



EBENEZER MATOBO

We are very grateful to our friends at the Institute of Bible Training (IBT), who invited our recent graduates to a Transition Week at their site in Cowdray Park, a suburb of Bulawayo. As these youngsters graduate from Ebenezer and step into the season of life, IBT put on a unique opportunity to help strengthen their faith and prepare them for the future. Those attending appreciated a week-long intensive Bible study looking at topics including: Biblical leadership; Faith for everyday life; Bible skills; and Engaging God's world. Feedback from our graduates was that the week was "absolutely amazing." Many thanks to the IBT team, for providing this wonderful opportunity and for the care, support and encouragement they have shown to our graduates.

Our second years were also blessed this month to be invited to a different kind of training – an Irrigation workshop being hosted by DripTech and Avanos Seeds. Both companies have been working with and providing skills and inputs for small-scale contract farmers around Ebenezer. It was great to be included in this training which was very practical. Second years commented, "We enjoyed learning about the drip irrigation system because we also participated in the installation."

It was with sadness and gratitude that we bid farewell to the longest-standing members of our Ebenezer team. Having been at Ebenezer since we started in 2007, Mr and Mrs Nyams have been a rock and a blessing to all staff and apprentices who have passed through Ebenezer. We will miss them hugely, but we are excited for what God has for them in their next season, that of retirement, and we are sure it will involve lots of visits to us here at Ebenezer!

NEWS AUGUST 2026



CROPPING

August has been a busy planting month with our cropping teams planting 3 hectares of butternut, 2 hectares of watermelon and 1 ½ hectares each of maize and tomatoes. Colder temperatures throughout the month meant we planted less than planned, with soil temperatures being too low for good germination. This meant much of the planting happened later in the month once temperatures began to rise. As a result, we will also have a busy planting month in September!

August is never a big month for harvesting as most of our crops are finished and we are preparing and planting new crops. However, we did harvest 6,312 heads of cabbage and 584 bunches of onions. The market responded particularly well to our cabbages which were good quality and looked it!

Our first year apprentices have been rotating around the various Productive Learning Areas. It has been great to see their enthusiasm in cropping as well as to see them learning from the second years and their coaches.





LIVESTOCK

Lay rates across our layer houses have been varied this month. Respiratory infections in July led to a drop in production. Despite this, our birds in houses 2 and 4 were exceeding their lay-rate targets, excellent news for two ageing flocks. The flock in Layer House 1 was struggling at the start of the month, achieving a 72% lay-rate against a target of 81%. However, by the end of the month, we saw a massive improvement to 97%. We have made a lighting change in this house, replacing our white-blue bulbs with warm-bright bulbs; we hope this will help us achieve even better results.

August brought both challenge and celebration to our Broiler team. We kicked off the month with a 4-week-old batch looking strong. However, as we reached week 6, our birds hit a rough patch with mortality spiking and our FCR increasing. Despite the losses, the growth of our birds was remarkable, with some hitting 3 kg and above! This is a huge milestone for our team, the first time we have pushed weights that high, and it shows the potential we have when our management is tight. We sent this batch to slaughter mid-August and received good feedback on bird weights and quality. As we prepare for a new batch in September, we are determined to put our August learning into action by being our sharpest yet on health management.

We welcomed two new members of staff into our dairy this month. Nhlalenhle and Moreblessing are both Ebenezer graduates who showed a passion for dairy farming during their time as apprentices and we are now excited to have them join us on the team.





INTRODUCING...

Bhekisisa Mhlana stands out among our new apprentices, not only because he is a very tall young man, but because he is one of the smiliest apprentices at Ebenezer!

Bheki is 18 and comes from Esigodini where he grew up under the care of his grandparents. Having completed school in 2025 but without taking exams, he then worked alongside his grandparents on their small plot, growing crops and farming 6 dairy cows. It was through his church, Bretheren in Christ, that Bhekisisa heard about Ebenezer – from a flier which was sent around a whatsapp group of church members. With an existing love of agriculture, some experience in farming and with a confidence in hard work, Bheki thought it was the perfect opportunity for him.

When he saw Ebenezer, Bhekisisa's first thought was, "This is a place I can learn a lot and learn in peace. I love to work and this place will help me learn what I need to start a small farm myself where I can grow crops and earn some money."

Two months into his apprenticeship, Bheki has no regrets in coming! "Nothing has been challenging and I have enjoyed everything at Ebenezer. I have enjoyed farming, learning how to plant seeds, how to space them, how much water they need. And as someone who likes to socialise and play, I have enjoyed living with many people."

Asked what he has learned about himself, Bhekisisa says he has discovered that when speaking he has some good things to say. And about God, Bheki has understood more about why Jesus died. He has especially enjoyed attending a local church, Bethel, where he values the preaching and singing and the way they make time for questions and answers.

AUGUST 2026

