

A word from the Editor

Better no deal than a bad one!!

"The DOHA round is not dead. I would say that it is definitely between intensive care and the crematorium," Indian trade minister, Kaml Nath said while a seven-year tragedy of errors, in which the convergent agendas of developed and developing worlds had become starkly drawn, desperately tried to revive itself.

Yes, better no deal (yet) than this bad one, is what some farmers are saying. A lot of smallholder dairy farmers in Africa are being flooded by millions of tons of dairy products being dumped on the continent's markets. In 2001, when the WTO's Doha round of negotiations was launched in Qatar, it was presented as an effort to focus on needs of the world's poorer nations. But is that the case?

In this edition we look at former Zimbabwean commercial farmers now plying their trade in Nigeria. The farmers have invested a lot of money in dairy production which is definitely going to assist Nigeria, Africa's largest importer, to produce its own milk.

We also have an update on the Zimbabwean situation, where milk production and agricultural activities are being hampered by an inflation which the Central Statistical Office says was at 11,27 million per cent in June, up from 2,2 million per cent in the previous month.

We pray for an economic and political settlement that will see the competent farmers in Zimbabwe returning to their position as the breadwinners of the region.

We also have an expert input on effective dairy production through the ability of cattle to utilise forages in the synthesis of milk. We take a look at milk production in Africa, where total cows' milk amounting to 21 244 474 tons, was produced from a total of 46 million dairy cows giving an average milk yield of 461 kg of milk per cow over the year – only one fifth of world average yield in 2004.



The top five African milk-producing countries in terms of milk volume are Sudan, Egypt, Kenya, South Africa and Algeria. Meanwhile, the first four countries alone produce 52% of total African milk. Geographically, the production volume is higher in countries on the eastern side of Africa and by those in the north. Though there is a slow overall growth in milk production in Africa, individual countries have witnessed different growth and reduction rates.

Esada's 5th Africa Dairy Conference and Exhibition will for the first time be hosted by a farmers' organisation in South Africa, with the support of all role players within the sector. This is going to be an eye opener for most dairy producers, processors, packaging, value chain and retailing within the continent, as South Africa is known for its commercial and well-developed industry.

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