

# ZiMUNDA

## FARMING



ISSUE 31 | 2022

### AGRONOMY

Regen in Mkushi, Zambia

### LIVESTOCK

Why Boran?

### HORTICULTURE

Fertigation

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**Bindu**

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## DISCLAIMER

The aim of ZiMunda Farming is to provide correct and relevant farming information to farmers. Every effort is made to check the content of every article, the directors will thus not be held responsible for errors or omissions in such articles. Farmers should thus consult with the references and resource people before making any financial or production decisions.

## COVER



A Boran bull and a cow at Collin and Mandy Langton's Boran Stud.



## Murimi akarongeka anonyoresa paEcoSure USD policy

**Chayai \*900#**  
kana kuenda pachitoro cheEconet kana kufona pa 311 munyorese.

Nechirongwa cheUSD, munogona kubhadharira vana venyu, mudzimai kana murume wenyu pamwechete nevabereki kuitira kuti vavigwe nenzira ine chiremera.

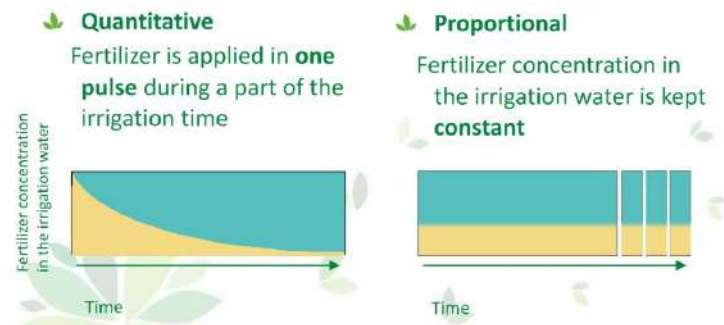
Mhando yechirongwa	Lite USD 0.50	Basic USD 1.00	Standard USD 2.00	Premium USD 5.00
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Kufambiswa kwebasa	✓	✓	✓	✓
Magwaro	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vanoviga	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kugezesa nekupfekedza	✓	✓	✓	✓
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Tende rekumakuva nemushina wekudzikisa mutumbi	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tende revanhu nezvigarro	X	X	✓	✓
Jira relesi	X	✓	✓	✓
Maruva	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bhazi rinotakura vanhu	X	X	X	Munyika yese
Zvimbuzi zvinotakurika	X	X	X	Munyika yese
Chikafu cheparufu	X	X	X	✓
Chikafu chepamwedzi (mwedzi mitanhatu)	X	X	X	✓
Sarudzo yemari	US\$500	US\$1,000	US\$2,000	US\$5,000

# Fertigation in Precision Farming

The application of nutrients through irrigation systems is referred to as fertigation. Fertigation, in any irrigation system, requires the injection of soluble fertiliser solutions into the irrigation water by a dosing device-injector. High quality, fully water-soluble fertilisers are required for the preparation of an appropriate nutrient solution. The incorporation of soluble fertilisers into the irrigation water is facilitated by the integration and harmonisation between the application of water and plant nutrients.



**Precise timing** – fertilisers can be easily applied at the right growing stage in micro-doses (Quantitative) or in one pulse (Proportional), according to the requirements of the crop. Because of the continuous small micro-doses of nutrients, crops can establish stronger roots faster and over time; this results in thicker, denser foliage.



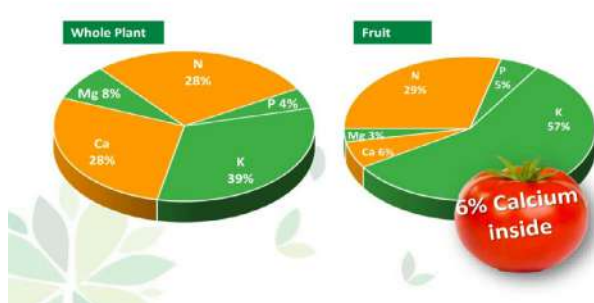
**Precise rate** – the ability to “micro-dose”. Thereby, feeding the plants just enough so nutrients can be absorbed and are not leached. The nutrients are already dissolved, hence ready for uptake by the roots. Groundwater contamination is then less likely to occur because less fertiliser is applied at any given time and the application can correspond to the peak crop requirements.

**Precise place** - reduced leaching of chemicals into the water supply as nutrients are directed to the active root zone and uniformly distributed.

