forward to her continued involvement with us in that role.

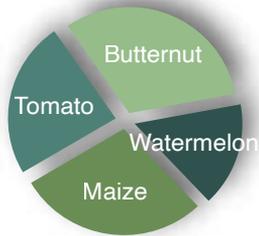


This month we welcomed Andrew McKechnie who has taken on management of our farm and all agricultural production. He comes with over 20 years experience in many fields of agriculture and we are thrilled to welcome him and his family into the Ebenezer community.

Despite our new Ebenezer intake not starting until July 2021, applications have already been coming in and in December we held our first Preselection Day for applicants. These days give us a chance to explain more about Ebenezer and to screen applicants before we invite a limited number of them to our Selection Camp in May.

CROPPING

31 hectares currently
under irrigation



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We have known throughout 2020 that come December we would be saying goodbye to Cropping team leader Washington Ngirazi who has been with us since 2016. He and his wife are exploring possibilities with a farming partnership in Tanzania. We also said good bye to Field Coach Prosper Ngulube this month.

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On the happy side we welcomed two new coaches to the cropping team - Ebenezer graduate Nkanyiso, and Brighton who has worked with us previously as an attachment student.

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In December we harvested 110 tons of tomatoes, 75 tons of butternut and 7275 watermelons. We sadly lost one hectare of watermelon due to sunburn.

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We harvested 41,340 cobs of maize for sale in Bulawayo. The remaining cobs and maize stalks were used to make silage for the dairy.

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In December we planted 1 hectare each of tomatoes, butternut, watermelon and maize.

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Our demo garden continues to thrive and is providing us with a steady supply of vegetables for our kitchen.

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LIVESTOCK



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Congratulations to Brierly and Nokuthula from our Dairy team who this month became qualified artificial insemination technicians, following a training course and examination in Harare.

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Our dairy produced a total of 14,839 litres of saleable milk in December. We reached an average production of 16 litres per cow per day which is the highest rate of production we have achieved in the last two years. One day in December, Dairibord had to help out the dairy and take unchilled milk because there was no more room in the two chillers. What a good problem to have!

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Our layer flocks produced a total of 435,061 eggs in December.

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It was amazing to be able to place birds in our new layer house 4. Our layer team and workshop team worked incredibly hard to ensure that the cages were built and the manure removal was fully automated before we placed 8400 birds. The birds are 14 weeks old and will start laying in February.

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Our workshop team has also been busy in layer house 2 to improve the manure removal system, which was a great relief to all staff and apprentices working in layers!

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We have also welcomed 4 Ebenezer graduates to assist in our layer team with the increased number of birds.

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Broiler rearing has continued steadily and our apprentices are learning a lot from the hands on experience.

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