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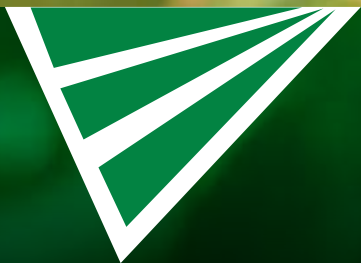


Tiger feeds shares practical tips for poultry farmers: To weigh or not to weigh your eggs?

p 17

**Namibia's food
insecurity
declines as rainfall
boosts harvests**

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MASSEY FERGUSON

Dear readers,

As we step into November, many parts of Southern Africa have been blessed with much-needed rainfall, bringing a welcome respite to farmers battling dry conditions earlier this year. In some areas, including Lusaka, the rain has been heavier than expected, causing localised flooding, reminding us of the delicate balance between water as a life-giving resource and its potential to disrupt agricultural activities.

It's a timely reminder of the critical role weather patterns play in the decisions we make on farm and across the agri value chain.

In this edition, we explore practical and timely insights for farmers and agribusinesses. Tiger Feeds share their expertise on the question every poultry farmer asks: "To weigh or not to weigh?" Their guidance on commercial egg layers highlights the importance of monitoring flock performance to ensure optimal feed efficiency and productivity, a key topic for any layer operation.

Across the border in Namibia, positive rainfall has led to a significant improvement in food security. We report on how increased precipitation has boosted harvests and offered a measure of relief to farmers and communities alike. It's an encouraging story of resilience and the tangible impact of rainfall on food systems.

Our herd health focus in this issue examines the often-overlooked pre-breeding exams for replacement

heifers. Sound animal health and careful selection of breeding stock remain cornerstones of profitable and sustainable livestock farming, and our experts explain why this step cannot be skipped.

Food security also takes centre stage as we explore the value of indigenous knowledge in sustainable agriculture. From traditional cropping systems to local pest management practices, integrating ancestral wisdom with modern science can strengthen our resilience and support more sustainable food production for generations to come.

Across Africa, the agri sector is seeing rapid innovation, from mechanisation and digital farming tools to climate-smart practices and value chain development. Keeping abreast of these trends is crucial for farmers, agribusinesses, and policymakers alike.

As always, we at ProAgri Africa are committed to bringing you practical insights, expert advice, and stories that celebrate the dedication of farmers across the continent. We hope this edition inspires you, informs your decisions, and strengthens your connection to the ever-evolving world of African agriculture.

ProAgri-greetings!
Bianca Pretorius
bianca@proagri.co.za



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Philagro is committed to supporting African farmers with innovative crop protection solutions that boost yields and safeguard livelihoods. Their expertise helps farmers achieve healthier, more resilient crops across the continent.



ProAgri
technology for the farmer AFRICA

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Philagro's winning formula for African agriculture

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As one of the leaders in the drive to transform agriculture in Africa for the greater good, Philagro's philosophy is simple but extremely effective. The company's singular vision and commitment is to add real value to agriculture in Africa by supplying quality agricultural products and providing exceptional service, hence the slogan:

A fine example of this technology is Philagro's comprehensive range of proven products that are now available to meet the needs of farmers throughout the region of Southern Africa. Commercial and smallholder farmers now have access to total crop solutions with state-of-the-art herbicides, pesticides, fungicides, miticides, plant growth regulators

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Despite the challenges faced today, prospects for Africa's agricultural sector are remarkably positive. According to the "Agriculture Outlook 2018-27" report from the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the sector will undergo robust growth, with crop production in sub-Saharan Africa projected to rise 30% over the next decade. Moreover, greater access to innovative technology is expected to support the development and application of smart farming techniques.

and animal nutrition. Most of the bio-rationals and animal nutrition distributed by Philagro are very well known in the agricultural world and have earned admiration and respect in the tough world of agricultural remedies.

Philagro has acquired a wide range of registrations against many of the most stubborn pests on important vegetable crops, like the modern active ingredient pyridalyl in SumiPleo®. This product has some outstanding beneficial features that distinguish it





from old-fashioned hard chemicals prone to pest resistance.

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In potatoes, SumiPleo® controls potato moth, *Tuta absoluta*, and suppresses the flying leaf miners *Lyriomyza trifolii* and *L. huidobrensis*. In tomatoes, SumiPleo® controls African bollworm, *Tuta absoluta* and suppresses the flying leaf miners *Lyriomyza trifolii* and *L. huidobrensis*, as well as the tomato semi-looper (*Chrysodeixes acuta*).

In various cabbage crops, SumiPleo® as well as FlorBac® effectively control diamondback moth larvae. In lettuce, African bollworm is kept in check with SumiPleo®. In sweetcorn, SumiPleo® controls the dreaded fall army worm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*).

For a more effective environmental approach and intelligent resistance management, SumiPleo® is alternated with Philagro's organic *Bacillus* (Bt) products like DiPel®DF on *Lepidoptera* larvae in most vegetable crops and FlorBac®WG in cabbage crops, specifically against diamondback moth larvae.

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Sumi-Alpha 200 EW® contains the highly active synthetic pyrethroid esfenvalerate, which is a contact insecticide for the control of cutworms on all crops, bollworm on cotton, sunflower, maize and sorghum and stalk borers in maize.

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For more information about Philagro products in your area or to find your nearest agent, contact Bennie Buys at (+27)82-809-5447 or email him at bennie.buys@philagro.co.za.

- SumiPleo® (Reg.no. L8377, Act 36 / 1947) contains, Pyridalyl dichloropropene-derivative. Caution. (Sumitomo Chemical Company, Japan).
- DiPel®DF (Reg.no. L6441, Act 36 / 1947) contains *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki*. Caution. (Valent Biosciences, USA).
- FlorBac®WG (Reg.no. L5531, Act 36 / 1947) contains *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *aizawai*. Caution. (Valent Biosciences, USA).
- Sumimax® WP (Reg no. L6358 Act 36 / 1947) contains Flumioxazin (N-phenylimide). Caution. (Sumitomo Chemical Company, Japan).
- Sumi-Alpha® 200 EW (Reg no. L8821, Act 36 / 1947) contains Esfenvalerate. Harmful. (Sumitomo Chemical Company, Japan).
- Sumisclex® SC (Reg no. L6377 Act 36 / 1947) contains Procymidone (dicarboximide). (Sumitomo Chemical Company, Japan).