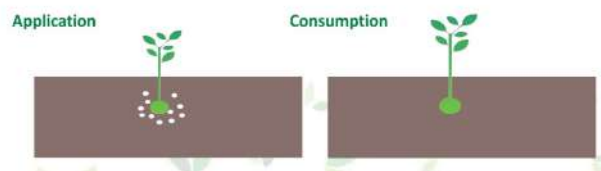
## Benefits of Fertigation

This modern Agro-technique provides an excellent opportunity to maximise yield and minimise environmental pollution by increasing fertiliser use efficiency, minimising fertiliser application and increasing return on the fertiliser invested. The effectiveness of fertigation is based on the preciseness of the practice.

**Precise composition** – the nutrients applied can be altered to the growth stages and according to the crops needs. Potassium and calcium are more than half of all nutrients absorbed by the tomato plant (fruiting)



(a) As such, fertilizer applications in field are only absorbed around the root zone, resulting in salinity build-up over time



(b) Fertiliser application through fertigation, salinity built up is avoided

## Fertilisers for Fertigation

The fertiliser products which can be used in Fertigation are limited to those that are readily soluble. There are many commercially formulated soluble fertilisers available to growers. These formulations are prepared for specific crops,

or combinations can be used depending on the crop cycle. They have the advantage of being stable and highly soluble, dissolving rapidly and providing a balance of nutrients.

**NB-** The fertiliser should be of high quality, with high solubility and purity, containing low salt levels and with an acceptable pH, and it must fit in the farm management program.

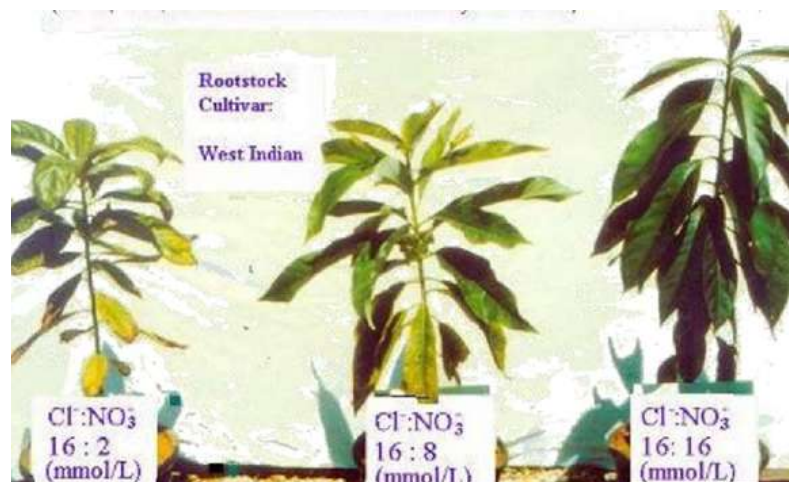
**NB -** Interaction between fertilisers in solution if one or more are prepared and mixed by the grower, or in the irrigation line (but to a lesser extent), the compatibility between them must be checked as there are precautions to be taken. Make sure that the fertilisers used are compatible to prevent precipitation.



horticultural crops such as potatoes and tomatoes require basal fertilisers with low chloride levels as they are salt sensitive. For such crops, no chloride fertilisers such as

Multi-K™ from Haifa can be used in a Fertigation regime. Its line includes a complete range of products addressing a variety of crops, growth conditions and application. This potassium nitrate fertigation fertiliser has a higher solubility and faster dissolution rate than potassium sulphate fertilisers (SOP), allowing the grower to apply higher concentration of nutrients per litre of water - higher efficiency.

**Multi-K™**, Haifa's flagship potassium nitrate brand, is the basis of a whole line of plain and enriched products, designed to provide optimal plant nutrition under all growth conditions. It is a necessity for chloride-sensitive crops. The benefits of Multi-K™ potassium nitrate include stronger and healthier plants, higher yield and better quality, water saving capacities and counteracting salinity damages. The presence of nitrate in Multi-K™ enables the plant to minimise its uptake of chloride, whenever this damaging anion is present in the soil solution or in the irrigation water.



The nitrate in **Multi-K™** counteracts the chloride's harmful effects: Relieving chloride toxicity in avocado leaves by increasing nitrate concentration in irrigation water containing 16mM Cl.

