

Briefly | Africa

Spin Knit upgrades

Spin Knit Dairy has completed the first phase of its modernisation programme at a cost of Sh250 million. The project was part of the company's plan to counter the growing competition in the Kenyan processed dairy market.

Competition has increased vastly due to many entrants and the revival of large dairy companies. In the first phase, Spin Knit has installed Fino aseptic equipment from Tetra Pack and increased the storage space for long-life products. Kenyan milk production and processing have been rising recently. The amount of milk handled by processors rose from 197 million litres in 2003 to about 274 million litres last year. – *Food and Beverage Reporter*

Dairy Corporation lease approved

Uganda's former cabinet approved the lease of Uganda Dairy Corporation to Sameer Agriculture and Livestock, a local company. However, a source said although the government had signed a memorandum of understanding, the dairy board was still hesitant to sign the lease agreement, saying the company was not locally registered. The lease agreement was supposed to be signed on 4 May.

Sources said the company was intended to be a subsidiary of a Kenyan company, Sameer Investments, also known as Sameer Group that will be its financial and technical promoter. Last year, the government halted the lease after the MPs discovered irregularities in the agreement that was to be signed between the corporation and Pan African Foods, a local company, instead of Malee, a Thai firm. The divestiture process was transferred to the dairy board. Godfrey Sebugwayo, the privatisation team leader, declined to comment on the issue. – *New Vision*

More than 5 000 cows for Uganda

Heifer International Uganda has donated 5 200 dairy cattle to farmers in 35 districts. Country

director, Patrick Nalereim said over 414 families had original improved heifers-in-calf in Gulu. He said over 60% of the 414 families in Gulu district were getting between 14 and 20 litres of milk per day. – *New Vision*

Foot-and-mouth alert in Botswana

All meat and live animal imports from Botswana have been banned. This comes after the country's veterinary department recently confirmed a foot-and-mouth disease outbreak. The South African Department of Agriculture has banned the import of all cloven-hoofed animals and their products after confirmation of the outbreak in the eastern town of Selibe Pikwe near the border between Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

According to the Botswana Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, the town has been placed under quarantine to restrict the movement of animals and all exports have been banned. – *Farmer's Weekly*

South Africa compiles Code of Practice

The South African Dairy Standard Agency (DSA) has compiled a *Code of Practice (COP)* for safe milk processing. According to the DSA, the COP was published as a tool to enable dairy processors and milk producers to evaluate the food safety risks with operations and to determine levels of compliance with criteria.

East Africa fights rinderpest

The African Union (AU) has launched a programme to fight rinderpest in three Eastern African countries. The European Union has released 1,8 million euros for the first phase of the programme that runs to October this year. The disease is spread across the Somali ecosystem that covers parts of Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia.

The three East African countries involved in the programme have established liaison

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offices to fight the disease. They also signed an operational memorandum of understanding with the AU's animal resources bureau. Some 7,5 million head of cattle are targeted in the eradication campaign.

The AU Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (IBAR) director, Modibo Traore, said recently that Kenya and Ethiopia had only joined the World Animal Health Organisation on zonal basis. Somalia had not joined at all due to uncertainty of the presence of the disease.

Rinderpest is highly contagious and a single outbreak can kill millions of cattle. The AU suspects there is a mild presence of rinderpest in the three countries and will report its findings to the World Animal Health Organisation. – *The East African*

Ugandan food prices soar

The demand for fresh commodities in Uganda has surged, leading to increase in prices. This is despite increased supplies, *The New Vision* weekly survey has shown. The development has, however, led to a drop in prices for dry beans, maize, cassava and millet flour and groundnuts. The survey also shows consumers prefer fresh items to dried ones.

"Dealers in dry items have no customers," a city trader said. This has even pushed prices (of fresh items) up, leaving us idle," said Hadija Nakintu, a trader at Nakasero market. She said despite the high prices, consumers rushed for the fresh ones. Nakintu expects that prices will return to normal around the harvesting peak in June. – *The New Vision*

Free cattle vaccinations in Zambia

The veterinary department in Mazabuka district in Zambia has embarked on free vaccination of cattle against lumpy skin disease that has claimed hundreds of cattle in four chiefdoms. District veterinary officer, Nawa Mabuka, said the government decided to conduct a free vaccination exercise because increased numbers of animals were dying from the disease. He said so far, 8 500 head of cattle have been vaccinated in two chiefdoms. Mabuka

said his office was receiving good co-operation from cattle farmers. – *The Post*

New cattle deal for Kenyan pastoralists

Two years after Kenya landed a lucrative livestock export deal with Mauritius, pastoralists can now ask higher prices for their export animals. To date, close to 14 000 animals have been shipped to Mauritius, earning Kenya more than Sh250 million.

