



## **Livestock & Meat Advisory Council**

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### **LivestockZimbabwe Update: 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019**

#### **OVERVIEW**

Zimbabwe Herd Book hosted the Beef School 2019 in Bulawayo last week. This exceptional event attracted 175 participants and consisted of two days of intensive lectures from international, regional and local speakers. Steve Miller, Hugh Nivison and Kim Matthews from the US, Australia and UK, respectively, gave excellent presentations on the adoption of innovative technologies in the beef cattle industry in their countries. New technologies include taking the blood pressure of animals by inserting long catheters through the jugular vein into the ventricles of the heart. This data allows for the selection of bulls adapted to high altitudes and breed animals with improved tolerance to 'high altitude disease' in mountainous areas.

Electronic 'wearable' tags for cows are now available which cater for the measurement of a wide range of 'difficult but nice to have traits' including location (grazing behaviour), activity (temperament, oestrus, calving and health), rumination (efficiency and health), eating (efficiency) and respiration (health). Presentations also introduced participants to the significant strides being made by using genomics to measure and select for a wide range for traits.

The most eye-opening presentation was made by Prof John Lawrence who has spent many years researching Theileriosis (January disease) in cattle. The new thinking is that the disease is being spread by the reintroduction of Lowveld Brown Ear tick, to the highveld areas. With the breakdown of dipping services, and the lack of modern acaricides, Theileriosis is becoming a major health crisis. The tick is also well adapted to most cattle areas in South Africa and so it is likely that Theileriosis will become a crisis there as well. His presentation is attached for your reference and information.

Stimulating and thought-provoking presentations included discussion on bush dairy as a alternative to beef production, principles of veld management, chemical control of bush encroachment, history of veterinary work in Zimbabwe, Senkobo (dermatophilosis) disease and compartmentalisation for improved biosecurity and as a means to safeguard trade.

### **Meeting of the Stockfeed Manufacturers Association**

The Grain Marketing Board (GMB) is still issuing orders for the collection of maize. It is understood that while some product is available for manufacturers, stock levels are critical and human consumption needs are being prioritised.

The new producer maize price of ZWL 4,000 has not had the intended effect on improving deliveries to the GMB and it is hoped that the early rains may induce farmers to release stocks stored for precautionary purposes.

The Second Round Crop Assessment estimates soya bean production for the 2019 season at 60,000mt, but industry participants are of the view that the actual harvest may be lower, especially taking into account the effects of the drought.

Maize and wheat brans are not available and these products are being imported. It is anticipated that the supply of molasses will also dry up soon and imports will have to be sourced from the region.

### **Livestock Diary: November**

Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup>	Open meeting of the Pig Producers Association of Zimbabwe
Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup>	Meeting of the Stockfeed Manufacturers Association
Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Council meeting of the Zimbabwe Herd Book

### **Enclosures**

- Presentation on Theileriosis: A National Crisis