



NURTURE EDUCATION TRUST PRESS RELEASE

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The Nurture Education Trust (NET) was established early in 2016. At a time when Zimbabwe looks to its small-scale farmers to grow the beef industry, the Trust's aim is to assist smallholders to commercialise their cattle production.

A result of a joint effort between NET, Bulawayo Abattoirs, CC Sales, LPD and Agricultural Colleges, NET was established to empower small farmers with the knowledge to generate a return on their primary asset - cattle - and make the transition from cattle keeping to commercial beef production

By drawing from the wide- ranging expertise of experienced farmers and with their willingness to share their commercial cattle production knowledge, NET is, through the Stockman Academy, equipping smallholder farmers with the type of expert knowledge that only comes from years in the industry.

"The concept of Nurture Education Trust is to tap knowledge from retired farmers and other livestock experts and capture this in a form that today's cattle farmers can benefit from", explains NET Founding Trustee, Uchi Gappah. Nurture Education Trust has consolidated this into the Stockman's Academy training programme "to equip interested farmers with the knowledge on how to realize a return on their cattle."

In our first two years of this exercise, NET has trained over 400 farmers, 40% of them women. Farmers are drawn from every cattle-farming district of the country, in consultation with the Department of Livestock Production and Development (LPD). The programme over the last year consisted of five modules i.e. Nutrition, Breeding and Reproduction, Animal Health, Cattle Handling and Cattle Farming as a Business. 137 farmers have attended all five modules and will receive certificates in recognition of their completion of the Stockman Academy programme.

Gappah added, "The first cycle of the program was completed in April 2017 having commenced in June 2016. The second year of farmer training commenced in July 2017 and was completed in June 2018. Any farmer is free to register for the course for fee of \$50 per training session".

Through the Stockman's Academy, NET is equipping farmers with the cattle management skills to build strong, productive beef herds. In rural communities traditionally centred on cattle, strengthening cattle productivity improves livelihoods at many levels.