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Irrigation Unlimited

introduces: New and improved Vanlok+ Turf fittings

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When it comes to irrigation, reliable connections make all the difference. Irrigation Unlimited's Vanlok+ Turf fittings are designed to simplify LDPE pipe installations, offering everyone from farmers to landscapers a strong, hassle-free, and leak-free connection with ease.



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West Africa Mauritania

by Tisha Steyn

During the past few months, we have travelled through Africa on a food journey, learning more about the food of people in different countries around the continent. Our journey took us to Southern Africa, East Africa, North Africa and Central Africa. In the next few articles, we will visit some of the 16 countries in West Africa to learn more about the food they eat.

The food and drinks that the inhabitants of these countries consume, depend on what is grown on small-scale farms and what these farmers can buy when they sell their excess goods at the local markets.

The cuisines of some of these countries can be grouped together because they show similarities regarding ingredients and preparation based on agriculture in the different climate zones of this part of the continent. The food may also show similarities because their cuisines were influenced by the same nations that played a role in their countries' past.

Mauritania

Mauritania is located in Northwest Africa, and its cuisine is to some extent similar to that of Morocco and Senegal, two of its neighbouring countries, along with Western Sahara, Algeria, Mali and the Atlantic Ocean.

Mauritania's population is made up of different ethnicities, including the Moors, Berbers and the Arabs, as well as non-Arabic Africans such as



Yassa Poulet is made from roasted chicken and caramelised onions.

the Wolof, Bambara and Fulas. The cuisine originally reflected Arab and African influences, but French colonial influences have also played a role in shaping traditional dishes.

Since the locals of Mauritania are usually nomads, the food does not heavily depend on fresh ingredients that are harvested and prepared at home. Staple starches include couscous, rice, millet, potatoes and sweet potatoes.

Since alcohol is prohibited for the predominant Muslim population, they drink a lot of tea.



Yassa refers to grilled fish marinated in lemon juice and mustard and served with onions. (Source: <https://recipeswith-ash.com/10-best-mauritanian-recipes-you-need-to-try-once/>)



Thieboudienne is a traditional fish-and-rice dish prepared with tomato sauce, all in one pot. (Source: <https://travelfoodatlas.com/mauritanian-food>)

01 Meat and vegetable dishes

Thieboudienne, pronounced che-bu-jin, is one of Mauritania's traditional dishes. Originally, it was usually made with fresh or smoked firm white fish, but beef and chicken can also be used. The dish is flavoured with Thieb or Tiep, which is a garlic-parsley marinade, and a spice called netetou (fermented locust bean seasoning). The dish contains tomato, garlic, onion and vegetables such as okra, eggplant and sweet potato.

Thieboudienne is served over cooked rice in a large dish and traditionally eaten with the hands.

Yassa poulet is a citrusy dish consisting of chicken marinated with lemon juice and mustard. The marinated chicken is first seared and then simmered with caramelised onions, garlic, chilis, and sometimes hot peppers and bay leaves.

Yassa can also refer to grilled fish with onion sauce. The fish is marinated in lemon juice, mustard, salt and pepper for an hour and then cooked on a grill. Onions are sautéed in oil until caramelised and served over the fish.

Mahfe is a peanut stew made with



Mechoui, also known simply as slow-roasted lamb, is prepared by taking lamb, seasoning it with spices, and then cooking it. (Source: <https://travelfoodatlas.com/mauritanian-food/>)



chicken, goat or camel meat in a peanut sauce. The peanuts are first crushed manually, and then mixed with tomato paste and jachtiin, or ground okra – and sometimes with tomatoes, garlic, cabbage and other root or leafy vegetables. It is usually served with white rice.

Mechou is slow-roasted lamb. It is prepared by seasoning the lamb and then skewering it onto a tree branch and slow roasted over hot coals until the meat is done. The dish is usually made on special occasions or holidays. On such occasions, important guests are offered the cooked organs, including the kidney, liver, sheep's head and eyes.

Cherchem is made with mutton, durum wheat and beans, and spiced up with oregano, paprika, thyme, bay leaf and ground coriander. Drizzled with olive oil, the dish is eaten for lunch or dinner.

Lamb tagine is a slow-cooked stew prepared in a conical clay pot called a tagine. This sweet and savoury dish includes tender lamb, aromatic spices, and dried fruits such as apricots and prunes, onions, garlic, ground ginger, cinnamon, turmeric, cumin and honey.

Marouga is another Mauritanian lamb stew made with onions, garlic, ginger, turmeric and cumin. Once the meat is browned and cooked until soft, tomatoes, potatoes, carrots and pumpkin are added. The dish is served with bread or rice.

Camel meat is a traditional source of protein in Mauritania, especially among the nomadic communities. The camel meat is slow-cooked with onions and garlic, spices such as cumin, coriander and cinnamon, beef stock, potatoes, and carrots. The stew is garnished with fresh parsley and eaten hot with rice or flatbread.

Harira is a soup prepared with flour,

02 Snacks



Boulette: Boulettes are Mauritanian meatballs made with ground beef or lamb that are fried in hot oil and eaten as a snack or in a stew. (Source: <https://recipeswithash.com/10-best-mauritanian-recipes-you-need-to-try-once/>)

tomatoes, lentils, chickpeas, onions, rice and beef, lamb or chicken, and is drizzled with olive oil. It may be used as a starter but it is also a light snack. The dish is often served with a hard-boiled egg spiced with salt and cumin, dates, dried fruits such as figs, honey sweets and homemade breads or crepes.

Hakko is a savoury sauce prepared with ground bean leaves, peanuts and meat. The dish is usually accompanied by beans or steamed couscous. The latter refers to granules of millet, wheat or barley that are steamed. **Boulettes** are Mauritanian meatballs

made with ground beef or lamb, onions, egg, breadcrumbs and spices such as cumin and paprika. The meatballs are fried in hot oil and make a nice snack or can be used in a stew.

Akara refers to black-eyed pea fritters made with black-eyed-peas, onions and scotch bonnet pepper, and fried until golden brown and crispy.



Akara refers to fritters made with black-eyed peas. (Source: <https://recipeswithash.com/10-best-mauritanian-recipes-you-need-to-try-once/>)

03 Sweets and drinks

Chakery is a Mauritanian couscous pudding made with couscous, yogurt, milk, sugar, raisins and chopped nuts.

