



Milk Report

Mauritian milk villages launched

The Mauritian government recently finalised a strategy to increase milk production in the country by 60%. The pilot project will be launched in Nouvelle-Découverte. If it proves successful, six similar "milk villages" will be established to facilitate milk production, collection and sale.

Through this project, led by the Mauritian Food Agricultural Research Council (FARC), the State hopes to increase milk production from 3,2 million litres, to 5 million litres a year. At the moment, the local milk production only represents 2% of Mauritian needs. Although this is far from the 120 million litres consumed, it will at least make the country less dependent on imports.

The main problem at the moment is that farmers use old methods that no longer match today's needs. Moreover, the absence of fodder and the lack of financial help from the authorities, do not help the industry to take off. And this is probably why all similar projects have failed thus far. The country's livestock has plummeted to below 3 000 cows.

Twenty farmers from Nouvelle-Découverte have already formed a cooperative and will adopt modern production methods. In fact, the first objective will be to retain only farmers who show an interest in new and modern techniques for which the state is going to give full support.

It is expected that these farmers will produce 840 000 litres of milk every year with their 200 cows – 4 200 litres each. However, the project will not be limited to Nouvelle-Découverte. Research is being conducted to find five other areas where conditions are favourable for milk production. The authorities know that they will have to buy some land from the private sector.

Creambell Mauritius Private Limited's project in Salazie, is set to use the milk village in Nouvelle-Découverte to create its dairy farm. The company started a partnership with a major milk producer in South Africa. The expertise of this foreign company is expected to help Creambell achieve its objectives. "In the very long-term, we want to absorb the production of all other units in the country and meet the daily



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consumption at 100%," Creambell's manager, Rajiv Sant, revealed. – *L'Express*

Zim desperate to save dairy industry

Zimbabwe imported 100 pregnant heifers from South Africa in July this year, in a desperate move to improve its depressed milk production. It had aimed to import 500 dairy cows, but only managed 100 due to lack of foreign currency.

Dairiboard Zimbabwe Holding said its first batch of cows arrived in the country in July and produced over 11 000 litres of milk in August this year. Busi Chindove, the company's corporate services director, said the cows were imported under the government-initiated "Buy, Operate and Transfer" scheme. The country's milk production has decreased by 60% since the country launched its controversial land reform programme in 2000. – *Farmer's Weekly*

Ethiopian farmers benefit from AI

The Agriculture Development Desk in Hadiya, Ethiopia, says activities are underway to artificially inseminate (AI) 4 000 cows to help the country's dairy industry. The development desk's animal resources development coordinator, Mathias Gebre-Selassie, said that more than 3 000 farmers would benefit from the scheme during this budget year.

The coordinator said professionals and AI equipment have been distributed to six insemination centres. He added that 1 400 improved calf breeds were also delivered by inseminating 2 295 cows last year.

Gebre-Selassie indicated that local cow breeds produced an average of 1,5 litres of milk per day. He said that farmers are becoming more motivated to use AI after learning that artificially inseminated cows can produce up to 5,5 litres of milk per day. The desk is also promoting Borena dairy cows, known for their high milk-yielding potential.

According to Gebre-Selassie, the desk provides services for milk processing centres in Lemo, Misha, Soro and Badwacho with the help of support obtained from the National Animal Resources Development Project. – *The Ethiopian Herald*

More Ugandan beef and milk

Kampala's major abattoirs have seen an increase in beef and milk supply after the Ugandan

Government relaxed cattle movement restrictions. This has led to a price reduction, a weekly survey by the newspaper, *New Vision*, has shown.

Movement of cattle and cattle-products in western Uganda was restricted in July following an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease. Western Uganda is the major cattle supplier. "Animal movements in western districts except Kiruhura, have been given the green light. This has increased supply, reducing prices by sh500," Hassan Rashid, a butcher, said.