#### About the Haifa Group

Haifa Group is a world leader in the field of specialty fertilisers. Since its establishment in 1966, Haifa brand has been considered a symbol of quality and pioneering in the global agricultural industry. The company sells a wide range of quality products in more than 100 countries through 17 subsidiaries spread throughout the world. In Zimbabwe Haifa products are sold through Damara Bio-Agri, Pomona Harare.



**Full document for the extracts** - [https://www.haifa-group.com/sites/default/files/ifa\\_fertigation-Kafkafi-511.pdf](https://www.haifa-group.com/sites/default/files/ifa_fertigation-Kafkafi-511.pdf)

#### Potassium Nitrate for High-Value Crops

Farmers often use potassium nitrate fertiliser to support high-value or specialty crops in horticulture and orchards. Some



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# WHY BORAN?

## God's Gift to Africa ..... for over 1,300 years

By the Zimbabwe Boran Breeders Society

With so many breeds of cattle to choose from in Zimbabwe - Why Boran?  
Well, that's quite easy to answer!

### MUSSOLINI GANYO

My love for Borans was brought about through sheer coincidence. When I got my piece of land in 2006, my very first heifers were comprised of Boran crosses. By then,



as a startup cattleman, I did not know anything about the Boran breed and it was through observation and comparison that I realised that the Boran crosses in my herd exhibited outstanding performance as compared to the other cattle breeds that I later acquired after purchasing the crosses. Besides temperament i.e. being docile and easy to handle, the Boran crosses also displayed;

- **Early-age calving traits** – the heifers matured earlier than the other breeds and these first time calvers were excellent mothers and the calves had higher weaning weight.
- **Good traits in keeping condition** - because the breed is a non-selective grazer (as well as a browser at times) with a rumen and metabolism that can handle poor roughage. My Boran crosses were adaptable and kept their condition.

With these wonderful traits I had 'discovered', I embarked on a learning curve about the Borans by travelling around Zimbabwe, South Africa and Kenya to acquire both genetics and knowledge. I must admit the former was/is a hard yet exciting task and the latter was very stimulating and motivational– conversations with established Boran Stud breeders.

*For me, the Boran Breed is a Breed I Can Count On.*



### COLIN & MANDY LANGTON



My venture into the Boran breed was also by chance . In 2003 I bought in 2 Mashona herds of cattle destined for slaughter. One of them had been running with a Boran bull. Later upon calving, cross calves were produced.

*So God's Gift to Cattlemen was manifested.*

The hybrid vigour of these calves, beefiness, ability to thrive, resist ticks, and just perform over the straight bred calves was just so strongly noticeable. This led me to buy 2 Boran bulls to breed onto my cows, and then progress to buy further bulls and finally purchase Boran cows as the breeds adaptation traits started proving themselves in the new unfolding farming environment, of herding during the day confinement at night started to play out.

*The relationship with the Boran breed and fellow breeders has been a very rewarding one.*





The bull number is 16-246HHB.

From left to right: Friday, Chikomo, Nhubu, P.V.O. Mswela and Bajaba at H.A.V.E Boran Stud.



at vast expense and we then sourced a bull from Mark Hook then the journey began. It has been a journey of new friendships both in Zimbabwe and abroad. There have many inspections and lots of learning, whilst touring our beautiful country. The breed has not disappointed and continued to show its worth under tough conditions, with little maintenance.

*It is no surprise that we have seen exponential growth in the Society with this truly superior indigenous beef cattle breed. Thanks to all that have been involved in our journey.*

**MARK HOOK**

Have' Hook Boran became breeders of Boran in 2005.

I was breeding large framed pedigree Beefmaster cattle for the Zimbabwe EU export quota. With the loss of fencing, and the EU quota, I had to adapt my management practices to achieve a calving percentage above 75%.

I was looking for an easy to manage breed that had good herding instincts, and behaviour because the animals had to be bomad (kraaled) at night in a mobile danga, and still produce a good weaner annually.