Mauritanian sweet tea is made with green tea, sugar and mint leaves. The tea is boiled many times and served with a special technique called ragwa, which involves raising the teapot and then pouring the tea. This process helps to create a frothy foam, which makes it a unique beverage. It is consumed hot.

Dromedary milk tea, a staple in Mauritanian culture, is tea made with camel milk, green tea leaves, sugar and mint.

Lakh, also known as lah, is a special kind of yogurt made with the fruit of the baobab tree, millet couscous, peanut butter and grated coconut. It is sweet in flavour, and many people also refer to it as cheese curds. Lakh is often served with millet dishes.

Zrig is a traditional Mauritanian, slightly tangy drink made from fermented camel milk. It is particularly popular among nomadic people who use it for hydration in the arid regions of Mauritania.

Source references

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Mauritania – 10 Iconic Dishes <https://10dishes.com/home/iconic-mauritania-dishes/mauritania-10-iconic-dishes/>

Chakery is a Mauritanian couscous pudding made with couscous, yogurt, milk, sugar, raisins and chopped nuts. (Source: <https://recipeswithash.com/10-best-mauritanian-recipes-you-need-to-try-once/>)



Dromedary tea is made with camel milk and sugar. (Source: <https://recipeswithash.com/10-best-mauritanian-recipes-you-need-to-try-once/>)

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Indigenous knowledge key to sustainable agriculture

Indigenous knowledge is knowledge that has developed in communities over centuries. In Africa, knowledge is passed on from father to son. Since women are primarily responsible for keeping small-scale farms going, knowledge regarding agriculture and environmental care is passed on from mother to daughter.

This indigenous knowledge mirrors how people understand their environment, their way of making a living, solving problems regarding their livelihood and well-being, and thereby ensuring that they can continue to do so in the future.

What are indigenous knowledge systems?

Indigenous knowledge systems that develop over time is passed on through the generations by storytellers who use stories, songs, proverbs, dances and dramatic portrayals to convey wisdom. This wisdom signifies the cultural, historical and spiritual ties that the people have with the environment, and shows their understanding, beliefs, values and skills in the information they convey in their storytelling.

Indigenous knowledge in agriculture and conservation

African agriculture and conservation are deeply interconnected, encompassing a community that takes responsibility for living in harmony with nature in order to achieve long-term sustainability.

There are many examples of how indigenous agriculture enhances food production by using the basic principles of regenerative methods. This indigenous knowledge about intercropping and mixed farming improves soil fertility, maximises land use, reduces pests, and ensures food security.

Intercropping and crop rotation are used by farmers in West and East Africa who traditionally use intercropping and crop rotation by planting maize, beans, and cassava to maintain soil fertility and reduce pests. They use animal dung as organic manure and crop rests as compost to enrich soil naturally.

Women often select and store drought-tolerant and pest-resistant seeds and preserve them for the next season. The use of indigenous crops and seeds, such as sorghum, millet, teff, and African yam beans, which are traditional crops selected over generations, are commonplace. These plants are drought-tolerant, pest-resistant, and adapted to local soils. They also preserve agrobiodiversity and food security in changing climates.

Water management

Water harvesting and retention techniques are maintained through communal labour and traditional leadership systems.

In Ethiopia and Kenya's highlands, terracing and contour ploughing are practiced to prevent soil erosion. Terracing in the Ethiopian highlands is used to reduce runoff, prevent erosion and enhance soil penetration.

In Kenya and Tanzania, traditional water pans and stone bunds are used to harvest rainwater for later use. Bunds are among the most common techniques used in agriculture to collect surface runoff, increase water infiltration and prevent soil erosion on a gentle slope.

Zai pits are small planting pits used in the Sahel, including Burkina Faso and Niger, to capture water and restore degraded soils. Zai pits are ancient water-harvesting techniques used in the Sahel to rehabilitate degraded lands. These pits consist of small basins

(20 to 40 cm in diameter and 10 to 20 cm deep) during the dry season to trap rainwater, soil particles, and organic matter. The method enhances water infiltration, retains nutrients, and improves soil structure, ensuring a higher yield in arid environments. The pits can be combined with stone bunds.

Indigenous irrigation systems include the aflaj systems, also known as qanats. In North Africa and elsewhere in the world, this refers to a system of canals that divert underground water from highlands to low-lying areas for agriculture.

Local communities in Uganda and Zambia manage wetlands as buffers during periods of drought.

Livestock management

In Ethiopia and Tanzania, crop residues feed livestock, while animal manure fertilises fields. This benefits the soil by enhancing fertility while reducing waste, thereby creating closed nutrient cycles in small-scale systems.

In these countries, nomadic herders such as the Maasai in Kenya and Tanzania, move their livestock seasonally to access water and grazing in a process called transhumance.

To enhance livestock resilience, indigenous cattle breeds such as Nguni and Ankole are cultivated for their resistance to disease and tolerance to drought.

Just as indigenous knowledge of medicinal plants plays a role in human health and well-being, ethnoveterinary practices make use of local herbs and plant extracts to treat animal diseases.

Farmers who have gained knowledge that is based on observation and experimentation, pass down knowledge of natural and chemical-free pest management, such as using neem leaves, pepper, or ash to deter insects.



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Technologies for African Agriculture Transformation (TAAT) <https://e-catalogs.taatafrica.org/gov/technologies/zai-pits-water-harvesting-and-soil-improvement>



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Traditional ecological knowledge of plant species

Indigenous knowledge guides sustainable grazing and biodiversity protection. Pastoralists in Kenya and Botswana identify hundreds of plant species and know their roles, whether they are used as fodder, medicine, or soil indicators.

Agroforestry systems

When trees are integrated with crops and or livestock in an integrated, intentional, interactive and intensive way, they are practicing agroforestry. Communities understand tree-crop-livestock relationships and selectively manage which trees remain in fields.

The parkland system in West Africa integrates trees such as shea, baobab, and acacia with crops. These trees provide shade, reduce erosion, fix nitrogen in the soil, and supply fruits and fuelwood. Selling these products provides an additional income, making households more resilient against climate shocks.

Traditional fire management

The San and Bantu-speaking groups in Southern Africa start controlled burns to prevent larger wildfires. These fires are timed seasonally to promote regrowth and maintain grazing lands. Timely and regular fires prevent bush encroachment and promote biodiversity.

