



Livestock & Meat Advisory Council

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Livestock Zimbabwe Update: 16th March 2018

OVERVIEW

Zimbabwe has banned the importation of all processed meats from South Africa, following reports of deaths in that country from listeriosis, a bacterial contamination traced to processed meats.

Livestock producers should be aware that rabies is on the increase and can be contracted by humans coming into contact with an infected animal. Cattle and other rabid livestock may not initially display aggression or confusion but may salivate excessively.

The date has closed for submission of livestock project proposals for the Zimbabwe Agricultural Growth Programme (ZAGP), the largest livestock development programme to date in Zimbabwe. This broad-ranging programme focuses on the building of sustainable and inclusive livestock value chains as the basis of national livestock development.

Council Meeting of the Zimbabwe Poultry Association

Council looks forward to the extension of the waiver of 40% duty on imported hatched eggs for a further six months. This is a key enabler in the poultry rebuilding strategy which ZPA embarked on last year following the outbreak of Avian Influenza (AI) in Zimbabwe. Importation of grandparent and parent stock is also essential for rebuilding capacity in the poultry industry.

Restocking of Lanark Farm, part of the breeder operation on the largest poultry enterprise in Zimbabwe, is underway after the lifting of the AI quarantine there.

As the end of the first quarter approaches, it can be seen that the poultry industry rebuilding strategy is paying off. It is apparent that many small-scale producers are going back into production again after the uptake of 7.1million day-old chicks onto the market in December. This year, there was no typical tailing-off of broiler production after the Christmas market peak, instead more small-scale poultry producers have entered the sector. These and other national poultry production statistics are detailed in the latest ZPA newsletter, released this week.

Broiler prices are starting to soften as national production increases again, primarily in the small-scale sector.

Council Meeting of the Meat Processors' Association of Zimbabwe

Members reported that media focus on listeriosis in processed meats in South Africa has prompted many local consumers to seek assurance that processed meat products produced in Zimbabwe are safe to eat.

The meeting observed the following:

- **There are no reports of listeriosis in Zimbabwe.**
- Listeriosis is a bacterial infection that can occur in a range of foodstuffs, from fruit to dairy products. The strain found in processed meats in South Africa is Listeriosis ST 6.
- A ban on importation of mechanically deboned meat (MDM) via South Africa has been in effect since mid-2017, as a veterinary precautionary measure following continuing outbreaks of AI in that country. (MDM is a key ingredient used in many processed meat products and is not manufactured in Africa).
- Investigations into the source of listeriosis in processed meats in South Africa appear to indicate that it did not originate from MDM imported from Brazil.
- Members of the Association uphold strict hygiene procedures, including maintaining a 'closed cold chain', in accordance with global protocol on meat processing and handling.
- Members also implement a Code of Conduct on the preparation, storage, distribution and handling of processed meat products in line with global food safety regulations. This includes adherence to global procedures on the handling and utilisation of MDM.
- All MPAZ members are licensed and those using MDM as an ingredient only utilise it as specified in precooked products.
- Product spoilage can occur if these standards are not adhered to at any point along the value chain - from processing, storage, distribution, retail and other vending of product, or even unsatisfactory home storage of processed meat products.

The meeting proposed that MPAZ, as market leaders in the processed meat industry, should conduct an educational awareness campaign on safe handling and storage of processed meat products. An approach will be made to the Department of Veterinary Services and urban health authorities with the view to conducting the campaign in partnership with these regulators. Not all small entrepreneurs in the growing 'home-processing' meat product industry are equipped with the necessary cold storage facilities. MDM should never be used in its raw form in processed meat products.

Like all other meats, processed meat products can deteriorate rapidly if not kept properly refrigerated according to manufacturer specifications.

Schedule of forthcoming meetings and events: March

March 20th and 21st MillSmart and Nutrition School, Harare