**I choose the BORAN.**

The added bonuses came when the Boran exhibited its HYBRID VIGOUR. I have crossed the Boran with Beefmaster, Mashona, Ankoni, and Jersey dairy cows. The progeny is always better than the average of the two parents. With climate change becoming a reality,

*I believe the BORAN is the breed to uplift most rural herds throughout Zimbabwe.*

**GREG MAGGS**

My journey with the Boran started in 2013 when searching for a breed would thrive under the current Zimbabwean conditions, after much research I eventually settled with the Boran. Together with my brother-in-law, we purchased our first 13 Appendix A heifers from Forrester Estate



Image of Greg Maggs







# ZBBS

ZIMBABWE BORAN BREEDERS SOCIETY

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1400 - PRE-SALE VIEWING

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# Forrester Estate and The Kaiser Boran Stud

The Boran cattle have been in Zimbabwe for decades, here is what some of the pioneer cattleman have to say on – Why they chose the Boran Breed.

## FORRESTER ESTATE

Among the many superior traits of the Boran, those listed below put them in a class of their own:

- Ability to not only survive but then thrive after times of drought, scarcity or winter,
- High resistance to tick borne and other diseases,
- Short hair coat and highly motile skin,
- Herd instinct and mothering ability,
- Longevity and production life,
- Cow to calf weight ratio at weaning,
- Bull size, fertility and virility,
- Temperament,
- Short period to “finish” and ability to do so off the veld.

It was with these traits in mind that the von Pezold family, owners of Forrester Estate and with their vision and pioneering spirit set about the almost unimaginable task of introducing, for the first time ever to Zimbabwe, the superior Boran breed.

A trip was arranged to Kenya, the heart of Boran country and after much effort, determination and an artificial insemination exercise coupled with a comprehensive embryo fertilization and implantation program, the first Boran calves were born in Zimbabwe in 1993. These calves became the foundation stock of not only the current Forrester Estate pedigree Boran Stud but the start of the entire Zimbabwe Boran breed as we know it.

*To this day, Forrester Estate is still fondly referred to as, “The Home of The Zimbabwe Boran”.*





## THE KAISER BORAN STUD

The Kaiser Boran Stud's journey started in 1999 when my late father, a lifelong cattleman, bought several Boran bulls from Forrester Estates after previously being involved with a Boran herd in Zambia and knowing all the great traits the Boran possess. They immediately proved their worth as a "herd improver" when used as sires on Sussex, Simmental and Mashona cows.

The hybrid vigour and early maturity of the Boran/Mashona cross offspring in particular was exceptional in comparison to the other breeds, as well as their ability to adapt to the harsh sour Highveld conditions. This led to us buying our first six SP heifers in 2002, the foundation of our stud herd. We never regretted this decision: the characteristics of this breed for the Kaiser stud, has time and again, proved for us, its value. More than 20 years on, the Kaiser Boran Stud continues to build a legacy for cattle producers and Boran enthusiasts.

The Boran breed has survived and thrived in the harshest of African conditions. Its docility and ease of handling, are also inherent as a result of its history of domestication, and smaller calves make ease of calving another desirable breed trait.

Furthermore, a strong herding instinct, low maintenance and ability remain highly fertile through all the tough Zimbabwean

conditions.

