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News Letter no 2

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Update on activities

1 Milk Processing in MDFA

The mini milk processor for MDFA has now arrived and the renovations of the building are almost completed. We are being held back by the Northern Region Water Board and Escom but we hope that reason will prevail in our negotiations. We are now in the process finding people that are going to operate the Plant and buy the necessary testing equipment for the milk. We are also designing a marketing and distribution plan for the sale of the "Milk from the North". Although we will start slowly, when in full production, we should be able to process 1000 liters a day. It will be happy days for the dairy farmers in the north finally to have a market for their product.

THIS IS THE LOGO
THAT WILL
APPEAR ON THE
MILK SACHETS



2 Liquid Nitrogen and semen.

The shipment of the Liquid nitrogen plants was delayed because the manufacturer was waiting for some electronic components. This seems now to be resolved and they tell us that we can expect them soon. In the north we will place the machine at MDFA and in the Centre it will be placed at CREMPA. In the South it will be placed at SHMPA. As soon as the machines have arrived we will ask our Supplier for semen, to send us the shipment. This has been waiting in the US for months as we were waiting for word on the machines.

3 Training of new farmers.

The practical training Center at Katete Farm is now fully in operation. So far 46 students have gone through the training and all have received a certificate. Two groups from MDFA and the rest from CREMPA area. The students now selected are all farmers that will, or have received a pass-on animal and are not supported by training of any kind. The feedback from the students is very positive and some even want to come back for more! The selection is initially done by the bulking groups that receive pass-on animals, and submitted to the Regional Association. They in turn submit the names to MMPA and the Training school.

The Center has recently appointed a full time administrator who is now taking care of the day to day activities in cooperation with Mr. Banda, the instructor. The Center has received many national and international visitors interested in the set-up of the center.

MMPA is now in negotiations with some NGO's who are interested to send some of their project farmers to the school. We welcome this very much as it will help us to make this project sustainable in the future and give all farmers a fighting chance to make a success of their dairy business.

4 MMPA goes "GREEN"

In recent weeks MMPA has made a deal with D.Light of Honkong to supply and sell the farmers in Malawi with lanterns **charged by the sun**. So... no more need for paraffin, kerosene, batteries or candles These lights are very efficient and will give you light in your house for up to 8 hours on a normal day **sunlight** charge and will pay for themselves in about 2 to 3 month in savings on paraffin and batteries and candles The larger model will also **charge your cell phone**. We expect the first shipment in early January 2011. They will be offered for sale through your Regional Associations. We are also targeting NGO's who would like to supply them to their projects and cut down on carbon emissions. Information is available at MMPA head office and at the Regional Offices. The normal lanterns will cost about MK 4000.00 and the lantern including the cell phone charger; MK 8500.00



MMPA
IS HOPEFULL THAT THIS
LIGHT WILL MAKE
DAIRY FARMING EASIER
FOR ITS MEMBERSHIP

5 Veterinarian Drugs and cleaning supplies.

We are in the final stages of selection of suppliers for drugs and cleaning supplies for the MBG's. This will be with considerable savings for you, the farmer. The cost of the drugs will be charged to you in the revolving fund of the association and can be deducted from your milk income. This will also include MCP as a feed additive to keep your cow healthy. We will update you as soon as the final deal has been made.

6 Field officers

We have now appointed 2 field officers to assist the MBG's on the input program and to help you with specific problems you might have.

In CREMPA there is; Philemon D Banda phone; 0999 707 735, who has already been working with several Groups.

In MDFA we have appointed Petros M Botha, [Phone number to be announced] who will be starting in Mzuzu on the first of December.

We welcome them both to our team and we are sure we will be seeing great things from them in the future.

7 Milk Price.

In our previous newsletter we talked about our concern that a 3% withholding tax was put on the milk collected from the farmers. Some of the processors started to collect this immediately from the farmers. We are now in negotiations with some processors to increase the milk price paid to the farmers to make up for this loss and other cost increases.

We will keep you informed on the outcome of these negotiations.

8 Training of Milk Buyers.

With all the activities going on at the moment, at the MBG level we have to look how this is going to be administered and recorded. Discussions are underway with the Regional associations and MMPA to upgrade the role of the milk buyers at the MBG's and let them take on more of the responsibilities in the sale of inputs and services for the MBG's. The roll of the milk buyer could then develop in one of a fulltime administrator for the MBG's

We are open for suggestions, so let your committee know if you have any ideas on this matter.

9 Banks and Loans

Some of the commercial Banks are offering loans to MBG's to buy cows, inputs or equipment at very high interest rates and repayment terms that are almost impossible for the farmers to pay back. MMPA is quite concerned about this development and has started consultations with some of the Banks to find out what kind of programs they have to offer.

We will report on the findings as soon as we have more information on this matter.

10 Veterinarian support from WUSC

In early December Dr. Bill Hazen will arrive in Malawi and he will be placed at CREMPA.

Bill is an experienced veterinarian surgeon from Canada. We hope that he will be able to help upgrade and provide additional training to the Vet officers in the field in the Central Region. Welcome to Malawi Bill [when you arrive]

We hope you find this Newsletter useful. Give us feedback through your MBG or Regional Associations via the field officers about challenges or problems you run into. We can then see how best we can help you.