

## New year, new beginning!

**M**ost farmers want 2009 to be quickly forgotten! The economic melt-down, unpredictable weather conditions and floods that affected most of the African continent, put most farmers at risk.

In Kenya, Africa's milk hub, the devastating drought has caused widespread hunger and thirst and, in the case of cattle, many deaths were recorded. Photographs of hundreds of cow carcasses being tipped into a mass grave near Nairobi, emphasised the scale of the disaster.

The current drought is the worst since 2000, and one in every ten Kenyans is now in need of outside help. Many areas have suffered as much as four consecutive failed harvests. Meanwhile the rate of malnutrition among young children – already above emergency levels in some areas – are rising, and cattle are dying in their thousands.

Climate change is a reality that is with us to stay. As one devastating drought follows another, the future is bleak for millions in east Africa. Next year *Dairy Mail Africa* plans to focus on climate change in a bid to educate our readers. Our thanks to ESADA for endorsing the dairy sector climate change policy.

This edition of *Dairy Mail Africa* focuses on feed and we trust that the practical and valuable advice given, will assist farmers to counter the effects of climate change and drought.

We hope and believe that 2010 will be a better year. The economy is set to look positive. The FIFA 2010 World Cup to be hosted by South Africa, is a stone's throw away. Thirty-two teams will be competing for gold and we hope all the fans, footballers, supporters, heads of government and delegates will have a litre or two of milk daily.



In South Africa, we look forward to the All Africa Dairy School & Expo, which will be held in April. This is an event not to be missed. See the advertisement elsewhere in this edition for more information.

We also look forward to seeing all of our readers and contributors in Rwanda next year, when that country will be hosting the ESADA conference. We wish the organisers the best of success with their arrangements.

Season's greetings to one and all.

**Editor**