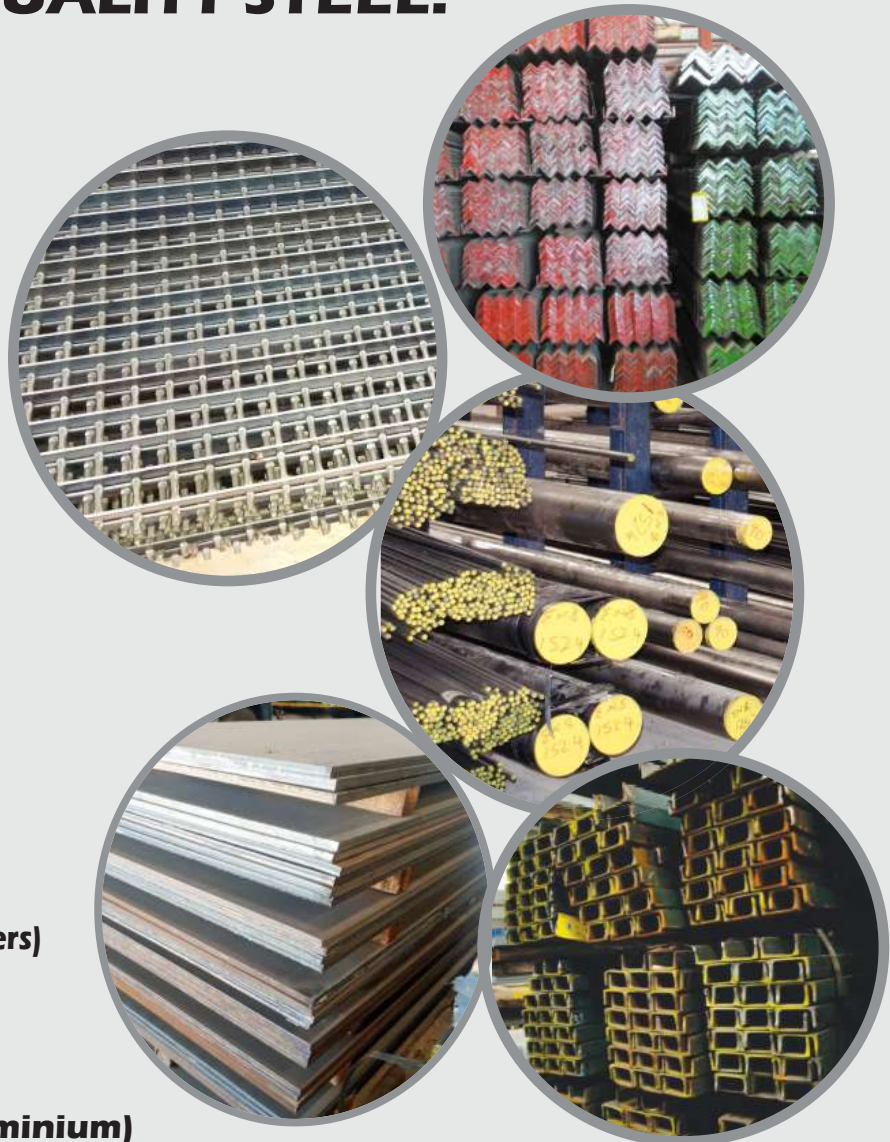
For the Kaiser Stud, these traits will continue to make the Boran our breed of choice. These compact and hardy cattle have a major role to play in building the Zimbabwean herd and cattle ranchers, both big and small, wanting a herd improver need look no further than the Boran.



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# Regenerative Agriculture in Mkushi - Zambia

by Hugo Winkfield and Rob Jarvis (images)

A gruelling 14-hour drive from Harare to Mkushi a few weeks ago, by the ART team, was justified by the warm welcome and fascinating examples of regenerative agriculture in the area.

Mkushi is a largely new commercial farming area with many farmers having carved their croplands out of Miombo woodlands. The soils are light and prone to compaction. We spent three days visiting seven farms, each had very different contexts, opinions, and passions. On the cropping side, there was an excellent display of maize-soya-mixed cover rotations, both dryland and irrigated. We were pleasantly surprised to hear that by including a mix of full-season plants as a cover crop in the rotation, farmers were reporting greater yields and cost savings, despite the lack of any direct income from the cover crops. Typically, these mixes were planted using a zero-till seed drill, and contained Red and Black Sunn Hemp, Sorghum varieties, Cow peas, Dolichos, Sunflower, Millets. The aims here were soil biology improvement and high biomass for grazing and ground cover.



Cattle were not as prominent in Mkushi as they are in many Zimbabwean Farms – the beef market is depressed. The farmers that did have cattle were almost exclusively operating managed grazing with great success. Portable

electric fencing was the key here: In a particularly overgrown area of **Sporobolus** grass, one farmer had run 290 head through about 1.5ha in a week – naturally the cattle took a hit on weight gains, but the results on the veld showed an explosion of diversity waiting to happen beneath the mass of **Sporobolus**.

The vast areas of Miombo woodland surrounding the recently cleared farmlands were also a source of good grazing – made easy and efficient by the electric fencing. The only lacking principle of regenerative agriculture was the integration of cattle onto cropland – whilst some farmers were testing it out, many were understandably cautious of giving themselves a nasty compaction problem.



Mkushi is a wonderful place, full of passionate people, skilled farmers, and great opportunities. We thoroughly enjoyed seeing all of these developments in farming being used commercially and would recommend any-one interested to make time for a visit. Sharing local and regional knowledge is probably the greatest tool we can use to develop our own ideas of how best to regenerate our farmlands.



