

DECEMBER 2022



EBENEZER MATOBO

NEWS



Staff and apprentices have enjoyed a good festive season at Ebenezer as we celebrated Christmas and New Year. With December one of our busiest agricultural seasons, many apprentices remained on site throughout Christmas but enjoyed lots of Ebenezer Family Time, fun and games and some Christmas feasting!



With the end of 2022 drawing near, in mid-December we finished our second training block of the year. Despite the farming busyness that summer brings, apprentices remained enthusiastic about lessons throughout the block and it was great to see them applying their learning in their productive areas. The end of the block brought a colour-themed Family Night celebration which involved a lot of dressing up and some very creative table decorations! Once the block was done, we also enjoyed a staff Christmas gathering, which involved some dressing up of a sillier nature!



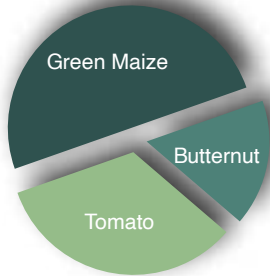
Another highlight of this month was a visit from Mgcini Mpofu, an Ebenezer graduate now based in the States. About once a year, Mgcini brings a team of visitors from America and Zimbabwe, to both encourage our apprentices and to learn from what we are doing. On this trip, he came with 6 young people who brought a lot of joy and encouragement as they shared with our apprentices and visited them in their Productive Learning Areas.



One of the wonderful things that happens when apprentices visit their homes over boost weeks, is the reports we receive back from families. One family expressed amazement at what their son had learned at Ebenezer and how he was able to instruct his relatives on their summer maize planting! Another grandmother sent us a beautiful cross-stitch as a gift of appreciation to Ebenezer. It is the most thoughtful gift and we are blessed at the thought of how much time and love must have gone into making it!

PRODUCTION

12 hectares under irrigation



In December we planted 1 hectare of butternut and 2 hectares of green maize. Our butternut harvest surpassed expectations as all fields were ready for harvest at the same time! We harvested a total of 60,000 kg of butternut as well as 12,460 kg of tomato and 4,508 watermelons.

One batch of broilers was finished this month. Apprentices did well at keeping mortality low, however various factors led to a higher FCR than aimed for. Despite this the batch still made a small profit. The apprentices also enjoyed taking it in turns to accompany the truck transporting broilers at the end of the batch. This provided them with some good exposure to what happens at the market.

We faced challenges of feed shortages with our layers this month, which had a significant negative affect on our production. Another good lesson learnt by our apprentices in some of the challenges a farmer faces! In total our layers produced 630,031 eggs with an average lay-rate of 68%.

Our dairy has had a good month! We were delighted to have our solar systems reinstalled there, meaning we are no longer reliant on a generator for our milking machines and chiller. Daily production remained good with daily averages per cow ranging from 15.5 to 21.3 litres. In total we produced 10,928.5 litres of saleable milk and 8 new calves!

