



# Esada aims at reviving dairy sector

by Fidelis Zvomuya

*The Eastern and Southern African Dairy Association (Esada) is set to revive commercial dairy farming through the use of investment as a vehicle.*



ESADA's executive director, Dr Kipkirui Arap Lang'at

Addressing the Zimbabwean Dairy Symposium held in Harare recently, Esada's executive director, Dr Kipkirui Arap Lang'at, said the regional dairy board wants to enlist the services of investment houses, work with venture capitalists and market its investment opportunities internationally.

"We need to instil commercial business production within our members, so that producers will produce good quality products that can make it into the international market," he said.

Lang'at said that through such initiatives, there are vast opportunities for countries such as Zimbabwe and South Africa to export dairy cattle to meet the huge demand for generic breeds.

Lang'at said Esada promotes and advocates efficient and effective means of achieving quality standards of the continent's dairy sector through innovative technologies and knowledge sharing. Esada's is run by a board of directors who has the authority to review the membership structure and provisions.

Currently there are seven full members namely Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Uganda, Rwanda, Zambia and Mauritius. Its associate members comprise Ethiopia, Sudan, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

During the same presentation Lang'at said that despite being Africa's leading dairy producer, Kenya highlights critical international best practice in its value chain, particularly with regard to the development and implementation of a competitive milk pricing system which needs the assistance of an organisation such as Esada.

*"Low productivity is due to the low quality of herds, inadequate training and extension services, and inadequate price incentives"*

He said the country faces a low market share of processed milk products, fragmented production structure, public sector interference, high costs, with registered processors serving a limited geographical area and a capacity utilisation of about 40%.

Kenya's marketed milk constitutes 32% of the milk produced, as the informal sector is presenting stiff competition for the processors. About 80% of the milk produced in Kenya, is sold unprocessed. "This has resulted in the existing processors with an average installed capacity of 2,9 million litres, only utilising 40% of their installed capacity," he said.

Kenya produces over 3,5 billion litres of milk per year and has an estimated dairy herd of 3,3 million cows. Smallholder farmers and hawkers total nearly one million, of which 625 000 farmers survive on dairy. Two million people are employed in the sub-sector. Average milk production per cow per day is 6,65 litres, which Lang'at said is low.

"Low productivity is due to the low quality of herds, inadequate training and extension services, and inadequate price incentives," he said. **DMA**