Fire is a natural part of many landscapes, and controlled burns can mimic nature's cycles. Controlled burns are intentional fires that are used to clear excess vegetation, prevent larger wildfires, and promote ecosystem health.

Climate and environmental knowledge

Indigenous knowledge includes ways to predict the weather, for example, rain or drought by watching animal and insect behaviour, the direction of the wind, a ring around the moon and the way plants are flowering.

Indigenous communities often maintain sacred natural sites that preserve unique plant and animal species by protecting certain trees, groves, and rivers for cultural and spiritual reasons, while the environment also benefits from this protection.

For example, the Kaya forests off Kenya's coast and the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove in Nigeria are protected for spiritual and cultural reasons. Some animals, such as lions, zebras and pythons cannot be hunted in Zimbabwe and Ghana. These indigenous traditions help preserve biodiversity.

As a result, seed banks and habitats of rare plants and animals are being protected, and thus the ecological



In Nigeria, parkland systems form part of agroforestry where trees, crops and or livestock are farmed together. (Source: <https://www.actionforshea.com/improving-shea-farming-communities-resilience/>)

balance is maintained.

Community-based natural resource management

In Namibia, for instance, local conservancies manage wildlife populations sustainably, thus blending traditional authority with modern law. This reduces poaching, supports ecotourism, and returns income to communities.

Health and medicine

Long before modern Western medicine reached the continent of Africa, the tribes of Africa used herbal medicine to treat ailments. For example, *Artemisia afra* (African wormwood) is still used for fever and *Prunus africana* bark for prostate ailments.

Traditional healers and diviners use ancestral knowledge to provide physical and spiritual healing by using herbs and rituals. Traditional midwives or birth attendants use local herbs for pain relief and postpartum care.

Architecture

Indigenous knowledge also incorporates the use of local materials such as mud, thatch or stone, which is used in building homes suited to local climates. For instance, mud houses with thatched roofs are cooler in hot regions. Traditional housing layouts often comprise compounds with an open courtyard with houses or huts on the perimeter to enhance social cohesion. Overhanging roofs of thatch or palm fronds provide shade for humans and animals alike.

In conclusion, a quote of universal relevance from *Agroforestry Notes*, published by the USDA National Agroforestry Center:

"Thus, traditional ecological knowledge is connected to certain places, peoples, cultures, spiritual beliefs, and a responsibility to family and community for the future. This knowledge must be practiced and constantly adapted to stay alive, current and able to meet the evolving needs of indigenous individuals and communities."



Stone bunds are built along contours to harvest rainwater for agriculture.

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A niggly question:

by Rowena Blanco, nutritionist,
Tiger Animal Feeds

To weigh or not to weigh? (Commercial egg layers)



Body weight is a factor that is often overlooked by poultry producers who purchase pullets, and sometimes by those who produce replacement pullets. The two most important criteria for pullet quality are uniformity within the flock and proper body weight at a specific age. Almost anything that adversely affects a pullet will usually be reflected in lower body weights and poorer flock uniformity.

The poultry producer should always be aware of the body weight, flock uniformity, vaccination schedule, feeding programme, lighting, environmental conditions during grow-out, and the general management of his pullets. Without the basic knowledge of the flock grow-out, it is virtually impossible to understand and possibly solve problems that may later occur during the laying period. Remember that once egg production begins, it is too late to solve problems resulting from poor grow-out nutrition or management.

Pullets are grown to attain a certain body weight at a certain age. During this growing period, the tissues and organs develop at different rates and therefore feeding to the nutritional demands for these various tissues and organs is imperative. For example, growth during the first six weeks of a pullet's life is not in fat, but in high protein organs such as the heart, liver and kidneys.

"Critical periods" exist during the growing period and simply feeding to body weight while ignoring these critical periods of development, may have a detrimental effect on performance in the laying house. It is essential to have the correct amount and balance of amino acids, other nutrients, and energy in the diet at

various stages of the growing period.

Underweight pullets approaching peak egg production will not be able to consume enough energy each day to maintain or even attain peak production. The bird, at this point, will use her body stores of fat and protein to provide the energy in an attempt to produce eggs at her full genetic potential. Small pullets reaching peak egg production will usually experience a decline in egg production at or shortly after peak production. This is often referred to as the "post-peak" production drop. In addition, a flock of pullets exhibiting non-uniformity of body weight will result in a lower, flatter production peak.

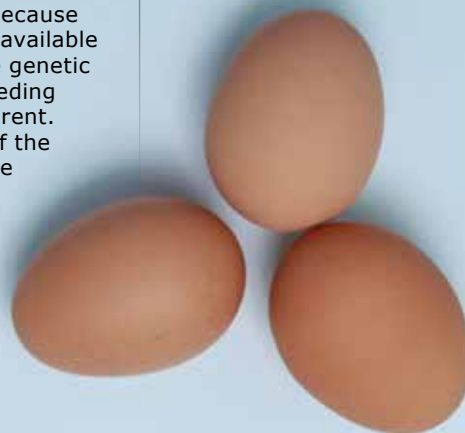
Many of the problems that occur during the early part of lay can be traced back to insufficient or improper types of body weight attained during the various stages of the growing period. In order to avoid these problems, pullets must be fed in a manner that allows full expression of their genetic growth potential during the growing period. Because each strain of egg-type bird available today is the result of intense genetic selection by a particular breeding company, each strain is different.

The desired body weight of the flock is usually the weight the breeder recommends at a given age. Being above the recommended body weight at any age should not cause as much concern as a pullet being underweight, especially in hot weather.

In summary, the main goal in feeding pullets is to produce a flock of birds which, when placed in the layer house, will attain

optimum performance. At point-of-lay, the highest quality pullet will usually be a profitable laying hen throughout the laying period. The genetic potential of the pullet is fixed prior to hatch. From the day of hatch onward, successful performance in the layer house is influenced by factors to which the pullet is exposed both before and after the onset of lay.

Body weight and uniformity are extremely important, and many of the problems resulting in reduced profitability from a commercial layer flock could have been eliminated if the correct pullet body weight and condition at the desired age of sexual maturity had been achieved. Remember, although feed is the major cost in the rearing operation, it does not pay to try to cut costs in this area, especially in the critical first 12 weeks of age. This error may result in losses in the layer house.



