

Sicabazini Agricultural Primary Cooperative Ltd.

The Work Progress Report

May 2014

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1. The tomatoes marketing

The tomatoes marketing has been progressing very well with the total of 179 crates sold to date. The project members are doing a good job in executing the post harvesting operations including grading and ensuring that the produce is clean. The price per crate has been set at R140.00 and it has not gone down yet. The total of +R25 000.00 have been so far generated and still counting.

The major customers have been Spar, Boxer, Jock Morrison, town hawkers, pension day hawkers, school feeding scheme suppliers and the general community. We usually load by 5h00 as our customers need the produce to be delivered before 7h00 but other customers come to collect the produce from the farm gate.

Photo 1: The current tomatoes field view



Photo 2: The project members engaging on another harvested tomaoes grading, cleaning and packaging in boxes



Photo 3: The graded cleaned and packaged tomato boxes ready for loading and delivery



Photo 4: The early loading of the produce to the market



Photo 5: The closing of the produce with the shade cloth before its transportation to the markets



Photo 6: The hawkers at Mbazwana town buying all the loaded crates



2. The purchased farm resources

The farm has purchased the irrigation connection elbows, and 2 bags of fertilizer. The engine elbow that broke down, ordered and paid for has arrived in the farm. It has fitted well in our engine and now we do continue with our farm irrigation schedule without a problem.

Photo 7-9: The purchased farm resources



3. The negotiations with Toyota Tsusho Africa

The stickers that were delivered by Toyota for us to paste on our signage boards were too small because we mistakenly sent them the miscalculated measurements for which we did apologise. The print “*Sponsored by: umhlosinga development agency*” on the bottom left hand of our signage was to be covered by the Toyota stickers. We negotiated with Mr Velleman that he will have to print the rather bigger ones.

We have resent the measurements to him. The list of members and the uniform sizes was also sent to him. He needed to know the shop and the place where the uniform was purchased and branded. We have contacted umhlosinga and they gave us the contact details of the branding company but could not give us the name of the uniform shop saying the officer that purchased them has resigned and she left no information about the uniform shop. We are now waiting for Mr Andrew to come back with the stickers and the branded cooperative uniforms.

Photo 10: The wrong project signage with the umhlosinga print as a project sponsor



Photo 11: The Toyota stickers showing to be much small than the print we need to remove



4. The capsicums planting

The dry chilli market has requested us to send them the dry chilli samples for them to check it in their laboratory before sending the truck to pick up the produce. We have sent the chilli samples by speed mail and we hope to receive the feedback anytime soon. The rest of 46000 chilli seedlings have been planted. The left over 0.3ha of unplanted land has been prepared to plant other 8000 tomato seedlings by Wednesday to Friday this week.

That will confirm the entire plantation of our 10ha project. The planted seedlings are behaving very well and we are sure to keep on managing them with constant irrigation, spraying, weeding and scouting until they give us a high quality produce. Our irrigation system components are perfect hence we are confident to have a good production though the rain fall is not being experienced yet.

Photo 12: The land in block A fully planted with chilli plants, tomatoes and cabbages on the other side.



Photo 13: The land in block B planted with chilli and green beans in small area



Photo 14: The irrigation system working very well on the entire 10ha farm



Photo 15: The prepared land for the 8000 tomato seedlings planting



5. The cabbages and green beans

The cabbages and green beans in the farm are the upcoming crops to be sent to the market. We are sure of the green beans to be marketed by next month. We have contacted the market in Durban (*same market for the fresh chillis*) telling them about the available green beans produce.

They asked us when we are harvesting as they usually come to take the ready produce. We have decided to send them the closer view of the green bean plants. They came back to say we need to give the beans pods some time to get big and start to turn red before we harvest them.

The cabbages might be harvested and sold toward the end of June month. We are certain to generate more farm income out of this crops marketing.

Photo 16: The field view of the cabbages



Photo 17: The view of the green bean pods not yet ready to be harvested and be marketed



6. The IDC visit to the farm

The IDC crew has visited the farm on the 22nd of this month within a 2hrs short notice we received from umhlosinga. The umhlosinga new CEO was not available. They started by farm orientation and taking photos. We then set down after they have taken all the photos of the developments that were delivered by the IDC funding to our farm. We have discussed that Umhlosinga has not handled our funds as we have expected. The shortage of our cold room storage and the resigning of their CEO, CFO and, COO has left us with a question; *“how come since they have not came to us to do the funding close up report?”*.

The IDC has promised to put pressure on umhlosinga to deliver our cold room immediately. The issue of the left over funding that needs to be deposited to our cooperative account was rejected by the IDC saying; after the funding implementation report has been presented to us, we need to know how was left over and then notify them of other additional project needs where the money could be used on. We are now waiting for umhlosinga to deliver our cold room and then do the close up report accompanied by the invoices from all the suppliers they have used.

Photo 18-19: The IDC crew taking photos on the farm