Rashid said milk supply has also increased. This is despite disagreements between the government and private milk transporters over modalities of transportation. The new development has led to a price reduction of sh500. Fresh milk has dropped from sh1 200 to sh1 000 a litre. Private milk vendors sell a litre at sh500, compared to sh600. – *New Vision*

Reconsider co-ops

Cooperatives can help South African milk producers prosper. As a business model, it is something that they might want to reconsider. This is according to Bob Dever, former vice-president



Bob Dever believes that all farmers – whether in America, South Africa or elsewhere – share the same concerns. He says that cooperatives give farmers more bargaining power

of Land O'Lakes, one of the largest cooperatives in the United States of America (USA).

Like South Africa, processors and supermarkets in the USA have become increasingly larger and more powerful. Dever recently told South African farmers that, although US milk producers can now negotiate better prices for their products, this was not always the case.

Dever was employed by Merick Dairy Cooperative before the company merged with Land O'Lakes. "We were not large enough to negotiate prices and started looking for partners," he said. In the 1990's, the US dairy industry went through a process of restructuring and consolidation. "For this reason cooperatives started merging."

"We consolidated so that we can negotiate from a position of strength." Consolidation also meant that they could negotiate on an equal footing with major processors and retail chains. This helped the US dairy industry to develop, he told farmers. Dever said that in the beginning things were difficult, but that farmers managed to work together. He added that co-ops became an important business model to overcome difficulties.

He said that co-ops are responsible for annually distributing two billion litres of milk in the USA. Land O' Lakes is the third largest co-op in the USA. The company is well-known for its butter brand and owns a third of the US retail butter business. Land O'Lakes is also a major player in the feed and seed industry, as well as a chief marketer of fertiliser and insecticides. – *Karien Slabbert*

Penetrate the market with cooperatives

South African Agriculture and Land Affairs Deputy Minister Dirk du Toit, recently advised emerging farmers to form cooperatives. Du Toit told farmers that this mechanism will help them penetrate the market and become economically competitive. "It is difficult for individual emerging farmers to survive in this industry. This is why it is important for them to form cooperatives to not only penetrate the market, but also be competitive," he said.

The Deputy Minister was speaking during his visit to several land and agrarian reform projects in the Bojanala District of the North West Province in South Africa, to obtain first-hand information about their impact on the local economy.

Most of the farmers complained that they faced challenges with regard to breaking into the market to sell their produce.

Du Toit said although there were challenges in the area as was common across the country, land reform implementation in the North West continued to impact positively on the lives of previously disadvantaged communities. He said land reform provided property for settlement, production as well as securing the rights of the people on land.

The provincial deputy president of the National African Farmers Union, Peter Rammutla, said the emerging farmers should be assisted to obtain technical skills relating to farming. – *BuaNews*

Collapse looms for Namibian dairy

The Namibian dairy industry may collapse within a year if it does not receive protection from government against cheaper dairy imports, local dairy producers have warned. Since 2004, Namibia has faced a massive influx of milk products from South Africa, putting extreme pressure on local dairy producers, according to local press reports.

Only 17 of a previous 25 dairies are still open. Japie Engelbrecht, chairman of the Dairy Producers' Association (DPA), said at its recent annual general meeting that high customs tariffs to Angola and Botswana, are hampering exports and preventing market expansion.

Namibia's only long-life milk production plant, which belongs to the Ohlthaver & List Group, might also have to close down soon, implying 460 job losses. Engelbrecht said the industry had not received any price increases over the past two years. Instead, it has to face a price reduction of 10c/litre for raw milk. – *Food and Beverage Reporter*

Dairy traders petition president

Dairy traders in Uganda have petitioned the country's President, Yoweri Museveni, to intervene in what they called "unfair ban of unprocessed milk in urban areas". This follows a directive from the Animal Husbandry State Minister, Bright Rwamirama, giving milk vendors to December 2006 to start processing milk for sale or quit the business. More than 100 000 milk traders throughout the country will be affected by this crack-down.

