

DECEMBER 2021



EBENEZER MATOBO

NEWS



Being the month of Christmas and New Year's Eve, December has been a celebratory season at Ebenezer! The celebrations started early in the month when we hosted the wedding of friends of Ebenezer, Kwenama and Ngaatendwe. That set the tone for the rest of the month with parties, fun and games, and gift-givings to follow. The majority of our apprentices also had the opportunity this month to take some time out from Ebenezer to visit their families at home. They have returned refreshed and enthusiastic for the New Year!



Our staff team has also enjoyed some end of year fun and games as we celebrated reaching the end of another challenging but good year together.



In the middle of December our apprentices held their annual Mr and Mrs Ebenezer competition, a fun evening of getting dressed up and showcasing talent that seems to have become something of an Ebenezer tradition!

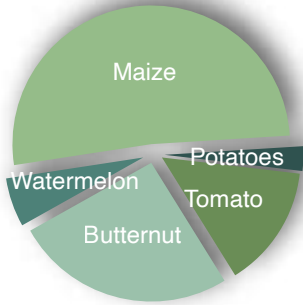
In the middle of December we held our first preselection day for candidates applying for our 2022 courses! It is always exciting to begin this process of connecting with applicants and sharing with them more about Ebenezer.



December saw the arrival of some fairly good rains for which we are grateful. The local community surrounding Ebenezer has been blessed by the building of a new dam which was officially opened in December. We are now waiting for more rain to see the rivers flow and the dam fill!

CROPPING

26 hectares currently under irrigation



December was a busy time of harvesting for our cropping team. It has been especially busy for our apprentices as they have been taking it in turns to take time off to visit their families and therefore sharing an increased workload when on site.

It was an exciting month for many of our apprentices who had their first experience of sending their produce to town markets as well as into the local community!

In total this month we harvested 1833 watermelons, 22,308 kg of butternut, 20,862 cobs of maize, 9,571 kg of tomato and 315 kg of peppers.

We were grateful for some good rain in December. Our fields look green and our crops are looking great but it has meant we are battling to control weeds!

In December we planted 2 ha of butternut, 3 ha of maize and 1 ha of tomatoes.

Alongside this, we were also able to produce half a hectare of our own seedlings for green vegetables which we are growing for the Ebenezer kitchen.



LIVESTOCK



Our layer team received a new flock of 15,000 birds which have replaced the birds culled from houses 1 and 3. We received them aged only 7 weeks which has meant a lot of work in vaccinating them all! This has been a great additional learning experience for our apprentices who have been administering the vaccines as well as debeaking the birds.



Working with birds from such a young age right up until they reach the stage of culling means our apprentices are getting a real feel for all aspects of layer production.



Production continues to move forward in our largest layer house 4. We have faced some challenges with a broken manure removal belt, but have benefited from the help of an Ebenezer graduate who has been quick to offer help in fixing it.



We are excited about a new partnership with Africa Alive, an initiative working with small scale farmers to grow and market SASSO birds, a unique chicken which can be bred for meat or eggs. Our second years enjoyed a workshop with Africa Alive in December and in the New Year they will be getting hands on experience in brooding these birds in our new Ebenezer "Mother Units" which will grow SASSOs from day-old chicks to 4-week old "teenagers" which can then be sold to households in local communities.

Our cows produced 13,772 litres of milk in December, an average of 15.5 litres per cow per day which is a good increase on previous months. Three calves we born this month - 2 females and 1 bull.