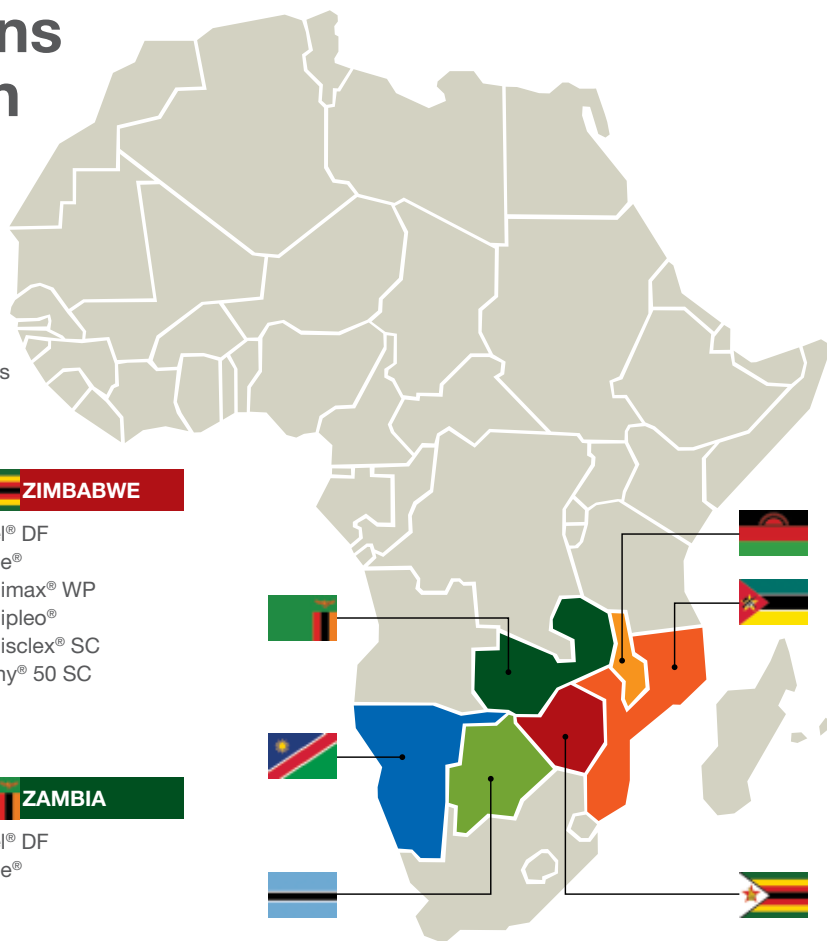
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Product information

INSECTICIDES

Dipel® DF

A water dispersible granule biological insecticide for the control of *Lepidopterous* larvae on numerous crops as indicated. Active ingredient - *Bacillus thuringiensis, var. kurstaki*, caution (Reg. No. L6441, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), W130297 (Botswana), MW/PCB/2021/R/0737 (Malawi), DSV-1545 (Mozambique), N-AR-0943 (Namibia)). DiPel® DF is the registered trademark of Valent BioSciences™ Corporation, USA.

FlorBac® DF

A water dispersible granule biological insecticide for the control of *Lepidoptera* larvae on crops as indicated. Active ingredient - *Bacillus thuringiensis, var. aizawai*, caution (Reg. No. L5531, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), W130272 (Botswana),). FlorBac® is the registered trademark of Valent BioSciences™ Corporation, USA.

Nemesis® 100 EC

An emulsifiable concentrate stomach and contact insecticide with insect growth regulant activity for the control of larval/nymphal stages of citrus Red scale (*Aonidiella aurantii*) and Mussel scale (*Cornuaspis beckii*) in citrus, and mango scale (*Aulacaspis tubercularis*) in mangoes and Whiteflies (*Bemesia tabaci* and *Trialeurodes vaporariorum*) in tomatoes. Active ingredient - Pyriproxyfen (phenylether), harmful (Reg. No. L6378, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), W130334 (Botswana), N-AR 2170 (Namibia)). Nemesis® is the registered trademark of Sumitomo Chemical Company, Tokyo, Japan.

Olyset® Net

Olyset® Net is composed of a resin-based fiber that incorporates a synthetic pyrethroid called permethrin to form a mosquito net for malaria vector control. Active ingredient - permethrin caution (Reg. No. L8411, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), N-AR 1055 (Namibia)). Olyset® Net is the registered trademark of Sumitomo Chemical Company, Tokyo, Japan.

Smite®

A suspension concentrate contact acaricide for the control of the egg and immature stages of the Red spider mite (*Tetranychus urticae*) on roses and tomatoes, Red spider mite (*Tetranychus urticae*) and European red mite (*Paronychus ulmi*) on apples and pears and various mites on citrus. Active ingredient - Etoxazole (Diphenylloxazoline derivative), caution (Reg. No. L6011, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), W130352 (Botswana), MW/PCB/2021/R/0758 (Malawi), N-AR-1238 (Namibia)). Smite® is the registered trademark of Sumitomo Chemical Company, Tokyo, Japan.

Sumi-Alpha® 200 EC & 200 EW

An emulsifiable concentrate contact insecticide with residual properties for the control of insects in crops as listed. Active ingredient - Esfenvalerate (Pyrethroid), harmful (Sumi-Alpha® 200 EC, Reg. No. L6452 (South Africa), N-AR 1237 (Namibia), (Sumi-Alpha® 200 EW, Reg. No. L8821, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), W130730 (Botswana), N-AR 2169 (Namibia)). Sumi-Alpha® is the registered trademark of Sumitomo Chemical Company, Tokyo, Japan.

Sumipleo®

An emulsifiable concentrate contact and stomach insecticide for the control of *Lepidoptera* larvae and Leaf miners on potatoes and tomatoes, Diamond back moth larvae in cruciferous crops, African bollworm larvae in lettuce and Fall armyworm in maize and sweetcorn. Active ingredient - Pyridalyl dichloropropene-derivative, caution (Reg. No. L8377, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), N-AR-1236 (Namibia)). Sumipleo® is the registered trademark of Sumitomo Chemical Company, Tokyo, Japan.

VectoBac® WG

A water dispersible granule biological larvicide for the control of mosquito larvae and fungus gnat larvae. Active ingredient - *Bacillus thuringiensis subsp. israelensis*, caution (Reg. No. L7224, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), N-AR 1167 (Namibia), DSV-2520 (Mozambique)). VectoBac® is the registered trademark of Valent BioSciences™ Corporation, USA.

