



EBENEZER MATOBO

November has been a busy, busy month with mid-summer bringing an increased amount of production work, especially for our cropping teams who are up to their eyeballs in harvesting while also fighting weeds and continuing to plant new crops! Despite this, apprentices have been showing a great attitude and though tired in lessons, they are putting maximum effort and continuing to grow in knowledge, skills and attitude!

As families, we have been meeting weekly to have fun and games together and to study the book of Philippians. With a particular focus on themes of gratitude, humility, thanksgiving and trust, we have had some awesome discussions as we learn from Paul, his colleagues and those he is writing to! It is challenging to see Paul's faith and positive attitude despite the hardships he faced, and to reflect on the source of his joy and peace.

Our netball team enjoyed attending a recent tournament at Silozwe High School, about 10 km from Ebenezer. Despite losing their only game, they were delighted to still be awarded with some plastic boxes and soap!

Special congratulations to team member and Ebenezer graduate, Fortune Ncube who in November graduated from his degree in Animal Science and Rangeland Management at Lupane State University. Several of our staff team have undertaken additional studies for diplomas and degrees alongside their full-time work; this is no mean feat, and reaching graduation day is a huge achievement.



CROPPING

November has been a hot and windy month. We have not received the rain that we would have liked by this time in the season, so irrigation continues to be a challenge. However, our centre pivot is working well and our local dam still providing a good quantity of water.

We have started to harvest and from what we are seeing, we are on track to hit our target yields! In total this month we have harvested 21,746 kg of tomato, 6,885 watermelons and 13,590 kg of butternut.

With so much harvesting happening, our apprentices have been doing an amazing job of giving their all, sometimes working late at night to load trucks with produce and consistently showing a positive attitude.

We have been planting as well as harvesting in November with 1 ha of butternut, 3 ha of maize and 1 ha of tomato going into the ground. In addition, we have planted 900 green pepper seedlings in one of our greenhouses.

Currently in the ground we have 1 ha cabbage, 6.5 ha butternut, 3 ha watermelon, 3 ha tomato and 14 ha of maize, a total of 27.5 ha being farmed by our cropping teams!





LIVESTOCK

We are so happy with our new flock of layer birds in Layer House 1. Throughout the month their lay-rate has increased from 37% to 88%. With previous flocks struggling to reach 85% at the same age, we are delighted with this progress and we look forward to seeing the lay-rate continue to increase as they come into peak production.

Our troublesome flock in Layer House 4 has maintained a lay-rate of 83%, just slightly below target, but an improvement on previous months. We have faced a series of challenges in this house but continue to work hard to manage the flock well. The total eggs produced across both houses in November was 217,744.

It was an incredibly tough month for our broiler production, as lost more than 3,500 5-week old birds in one afternoon, due to water challenges. We managed to fatten the remaining birds to a good weight, but obviously not enough to recover from the loss we had incurred. We placed a new batch at the end of the month and are looking forward to seeing improved results!

A notable highlight in our dairy this month was sending two team members to an Artificial Insemination (AI) course in Harare. This training will enable our dairy team to develop in-house expertise, reducing our dependence on external specialists and ensuring we can continuously introduce high-quality genetics to our herd.



EBENEZER AFRICA

THE CHALLENGE

- Africa is the youngest continent in the world with 60% of its population under 25.
- Africa has 26% of the world's most fertile land, yet produces only 1% of the world's food.
- Africa is the most Christian continent in the world, yet many of its churches are steeped in religion, superstition and a prosperity gospel.

Millions of young people in Africa have productive potential but no opportunity. Many of young people in Africa have a thirst to grow in their faith and be true to Jesus.

EBENEZER AFRICA: A SOLUTION

A robust and sustainable apprenticeship model which combines in-depth discipleship, intentional coaching and hands-on vocational training in Agriculture and Business. Demonstration platforms that inspire and showcase productivity possibilities for all. Partnerships with local churches and businesses for sustainability and multiplication.

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employed in agricultural contexts, managing farms or running businesses.
trainers and leaders in local churches
to churches.
and families.

INTRODUCING...

This month we carry on our conversation with Ebenezer Matobo Team Lead, Renée Cunningham....

What would you say have been some of Ebenezer's biggest successes since it was founded?

The biggest successes of Ebenezer are definitely the people whose lives have been changed as they've been through our apprenticeship. One of the things that brings me greatest joy is seeing graduates continue to grow beyond Ebenezer. Many of them have got married and started having children; it's wonderful to see them establish strong families and to see them parenting, bringing their kids up to know Jesus. Another success is seeing our graduates leave Ebenezer with a real heart for their communities and getting involved in all aspects of community life, from farming to coaching to church involvement. I love seeing the heart they have for others.

Ebenezer started in Matobo but has obviously expanded to Zambia and Mozambique. There's now possibilities for further expansion into other regions of Africa. What about that prospect excites you?

The potential to establish new Ebenezer sites excites me because of the positive feedback we get from our apprentices and graduates in our current sites, in Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. I would love more young people to have that opportunity and in different contexts. I also feel that as we grow, we keep on learning how to do things better. I think that having Ebenezer sites in different cultural contexts in different countries has taught us what are the most essential elements that need to stay the same, but which elements can, or should, change.

Tell us what you most enjoy about your role, what is most challenging, and how your role has impacted your own journey of faith.

The thing I most enjoy about my role is seeing people grow, both apprentices and staff. Seeing our staff team grow has been one of the most satisfying parts of my role. One of the most challenging aspects is making sure our production stays as efficient as it needs to be for us to be sustainable. In terms of my own faith journey, my role has definitely grown me in my faith, because there are many times when I've needed God's wisdom, both in practical situations but also in people situations. One of the other things I've grown to understand at a deeper level is that it is God who is at work in people's lives, not us, and it's up to him to bring transformation, not us. That's sometimes difficult, because we want to see change more quickly. But it brings a real sense that God is at work in us and around us and in the people we work with.

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