

Sembabule farmer boosts milk yield with new grass specie

The dry spells farmers have experienced in the past in Kiruhura district, have been turned into learning experiences, with farmers now being able to grow new grass specie to feed their cattle year in year out.

One of the model farmers we have identified is Emmanuel Tayebwa, a resident of Keshunga village, Keshunga sub-county, Nyabushozi county.

“We plant and grow improved species like brucharia (grows sprouting upwards), Local brucharia (stores water), Moringa, Labulab (legume is cut when it is flesh and given to cows), and Cariandra,” Gumisiriza Dan, the farm manager, says.

Gumisiriza adds that African black bean-all seeds are available to whoever wants them.

The farm also has other types of silage like Criteria, pepper mint, society garlic, alfa alfa, holy basil, oregano and kikuyu grass.

Gumisiriza says that management allows students and farmers from all parts of the country to come to learn new farming practices.



Dan Gumisiriza, Mutanoga farm manager

Esther Byentaro narrates how attacks by wild animals from Lake Mburo National Park threaten their livestock

“Students visit the farm for study purposes and we award them certificates at the end of their studies,” he says.

What is so special is that the farm utilizes water from valley tanks constructed using Water for Production/Ministry of Water and Environment facilities. The farm is apparently being sustained by contribution from SNV and payments students make for learning.

The farm has 10 paddocks with each paddock having 3 troughs for water. Cows are grazed on rotational farming.

Management of the farm uses a submersible pump. The family drilled a borehole for the community so that it does not contaminate water sources/valley tank.

The farm has banks and a warehouse for hey. Milk is preserved in coolers before being transported to Lyantonde and Kampala for bigger markets.

There are 2 baloon water tanks (2500 litres) for rain water. They do zero grazing for dry spells. There are mineral blocks to provide calcium for milk production. They sell off bulls to get income.



Milk being transported for sale



calves

Due to constant availability of water which is used to irrigate grass species, cows yield a lot of milk. Esther Byentaro, a family member requests for a chain link to stop wild animals from escaping from Lake Mburu National Park to invade the farm and kill livestock.

Mutanoga Dairy Plant

The family established Mutanoga dairy plant as a result of increased milk production after a valley tank was constructed and enabled storage of bulk water for more cattle.

The plant uses coolers to preserve milk for a longer period. There is also an ecosan toilet that has improved standards on sanitation.

Mutanoga Energy (Biogas) and Fertiliser Demonstration Centre

The farmer has added value on the valley tank by establishing a biogas and fertilizer demonstration centre. Cow-dung is collected from the kraals/farms and stored where it is mixed and released in the digester. Dung is directed downwards whereas air elevated upwards to release energy power, that is used for lighting and cooling milk.

One cow produces over 50 litres due to availability of clean water. Cows are increasing in number due to availability of clean water and improved forage.

It has various pastures; grass-Brucalia morato, local blucaria, kikuyu grass, olunyankore, (2) legumes)- mukuna, caliandra.

The farmer requests the Ministry to increase the number of valley dams to at-least 4 to provide adequate water for the increasing number of cattle.

The farm management also noted the challenge of running a generator on a daily basis and thus requests for electricity supply.

BY COMMUNICATIONS UNIT



Artemisia Annu



Coliandra and Oregano



Local brucharia



Pepper mint