Rwamirama said unprocessed milk poses a danger to the lives of consumers' health, as some traders mix it with water and other dangerous chemicals. In response, Gordon Mutima, Chairman of the Uganda Dairy Traders Association (Undata), said that Rwamirama did not conduct a comprehensive survey on marketing milk from dairy farmers before taking the decision.

"Minister Rwamirama has almost taken over the powers and duties of the milk regulatory body, the Dairy Development Authority (DDA). It was set up by Parliament to control the quality of milk and other dairy products," Mutima said.

He said the minister had also taken over the role of the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS). Mutima believes the bureau and DDA should be responsible for investigating milk quality and to confirm whether it is really poisonous or not: "Let technical people like veterinary doctors, DDA officials be the ones to tell us the dangers of selling unprocessed milk or if it is poisonous – not politicians," he said.

Mutima added that the DDA had sensitised dairy traders about the importance of quality and hygiene in the sector. He said DDA had managed to make milk vendors change from transporting milk using jerry cans to aluminum cans and finally milk tanks.

He said the vendors are ready to improve their activities if given enough time. "Twenty-six milk traders had bought 4 090 aluminum milk cans at sh920 million following a directive from DDA when it banned plastic jerry cans. Part of this money is not yet paid. Rwamirama is still new in the field, hence a need to handle issues carefully," he said.

"The minister cannot give us only four months because we do not have the money for making processing plants which are so expensive," Mustafah Mubiru of Sibyangu Dairy Farm, said. He said they have just bought expensive milk tanks to transport milk on yet unpaid bank loans and that is unfair to now tell them to pack the milk, which requires a lot of capital. – *New Vision and The Monitor*

Shake-up in Ugandan dairy

Michael Baingana, DMA's Comesa editor and member of the Amate Gaitu Cooperative, gives readers an insider's perspective on new developments in the Ugandan dairy industry.

The Uganda dairy industry is continuing to undergo radical changes. The government, through its Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, is cracking down on the informal milk trade sector to help secure public health. Informal milk vendors are notorious for adulterating milk and creating false glut in the market.

Milk can only be transported in proper, refrigerated milk tankers. The informal sector has been given until December to end the sale of unprocessed milk. In a country where 85% of the market is made up of unprocessed milk, this is a major shake-up. Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has given his personal support to this measure. Henceforth, there is no going back to consuming unprocessed milk.

During a meeting with a delegation from the Sameer Group, the new managers of the

Ugandan Dairy Corporation, Museveni welcomed the plan to accept milk from only authorised coolers in areas provided to farmers. He said the measure would stop contamination of milk by the middlemen who dilute it.

Already processors are recording higher sales. The Sameer Group has seen its sales double from 25 000-50 000 litres a day. The farmgate price has also held firm despite heavy rains.

"The informal sector has been given until December to end the sale of unprocessed milk"

The Uganda Dairy Traders Association has been up in arms. They have organised demonstrations and even blockaded milk transport tankers that belong to processors. These changes mean that after December, Uganda will become a largely formal dairy sector. This is a major distinction in a region where 90% of their milk is consumed raw. **DMA**

A glass of milk is being poured onto a blue textured surface. The milk is captured mid-pour, creating a white splash against the blue background. The glass is tilted, and the milk is flowing out of the opening. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the surface and the clarity of the milk.

Spilt milk or cash cow?

School milk programmes can directly benefit dairy development, as it creates a demand for the product. This is particularly true in countries with relatively undeveloped dairy industries.

In these countries, farmers and dairy processors see school milk as an exciting opportunity to create a sustainable consumer base. Japan's school milk programme, for example, was instrumental in increasing the country's annual milk consumption from five litres per person in the early 1960's, to over 70 litres today. Imagine the same result in countries with similarly low levels of annual milk consumption.

School milk implies a programme that is financially and administratively supported by government. It can also refer to the distribution of milk in schools through government programmes, industry promotion, or the commercial supply of milk to schools. It is not an easy or particularly large market. Therefore few dairy companies want to pursue it.