HERBICIDES

Sumimax® WP

A wettable powder herbicide for pre-emergence control of annual broadleaf weeds, as listed, in groundnuts, soybeans, deciduous fruit, citrus and vines (and forestry). Active ingredient - Flumioxazin (N-phenylimide), caution (Reg. No. L6358, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), N-AR 1792 (Namibia)). Sumimax® is the registered trademark of Sumitomo Chemical Company, Tokyo, Japan.

Yamato® 480 SC

A suspension concentrate herbicide for pre-emergence control of weeds, as listed, in corn. Can be applied post-emergence of corn. Active ingredient - Pyroxasulfone (Pyrazole), harmful (Reg. No. L10746, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), N-AR 2224 (Namibia)). Yamato® is the registered trade mark of Kumiai Chemical Industry Company, Tokyo, Japan.

Goal™ 480 SC

A suspension concentrate herbicide for use in crops, vineyards, orchards and forestry as listed to control a variety of annual broadleaf and grass weeds as listed. Active ingredient - Oxyfluorfen (diphenyl ether), caution (Reg. No. LL8303, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), W130817 (Botswana), N-AR 1681 (Namibia)). Goal™ is a registered trademark of the Sumitomo Chemical Company, Japan.

FUNGICIDES

Legend™ 250 SC

A suspension concentrate surface mobile contact fungicide for the control of Powdery mildew (*Oidium tuckeri*) in table and wine grapes, (*Oidium erysipoides*) in cucurbit crops and (*Oidium mangiferae*) on mangoes. Active ingredient - Quinoxifen (quinoline), caution (Reg. No. L6840, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), N-AR 1055 (Namibia)). Legend™ is the registered trademark of Nissan Chemical Corporation, Tokyo, Japan.

Rizolex® WP

A protective contact action wettable powder fungicide for the control of Rhizoctonia damping off on seedlings of ornamentals, flowering plants, cotton and beans, as listed, as well as the control of *Corticium rolfsii* on chinchinchee bulbs and Rhizoctonia on potatoes. Active ingredient - Tolclofos methyl, caution (Reg. No. L6376, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), N-AR 1239 (Namibia), W130344 (Botswana), DSV-1544 (Mozambique)). Rizolex® is the registered trademark of Sumitomo Chemical Company, Tokyo, Japan.

Sumisclex® SC

A translaminar systemic organic fungicide (suspension concentrate) for the control of diseases on crops and turf as listed. Active ingredient - Procyimidine (dicarboximide), caution (Reg. No. L6377, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), N-AR 0904 (Namibia), W130322 (Botswana)). Sumisclex® is the registered trademark of Sumitomo Chemical Company, Tokyo, Japan.

PLANT GROWTH REGULATORS

Dormex®

A soluble concentrate growth regulant for delayed foliation in apples, apricots, plums, cherries, wine and table grapes, kiwi fruit, as well as advancement of budding in sultana grapes and berries listed. Active ingredient - Cyanamide, harmful (Reg. No. L5740, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), N-AR 0902 (Namibia)). Dormex® is a product of Alzchem Trostberg GmbH, Trostberg, Germany.

Excelero® 10 SL

A liquid concentrate plant growth regulator for use on table grapes to accelerate or increase the colouration in berries and bunches. Active ingredient - s-Absciscic Acid, caution (Reg. No. L10170, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), N-AR 1991 (Namibia)). Excelero® is the registered trademark of Valent BioSciences™ Corporation, USA.

ProGibb® 4%

A liquid concentrate plant growth regulator for various usages on Grapefruit, Lemons, Oranges, Grapes, Pears, mangoes Hops, Potatoes and Peppers / Peppadews. Active ingredient - Gibberellins (ProGibb® 4%, Reg. No. L5118 (South Africa), N-AR 0941 (Namibia) (ProGibb® 40% Reg. No. L6777, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), N-AR 0942 (Namibia)). ProGibb® is the registered trademark of Valent BioSciences™ Corporation, USA.

ProTone®

A liquid concentrate plant growth regulator for use on table grapes to accelerate or increase the colouration in berries and bunches. Active ingredient - s-Absciscic Acid, caution (Reg. No. L8540, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), N-AR 1178 (Namibia)). ProTone® is the registered trademark of Valent BioSciences™ Corporation, USA.

Sitofex® 10 EC

An emulsifiable concentrate plant growth regulator for increasing the fruit size in kiwi fruit as well as for the increase of berry size and the decrease in berry abscission in tablegrape cultivars as indicated. Active ingredient - Forchlorfenuron, harmful (Reg. No. L6339, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), N-AR 0903 (Namibia)). Sitofex® is a product of Alzchem Trostberg GmbH, Trostberg, Germany.

Sunny® 50 SC

A suspension concentrate plant growth regulator for vegetative growth control and for the enhancement and improvement of fruit shape in avocados. Active ingredient - Uniconazole, harmful (Reg. No. L5587, Act 36 of 1947 (South Africa), DSV-2430 (Mazambique)). Sunny® is the registered trade mark of Aquamarine (London) Limited.

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Namibia's food insecurity declines as rainfall boosts harvests

Tisha Steyn



Above-average rainfall over most parts of Namibia has enhanced crop production, replenished water sources, and improved grazing conditions for livestock across most regions. (Source: Pixabay)

Namibia has recorded a remarkable decline in food insecurity, with the number of citizens facing acute food shortages dropping from 1,15 million in 2024 to approximately 456 000 in 2025, according to the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Acute Food Insecurity Analysis covering July 2024 to June 2025.

The report provides a detailed assessment of the country's food security landscape, highlighting vulnerable populations and regions still requiring targeted assistance.

This significant improvement is attributed mainly to above-average rainfall that enhanced crop production, replenished water sources and improved grazing conditions for livestock across most regions.

As a result, the majority of households now have sufficient food stocks expected to last until December 2025. "Namibia's food security situation has improved significantly in 2025 compared to the previous year," the IPC stated. "About 456 000 people, or 15 percent of the analysed population, are still facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above)."

