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Dairy farming requires commitment

Dairy farmers have been encouraged to work hard in addressing the problem of milk shortage in Botswana. The call was made by the deputy minister of agriculture, Oreeditse Molebatsi, during a meeting with farmers in the Serowe region.

He told farmers that locally, the country was able to get only eight million litres of the required 48 million litres of milk annually. Molebatsi, however, cautioned farmers that dairy farming was an expensive exercise that needed an individual's total attention, and urged them to leave other types of farming and focus on milk production.

The deputy minister was responding to comments by Serowe Milk Marketing Management Association's chairman, Baliki Kebole-tse, who was briefing the minister about their challenges. – *BOPA*

Product imports feared

The Milk Producers' Organisation of South Africa said it was concerned that the ongoing drought in the Southern Cape, could result in a spike in the number of dairy products being imported.

The MPO confirmed that between 10-15 dairy farms in the region have halted production, as a result of diminishing grazing land and climbing feed costs. The Southern Cape is one of the country's biggest milk-producing regions. The organisation's national director, Dèan Kleynhans, said South Africa's milk supplies may dwindle in the coming months. – *Eyewitness News*

Uganda dairy cashes in on regional trade

Uganda's dairy industry is likely to cash in

on limited trade barriers, as the East African Community (EAC) integrates even further. Officials within the dairy sector are optimistic that the EAC integration will bring opportunities to their businesses.

Anoop Sharma, Sameer Agriculture and Livestock's general manager, said that with too much milk supply, Ugandan businesses are going to benefit from the limited trade barriers that come with the integration to exploit new markets in the region.

"The opportunity is that we are able to send our milk to neighbouring countries without much problem," said Sharma. The expected fast clearance of milk trucks (milk being a delicate and perishable good) at border posts is expected to boost Sameer's access to regional markets, and a corresponding bigger share of Kenya's market is on the cards. – *The Observer*

East Africa supports milk traders

East African governments have put to a halt to fighting informal milk traders and have instead come up with a strategy to support them with technology and equipment. Traditional or informal milk markets control more than 80% of marketed milk within the region.

Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi under the East Africa Dairy Regulatory Authorities Council (EADRAC), say research suggests the informal sector would continue to co-exist with the formal players.

"There is need for enabling policy to help facilitate the ongoing transformation and modernisation of the traditional sector, and to build stronger synergies with the formal sector," the council said in a communiqué released after a two-day meeting in Nairobi.