However, the importance of milk and dairy products in schools lies not only in the size of the market itself, but also in its consumers – children. They represent an important market, because they drink more milk per head than adults, and because dietary habits established in childhood continue into adult life.

Programmes that encourage children to choose milk and dairy products should not be viewed merely in the light of the actual volume of milk sold. It should be seen as an investment in future demand for the product.

Promoting nutrition

School-based programmes provide an excellent opportunity to promote milk consumption among children. Some see it as the only way in which the dairy industry can meet the challenge of competing with beverages that are heavily supported by promotional campaigns. Yet the dairy industry has a major advantage over these sugary beverages – it is considered a necessary component in children's diets. Milk is the outright winner when one compares its nutritional role in children's diets to carbonated drinks.

However, experience shows that milk's nutritious value is not enough for it to maintain its role in children's diets. School milk programmes therefore represent an important vehicle for milk promotion.

Assistance or independence?

School milk programmes take on many forms. Some concentrate only on milk. In others milk is merely one of the elements of a government school feeding programme. Funding also varies. Some programmes are completely government-funded, while others are entirely private endeavours. In many countries a golden mean exists, with a mixture of public and private funding sources.

Subsidies are increasingly becoming a focal point for discussion, as school milk programmes can place excessive strain on finances.

A number of school feeding programmes were established with the help of aid-funded projects. While such assistance has many benefits, one should remember that aid assistance is finite. When it ends, it can be difficult to sustain the system that depended on it. For this reason some countries such as China, India, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and Oman, launched their school milk programmes without any direct financial support from government or external agencies. In these cases, the system evolved into one best suited to domestic resources and most sustainable in the longer term.

In other cases, limited government funds are used to provide school milk to the poorest sections of the student population, leaving wealthier sections to pay for the products themselves.

Legislation

In instances where governments do not subsidise the distribution of milk in schools, legislation can favour programmes. Government can support these programmes by setting standards and providing guidelines on good nutritional practices. Public policy, such as nutritional guidelines for school feeding, can have an important impact on the ability of school milk programmes to grow and prosper.

National nutritional guidelines can help by specifying daily recommended levels of milk consumption for children. It can also specify the amount of milk that should be made available to children as part of school lunches or even prohibit the sale of competing products such as carbonated drinks in schools.

Central coordination is a key factor in the success of school milk programmes. Left to themselves, dairy companies are unlikely to



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want to sustain the effort of establishing and maintaining these programmes.

Potholes and possibilities

In Kenya, milk distributed in the government-funded school milk programme dropped from 44 million litres in 1989 to three million litres in 1997. It subsequently stopped altogether. In richer countries, political decisions to end school milk subsidies resulted in a substantial drop in school milk consumption. This was the case when the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand ended free distribution of milk in schools in the 1970's.

In many former free school milk systems, the distribution system was inflexible. The product itself (typically unrefrigerated white milk) was also unappetising. Many adults dislike drinking milk today because of the way it was presented to them as children. But school milk has moved on since then.

Nowadays milk distribution systems cater for regional and local differences. Because students or parents often bear a higher proportion of the cost, milk is now presented in a more attractive way in terms of refrigeration, flavouring and packaging. In short, milk in schools is being tailored to meet the demands of the child consumer, rather than simply being presented as a bulk commodity.

A global overview

In some instances, school milk programmes have re-emerged with support of the dairy industry rather than government. In these cases, support is not necessarily subsidisation. It rather focuses on promoting a milk drinking culture in schools, leaving the milk to be supplied by commercial distributors. While school milk programmes still predominantly rely on government support, there are a number of examples of programmes without a direct financial contribution from government.

Remijo Katarakanbi, a dairy farmer from the Kabale in Uganda, took it upon himself to expand dairy production in his district by initiating his own school milk programme. When Katarakanbi started with the programme, the town of Kabale only produced 800 litres of milk per day. "Now we are selling 7 000 litres per day."

