

AUGUST 2021



EBENEZER MATOBO

NEWS



Our new apprentices are one month into their Foundation Course and showing plenty of enthusiasm in all they do! As well as throwing themselves into lessons and their Productive Learning Areas, they have been participating in some excellent workshops such as the Tree of Life workshop which focuses on growing in self-understanding through reflecting on past experiences.



A fun new challenge has been established this month between Ebenezer Families to see who can establish the most successful pfumvudza plot. Pfumvudza is a conservation farming concept developed in response to the question "How much land is required to feed a family?" and uses Foundations for Farming principles and instructions to farm a plot of maize that will produce a bucket of maize for each week of the year. Our Family groups are using what they are learning to farm their own pfumvudza plots and any maize produced will be distributed to those in need in the community surrounding Ebenezer.



Second year Business lessons have continued to be exciting and very practical as apprentices work in teams to market different produce. As they move into lessons on Production, their practical learning continues with a challenge to work in teams to produce the heaviest SASSO chickens at the most efficient cost of production!

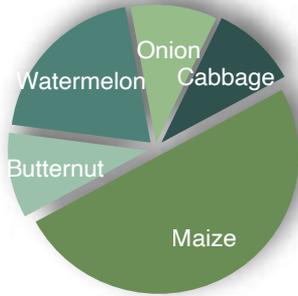


We have had a couple of public holidays in August, during which different fun events and activities were offered to apprentices. One group of girls had a lot of fun learning how to make friendship bracelets.

We are grateful to the local clinic at Natisa who have been visiting us to offer COVID vaccines to any staff and apprentices who wish to be vaccinated.

CROPPING

10 hectares currently under irrigation



Pecan coach, Nkosilathi, has been busy with our new apprentices, each week working with 5-6 of them to prepare holes for new trees and put the necessary irrigation in place. This has been an excellent learning experience for our 1st years.

This month we have also begun to sell pecan trees that we grafted last year. It is good to see this enterprise take off!

In August we started harvesting our green house tomatoes and have already produced 1 ton. We have also harvested 5 tons of potatoes, 4,299 bunches of onions and at the end of the month began to harvest cabbage.

This month we started our summer planting, with 5 hectares of maize, one hectare of butternut and one hectare of watermelon.

Our new attachment student, Nkosikhona has been working with apprentices to establish two new composts, which has been a great practical learning for everyone involved.



LIVESTOCK



Challenges with feed continued for our dairy throughout August, with the result that production was reduced to 6,455 litres of saleable milk. On top of that, cows have been breaking through our fence, so the dairy team have been busy on all fronts! However, they have remained cheerful and shown amazing commitment with second years going the extra mile and first years finding their feet and showing their potential in dairy production!

Some of our cows are beginning to give birth and we will be seeing more new arrivals over the coming weeks. We are also grateful to the cropping teams who have been planting maize for dairy feed as well as preparing silage for our cows.

In August we also welcomed Allen Bonthuis from the US. Allen is a dairy consultant whose input with us over the last 2 years has been invaluable. On this visit he spent 2 full days at the dairy, allowing us to tap into more his expertise than on previous visits.

Our layer birds produced a total of 413,860 eggs this month, with a steady increase in lay rates across all flocks. We are pleased to be hitting Hyline standards and in some instances even exceeding the standard.

Our new flock in layer house 4 started producing eggs in August and by the end of the month they had reached a pleasing 50% lay rate.