Despite this progress, the regions of Kunene, Kavango West and Zambezi remain in the Crisis phase (IPC Phase 3), where families continue to struggle to meet daily food needs. The remainder of the country is classified under the Stressed phase (IPC Phase 2), meaning households can access basic food but often sacrifice non-food essentials or

resort to coping strategies, such as selling assets or skipping meals.

Agricultural gains underpin recovery

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform's July 2025 Crops, Livestock and Food Security Report confirms these gains.

National crop production improved substantially, particularly in communal areas where yields rose by 75% compared to the previous year. Abundant rainfall restored grazing lands and improved water availability, with most dams reported to be more than 85% full and groundwater sources replenished.

Healthy pastures have supported livestock recovery and reduced dependence on food aid. However, the National Strategic Food Reserves (NSFRs) remain critically low, holding only 3 505 metric tonnes of grain or just 15% of total storage capacity, highlighting limited emergency stocks should another drought occur.

Outlook and emerging risks

While the country's food situation is currently stable, the IPC warns of a potential deterioration during the upcoming lean season (October 2025 to March 2026). The number of people in Phase 3 (Crisis) is projected to rise to around 612 000 (20% of the population).

This expected setback is linked to the

termination of the national drought-relief programme in August 2025, rising unemployment, and limited income-earning opportunities, especially in rural areas.

Namibia's unemployment rate stands at 36,9%, and in some regions it exceeds 50%. Many households, particularly those headed by women, youths, or marginalised groups, rely on pensions, small-scale farming, or informal work, leaving them vulnerable to food price increases and market shocks.

The situation is predicted to improve again between April and June 2026, when households begin consuming their new harvests. The number of people in Phase 3 is expected to decline to 408 000 (13%), with 13 regions projected to shift back to the Stressed phase. However, Kunene remains a concern due to recurring drought, veld fires, flood damage and chronic poverty.



Key drivers of food insecurity

Climate shocks continue to threaten progress. Although rainfall was above average in 2024/25, several regions, namely Ohangwena, Oshana, Oshikoto, Omusati, Hardap, Kunene and Khomas, experienced flooding, waterlogging, and outbreaks of crop pests and livestock diseases. These events damaged homes and infrastructure, displaced families, and disrupted access to markets and services.

High food prices remain another critical factor. Annual food inflation reached 6,4% in June 2025, driven by price increases in fruits, meat, oils and grains. For low-income households that spend most of their income on food, this has intensified financial stress and vulnerability.



As a result of above-average rainfall in Namibia, the majority of households now have sufficient food stocks expected to last until December 2025. (Source: Pixabay)



Persistent wet conditions may increase the likelihood of livestock diseases such as heartwater, anthrax, foot rot, pulpy kidney, and parasitic infections. (Source: Pixabay)

Sustaining the gains

The IPC urges continued vigilance and targeted investment to protect current achievements. It recommends maintaining social grants, food assistance for marginalised groups, and conditional cash transfers such as the Basic Income Grant (formerly the Food Bank) for urban and peri-urban communities.

Further investment in nutrition programmes, agricultural inputs and social protection will be crucial to strengthening household resilience ahead of the next lean season. With sustained support and favourable weather, Namibia may continue to reduce hunger and move closer to long-term food security.

Key assumptions for October to March 2026

The report states the following key assumptions for the period October 2025 to March 2026.

Rainfall and temperature

Weather forecasts for the 2025/26 season indicate that most parts of Namibia will experience above-normal rainfall, continuing a positive trend observed during the previous season.

However, the full benefits of this rainfall will only be realised after the next harvest, expected during the second projection period in 2026. Until then, most rural households will have depleted their food stocks by December 2025, entering the lean season with limited reserves.

Although rainfall prospects are favourable, above-average temperatures are also anticipated across the country. Higher temperatures may speed up soil drying, increase evapotranspiration, and reduce water availability in shallow wells and boreholes.

Consequently, some regions may still experience localised dry spells, even during periods of overall good rainfall. The combination of high temperatures and variable rainfall distribution could influence crop performance and shorten the growing season in marginal areas.

Economic shocks

The withdrawal of the national food relief programme in August 2025 is expected to exert significant pressure on households that previously depended on this assistance for their basic food needs.

Many poor and marginalised families will be forced to adopt alternative coping strategies such as informal employment, borrowing, reducing meal frequency, or selling productive assets.

The broader economic environment remains fragile following the El Niño-induced drought, which disrupted agricultural output, employment, and household income. Although the national economy shows signs of gradual recovery, many rural households, especially those in drought-prone areas, have yet to regain their income sources.

Families who are dependent on livestock production remain particularly vulnerable, as many lost animals during the severe 2019 drought. Recovery has been slow, leaving these households with diminished livelihoods and weakened resilience to future shocks.

Livestock conditions

Improved pasture growth and water availability from surface and groundwater in dams, rivers and boreholes are expected to sustain livestock until the end of the rainy season in December 2025. This will support better livestock body conditions and improved milk and meat production in most farming areas.

Persistent wet conditions also increase the likelihood of livestock diseases such as heartwater, anthrax, foot rot, pulpy kidney, and parasitic infections. Farmers will need to provide supplementary feed during periods of limited grazing access and ensure timely vaccination and disease control to prevent major livestock losses.

Depletion of household food stocks

Household food stocks are expected to be exhausted by December 2025, pushing many families to rely heavily on markets for food purchases until the next harvest in March or April 2026.

High food prices

Food prices are expected to rise towards the end of 2025, coinciding with the depletion of household stocks and increased market reliance. Seasonal transport disruptions, particularly during the rainy season, may further raise transaction costs, keeping food prices high in remote areas.

Nutrition and health

Nutrition outcomes are likely to deteriorate during the lean season due to reduced food access, limited dietary diversity, and constrained health-sector funding.

Children, pregnant women, and people living with chronic illnesses, are at heightened risk of malnutrition and related health complications. The combined impact of food shortages and reduced access to healthcare could lead to a rise in acute malnutrition cases, particularly in rural communities.

Humanitarian assistance

The phase-out of humanitarian food assistance in August 2025 will likely deepen vulnerability among poor households, particularly those outside major crop-producing regions.

Families with limited assets or income-generating opportunities may continue to struggle even as national food availability improves. To mitigate this risk, sustained social protection measures, including targeted cash transfers, school feeding, and nutrition support, will be essential.

