

Between a rock and a hard place

Hurt by the global financial crisis, Africa's agricultural sector is faced with the major difficulty of insufficient demand from the global market. The continent has been pulling all-out efforts to tap new markets, while maintaining traditional ones.

Farmers are caught up between high input costs and low farmgate prices. Governments must do something to protect the farmers, who are the economic heartbeat of many an African country.

According to small-scale processing plants in Kenya, agricultural growth depends on investment in rural infrastructure such as roads, transport and electricity. In addition, investment in rural finance and access to markets and technology, are also critical in order to revive and sustain dairy productivity. Moreover, the farmers believe that it will be critical to transform the dairy sector from disorganised and loosely structured small processors, to organised communities.

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In this edition we look at the state of the dairy industry in Africa, starting with endangered Zimbabwean farmers who remain under siege after battling it out for nearly a decade now. Properties are still being lost and milk production has dropped below 56 000 tons this year. Is there hope for these farmers now



that the government of unity came into effect in February this year?

We also look at the various feed crops that farmers can grow to feed their dairy animals, and give some advice on which crop works best in what conditions.

It is time for the ESADA conference and exhibition in South Africa and the staff and editorial committee of *Dairy Mail Africa* welcomes one and all to our beautiful country. We also hope that we will continue working together and forge new partnerships for the survival and upliftment of the dairy sector in Africa.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zonnyan". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Editor