

FEBRUARY 2024



EBENEZER MATOBO

NEWS



It's been another busy month at Ebenezer, with lots going on in our productive areas. To make sure our apprentices are still having fun in this busy season, we have started a new programme of Wednesday night clubs. Apprentices have signed up for their club of choice from an incredible selection which ranges from Dance to Hairdressing to Carpentry, Driving Theory, Basket Weaving, Cooking, Drama and much much more! We are looking forward to the end of this block when each club will present something they have created or learned.



Well done to our second years, who have taken on the SASSO challenge as part of their Business Finance lessons. They are working in three groups to brood SASSO chicks before finding a profitable market for them. They have shown a lot of commitment and innovation as they have worked in their teams to manage this challenge alongside their lessons and other work commitments.



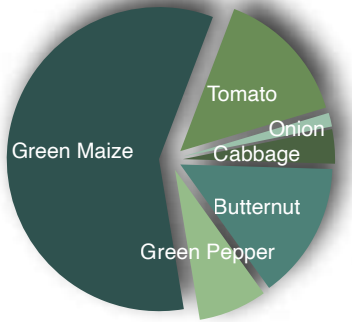
Team members, Brilliant and Sithabiso Khoza, were happy to visit Ebenezer Kazungula in Zambia this month. They spent 2 weeks with the team there, getting stuck into lessons and production and sharing their expertise and experience, not only as long-serving staff members but as some of Ebenezer's first apprentices!



Our preselection interviews continue with candidates for our next intake. Ebenezer teams of both staff and graduates have been visiting regions near and far to meet applicants and conduct interviews.

CROPPING

13.7 hectares under irrigation



There has been some great teamwork happening in our cropping section, with apprentices struggling to hit their targets and seeing their wider Ebenezer family step in to help them! This has created a great bond in our community and cropping team.

This month saw us planting 1 hectare each of butternut and sugar beans as well as 4 hectares of maize and half a hectare of cabbage.



Despite a lack of rain in February, we have been pleased with the maize germination we have seen and the standards that have been set in our fields. We have continued to experience water challenges, not just with a lack of rain but with ongoing issues with our pumps. Nevertheless the team has pulled together to do what we can to get much-needed water to our crops.

With harvesting continuing in several of our crops, this month we harvested 11,711 kg of tomato, 109 kg of green pepper, 13,420 kg of butternut and 5 crates of cucumber.

Land preparation has been underway to transplant onion to our pivot irrigation plot and we are excited for this new coming season focusing on winter crops.



LIVESTOCK



Results have come through for the broiler batch which we finished at the end of January. We were pleased with a low mortality of 2.3% and a reasonable average weight of 2.13 kg per bird, however the food conversion ratio for the batch was 1.99, which is significantly above our target of 1.6.

We placed a new batch of 11,075 broilers this month. These chicks have been the only animals at Ebenezer enjoying our current heatwave, which is serving them well in their brooding phase!

We continue to be pleased with the production of our older layer flock. They are hitting a lay-rate of 87% at 60 weeks of age. We are especially pleased with these results because we faced some water challenges in the middle of the month which saw our lay-rate dip.

It has been a bit of a different story with our younger layer flock which has been failing to hit its lay-rate target of 95%. We have also lost a number of birds in this flock due to heat stress.

With help from our cropping team, we were glad this month to silage 2 hectares of maize to serve as feed for our dairy.

Our dairy produced a total of 20,600 litres of milk in February, of which we sold 17,000 litres.