In an interview with *The Sunday Standard*, chief executive officer of the Livestock Traders Marketing Society of Kenya (LTMSK), Adan Dualle, said the Mauritius investors were now keen on the Kenya market.

He said that currently the demand for meat in the local Kenyan market was very high. However, the supply was low because of ravaging drought that claimed over 60% of livestock in northern Kenya's breeding areas. Dualle said that with the opening of the Kenya Meat Commission (KMC), livestock farmers will be able to access a better-priced market for their livestock. – *The East African Standard*

Ethiopia offers pastoral degree

The Haromaya University in Ethiopia has launched degree practices in two fields related to pastoralist practices. University vice-president, Dr Tena Alamirew, said the university has started training in animal husbandry and rangeland management.

The programmes, started at the Jijiga Veterinary Faculty, will contribute in improving the livelihood of the pastoralist community by producing well-trained personnel in the fields and thereby enhancing the productivity of cattle, he explained. – *The Ethiopian Herald*

Namibia Dairies ISO-certified

Namibian Dairies has received ISO-certification, following a thorough audit conducted by South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) during December 2005. "The certification denotes Namibia Dairies' full compliance with all the international requirements of ISO 9001:2000,"



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said the company's managing director, Desmond van Jaarsveld.

The ISO (International Standard Origination) is a network of the national standards institutes of 156 countries, based on one member per country, with a central co-ordinating secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland.

Namibia Dairies is Namibia's major supplier of fresh milk and dairy products. The company is part of the Ohlthaver & List (O&L) group of companies. Speaking at the same occasion, Berthold Mukuahima, the director of human capital at O&L Group said the "standards will help Namibia Dairies reduce technology complexity, and help employees to exchange information productively. In short, standards will assist employees to better understand the processes in which they function and their roles therein." – *Namibia Economist*

Uganda hosted agricultural show

The fourteenth Source of the Nile National Agricultural and Trade Show took place from 19-24 May in Jinja, near Kampala, Uganda. According to the show organisers, the agricultural show set a platform for local and foreign companies to display their technological innovations. The agricultural show focused on extensive participation from private and governments sectors.

Paying farmers for their milk

Devising payment systems is a complex exercise, modifying existing systems is just as difficult," says the International Dairy Federation (IDF). New research by the IDF presents a variety of solutions found around the world to meet the demands made on farmers and the dairy industry.

"This new IDF survey presents practices in 29 countries, from the most sophisticated dairy sectors to the less sophisticated ones, covering milk from cows, buffaloes, sheep and goats. The IDF does not seek to recommend any one system, but to ensure that it provides a source of ideas for those who establish or adapt payment systems," said Michel Beauséjour, compiler of the survey. – *IDF Bulletin* – www.fil-idf.org

Rural households resort to wild foods

The food situation in Zimbabwe has deteriorated significantly. Rural households now survive on wild foods, such as mushrooms and edible worms, says the latest Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) report. According to the report, Matabeleland South is the most severely affected region.

The World Food Programme and other non-governmental organisations' food aid programmes were the only dependable source of maize for about 52% of the rural population. This was noted by the United States based food security watchdog. The organisation estimates that Zimbabwe needs 1 420 000 tonnes of maize while grappling with a maize deficit of 197 000 tonnes stemming from poor harvests during the 2005 agricultural season. – *Zimbabwe Standard*

Nigeria has new agricultural policy

The Nigerian Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mallam Adamu Bello, said that the 25% increase in this year's budget for agriculture reflects the priority the government is giving to the sector. The country intends to boost growth of the sector from the current 7% in the past three years to 10% this year, he added.

The major policy shift, that was reviewed in 2001, is that government withdrew from direct production. This includes the establishment of plantations, and concentrated on the task of creating an enabling environment to increase agricultural productivity in the country. – *This Day*

Foot-and-mouth disease in Rwanda

Barely a month after the Rwandan Government declared its Eastern Province foot-and-mouth disease free, information from Nyagatare district indicates that the disease has again invaded the area. According to local authorities, more than 206 cows have been found with signs of the disease around Nyagatare district near in Nyabiyonga, Kanyangabire and the Museri sector. It has also been cited in the Matimba sector. – *The New Times* **DMA**