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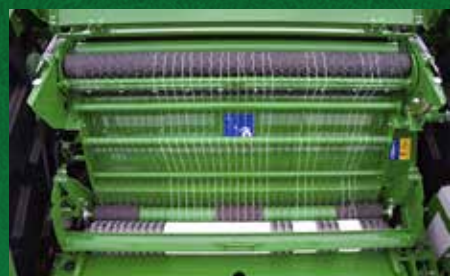
McHale F5 series balers: Engineered for Southern Africa's toughest conditions

Article supplied

Southern Africa's diverse agricultural landscapes demand machinery that is both robust and adaptable. The McHale F5 Series balers rise to this challenge, offering a range of fixed-chamber balers designed to deliver consistent performance under the country's demanding conditions.

Optimised crop intake with Profi-Flo pick-up

At the heart of the F5 Series is McHale's newly designed 2,1 metre Profi-Flo pick-up system. This feature ensures efficient crop flow, even in uneven or heavy swaths, by utilising an adaptive intake that adjusts to varying crop volumes. This adaptability is crucial for South African farmers who often deal with inconsistent crop densities due to variable rainfall and soil conditions.



Versatility across models

The F5 Series comprises two models tailored to different farming needs:

- **F5-540:** A non-chopper baler ideal for dry crops like hay and straw.
- **F5-550:** Equipped with a 15 knife chopper unit, suitable for silage and haylage.

This range allows Southern African farmers to select a model that aligns with their specific crop types and operational scales.

Durability and low maintenance

Built with heavy-duty components, the F5 Series is designed to withstand the rigours of Southern African farming. Features like the split drive gearbox and robust bale chamber bearings ensure longevity. Additionally, the automatic greasing and continuous oiling systems reduce maintenance time, allowing farmers to focus more on productivity.

Advanced control systems

The F5 Series incorporates user-friendly control systems to enhance operational efficiency:

- **Wizard Control Console:** Standard on the F5-540, providing essential monitoring and control functions.

- **i-Control 5 Console:** Standard on the F5-550, offering in-cab adjustments for bale density, knife engagement, and drop floor control. These systems enable real-time adjustments, crucial for adapting to the varying conditions found across Southern African farms.

The McHale F5 Series balers offer a combination of durability, adaptability, and advanced technology, making them well-suited for the challenging and varied conditions of Southern African agriculture. Whether dealing with dry hay or silage, the F5 Series provides reliable performance to meet the needs of modern farmers.



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Herd health management:

Why pre-breeding exams matter for replacement heifer selection



Selecting the right replacement heifers helps secure the productivity of future herds. (Source: Pixabay)

By Thapelo Kgosi Ramokala,
animal health specialist at
Beefmaster Group

Choosing the right heifers to replace older, less productive cows is essential, as they form the foundation of the next generation. But which ones should you choose and how does this process work?

Thapelo Kgosi Ramokala, animal health specialist at the Beefmaster Group, says three critical assessments help primary producers select the best replacement heifers for long-term herd health and profitability.

"The ideal for cow producers is to have one calf per cow every year," says Ramokala. "Farmers should also aim to keep productive cows in the herd for as many years as possible."

He believes the key lies in selecting the right heifers. "To set yourself up for success, you should choose a heifer that reaches puberty by 15 months, so she can calve at around 24 months," he explains. "But 35% of heifers don't reach puberty by then."

This is where pre-breeding exams come in – ideally performed between 12 and 15 months of age, before artificial insemination or bull turnout. These include a general evaluation, target weight check, reproductive tract score, and pelvic measurement.

"Heifers that conceive late in their first breeding season will calve late, and are more likely to conceive late again or not at all in future seasons," Ramokala warns.



Thapelo Kgosi Ramokala, animal health specialist at the Beefmaster Group.



Consistent calving is the foundation of herd profitability. (Source: Pixabay)

Pre-breeding evaluation

Ramokala recommends performing the exam four to six weeks before breeding starts. "During this time, heifers should be screened for health or structural issues, as well as any temperament problems that may have developed during growth or could have been missed during post-weaning assessments."

Target weight attainment

Reaching a target weight before breeding is essential for puberty. Ramokala stresses this weight should be specific to the individual animal – not just an average – and based on breed, biological type and herd goals. "The recommended target is 65% of the cow's mature body weight," he says. "Generally, heifers should reach 80 to 85% of mature weight before calving."

Reproductive take back

A more accurate indicator of puberty than weight alone is the reproductive tract score, done by a veterinarian four to six weeks before breeding. "This score ranges from one to five and gives a direct evaluation of reproductive maturity," explains Ramokala.

The exam involves a transrectal palpation. If the heifer scores one, it means that she has an infantile reproductive tract, while a score of



Pre-breeding exams help identify health, structural, or temperament issues early on. (Source: Pixabay)

two means she is pre-pubertal or more than 30 days from reaching puberty.

"If she scores three, the heifer is still pre-pubertal, but is within the 30-day mark of reaching puberty," he says. "A score of four means she has reached puberty, but has only reached the follicular phase of the menstruation

cycle, while a score of five means she has reached puberty and attained the luteal phase."

Pelvic measurement

Pelvic measurement is another vital management strategy to minimise calving difficulties. This is done by a vet using a pelvimeter.

"The heifer's pelvis should be large enough for her mature size, the calf's expected birth weight and ease of delivery," says Ramokala. At the pre-breeding exam, the minimum pelvic area should be 150 cm². By the start of the breeding season, approximately 90 days later, this should have grown to at least 180 cm².

However, bigger pelvises can signal bigger cows, which may not always be cost-effective. "Larger cows consume more feed and cost more to maintain, which is not always ideal for commercial operations," he notes.

That's why pelvic measurement should be a screening tool, not a selection tool, says Ramokala.

A good replacement heifer should reach puberty by 15 months, calve at 24 months, and grow into a long-term, productive asset.

"Early born heifers tend to grow faster, conceive earlier, and stay in the herd longer. Using pre-breeding exams helps you boost fertility, reduce calving issues and cut long-term costs."

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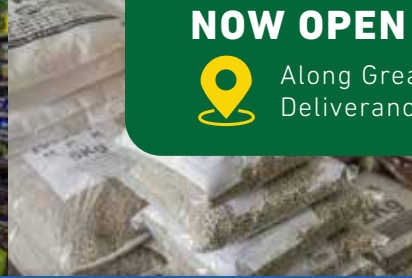
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