"I decided we must start a culture of drinking milk so that I can help feed malnourished children. The best way to do this was to start with the youngest children. When you have succeeded

there, you will have created a permanent market." Katarakanbi put his plan in action by involving the schools in the region.

"There are a total of 13 084 pupils in 23 primary schools in the municipality. I planned to supply each pupil with half a litre of milk per day. This would create a need for an extra 3 500 litres of milk a day". He provided the children with free milk on the first day. "On the second day, I went back and gave the schools a discount of 50 shillings per litre. In this way, I got the schools interested, and the children started drinking milk at a reduced price."

Katarakanbi went a step further, and put his ideas on paper. "In 2001, I attended a meeting of the farmers' association in South Western Uganda and told them about our success in Kabale." Representatives from Land O'Lakes offered to help the Kabale farmers set up management committees that specialise in mobilisation, production and procurement in local government.

The project was launched to stimulate further production from farmers in the Kabale district, once a steady market and a good price had been established. With more production and better returns trickling down to farmers and the rest of the community, the project would contribute to poverty eradication.

"Milk in schools is being tailored to meet the demands of the child consumer"

The success of the project, says Katarakanbi, lies in the fact that it is a process-driven, locally initiated programme rather than a "blueprint package". Most importantly, the community is encouraged to take part in the planning process to assure ownership and strengthen sustainability. Owing to Katarakanbi's initial vision of a milk drinking culture, as well as his continuous dedication, the Kabale district is currently at the forefront of school milk initiatives in Uganda.

(Source: School milk in the world: What future? presented by Michael Griffin, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, at the School Milk Workshop of the FAO Intergovernmental Group on Meat and Dairy Products, Winnipeg, Canada, 17-19 June 2004. Additional reporting by Karien Slabbert) DMA



It pays to replace on time!

by Rykie Visser, export and regional manager: DeLaval

The milking machine liner is the only part of the milking equipment that is in direct contact with the animal. The quality and characteristics of the liner greatly influence milking performance and animal health. It is very important to use the best possible liner type and to make sure you do not milk with old, worn liners.

How long can a liner last?

A liner's lifespan depends on:

- ▶ The number of cows you milk every day
- ▶ How many times per day you milk the cows
- ▶ The number of clusters that you use to milk the cows.

Generally liners should be replaced every 2 500 milkings or six months, whatever comes first.

Overusing liners

It is crucial to replace all liners as a set when the lifespan is over. If one overuses the liners, the following are a few of the problems that may occur:

- ▶ Clusters might slip down the teats during milking
- ▶ You will harvest less milk from the cows
- ▶ The cow's teats might penetrate too deep in

the liner, and this will result in severe teat end damage, which can lead to mastitis

- ▶ The bacteria growth in the milk will be high, due to bacteria growing in the cracks that develop in the liners
- ▶ The liners will also lose its elasticity, resulting in incomplete milking practices
- ▶ You can also spread diseases like mastitis from one cow to the next, by using old liners.

In short, over-used liners will lead to decreased milk-flow, extended milking time, reduced milk-yield and increased stripping. It will affect udder health and milk quality. Milking with over-used liners will reduce the milk volume by at least 4-5%!

These are only a few problems that might occur! The same applies to the milk tube. This tube has to be replaced once a year, regardless of the number of cows or number of times you milk the cows. A good practice is to replace all other rubber parts that are in contact with milk, also once a year.

What type of liner should I use?

Use original liners that you can buy as a set from the milking machine supplier, as these liners are manufactured for the specific cluster that you are using. Remember to replace liners according to the manufacturer's specifications.

It doesn't cost you to replace on time, it pays to do it! If you choose to use liners for longer than specified, be assured that you might end up culling cows due to spreading of diseases and injuries to the cow's teats!

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You will not be able to see the bacteria that grow in the cracks of over-used liners



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