**Notes on a few Mkushi farms and their Regenerative practices;**

**1. Verney Burdett**

Farm produce - Biochar, buckwheat and bananas.  
 Regen practices - Cover crop and biodiverse compost vegetable patch.  
 Future plans - Looking at integration of free-range pigs.



**2. Simon Hunt**

Use Effective Microorganisms (EM) - an organic liquid probiotic for soils and plants that improve seed germination, root development, nutrient absorption and soil fertility.  
 Compost and Vermicompost Extract as fertiliser.  
 Microscopy.  
 Yeoman/Keyline plough for compaction.  
 Perennial Cover crops.  
 Planting Bambara or Ground Nuts underneath maize.  
 Brachiaria in cover crops.  
 Reduce basal and top dressing after 2 years of min-till and other practices to improve soil health.  
 Compost only in Pfumvudza plots with companion plants.  
 Use broad-fork not a hoe.



**3. Malcolm Richardson**

High density grazing with stargrass in Sporobolis.



**4. Doug Badcock**

Teff grass is planted at end of summer season crop on dryland areas. Hand broadcast just as crop is drying off.  
 Rotational grazing in the whole farm.  
 Livestock is composed of smaller breeds chosen for being hardier.  
 Transforming Sporobolis into biodiverse by high density grazing.  
 Intends to use pigs on cropland.  
 Silvopasture using leucana, pidgeonpea, banagrass, albizia and vetiver  
 Gmelina trees in paddocks.  
 Cover crops are grazed.  
 Reduced fertiliser in some areas.



**5. Andrew Hunter**

Maize-Soy-Cover dryland rotation.  
 Roller-crimping first, then grazing of cover crops.  
 Many trial plots for commercial and small-scale growers.

**6. Calvin Carnezos**

Irrigated 600ha of Maize-Wheat-Soya-Wheat-Cover rotation.  
 Ultra-high density grazing of cattle comprised of 8-15 moves per day.



# N.RICHARDS GROUP



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# ETGL Displays an Extensive Range At NAMPO



Export Trading Group Logistics (ETGL), distributors of farming equipment and automotive products in Southern Africa, displayed an extensive range of products and services for the agricultural market at Grain SA's NAMPO Harvest Day Agricultural Show. Grain SA's NAMPO Harvest Day enables producers and other role players in the agricultural industry to experience the latest technology and products on offer in the farming industry first-hand and on one terrain.

On display were large and compact tractor ranges, power tillers, agricultural implements and machinery, quad bikes, a range of motorcycles, scooters and three-wheel delivery vehicles, the introduction of ETGL's Rent a Tractor mobile rental platform for farm equipment, and crop and farm asset insurance services from ETG Insurance and Risk Solutions (EIRS).

## About ETGL

ETGL specialises in logistics and distribution of farm equipment and automotive product ranges in Southern Africa and forms part of the Export Trading Group (ETG), a global company with extensive interests and involvement in commodities trading, agricultural inputs, logistics and distribution, FMCG products

and energy. Their involvement in agriculture goes as far back as 1967 and today ETG is the world's largest producer and distributor of cocoa, cashew nuts and lentils. ETG Logistics operates an established automotive and farm equipment distribution business in South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Tanzania, Zambia and Kenya with plans to increase our footprint in East and Southern Africa, amongst other regions.

## On Show

It was exciting to view ETGL's newly introduced tractor offerings at the NAMPO show. In a display reminiscent of David and Goliath, ETGL showcased the nimble VST range of compact tractors with engine outputs of between 14 and 18kW, as well as the huge Belarus Minsk tractor range with engine outputs ranging from 62 to 333kW. The VST range of power tillers with engine outputs from 9 to 12kW was also on display.

An extensive range of agricultural implements and machinery is available for use with both the Belarus and VST tractor ranges. These include not only small implements for VST compact tractors and power tillers, but also the extensive





Shaktiman model range. Local farmers are familiar with the Shaktiman range and the company is the world's largest producer of rotary power tillers. Other models on display at the NAMPO show include fertiliser spreaders, balers, MB ploughs, hay rakes and slashers.

Visitors to the NAMPO show could also sample the TVS range of motorcycles, scooters and three-wheel delivery vehicles, the latter offering an affordable transportation solution on farms and small holdings being equipped with a load tray that can carry up to 400kg. For more serious off-road work, ETGL displayed the TGB Blade 600 4x4 range of quad bikes. Two models are on offer – a recreational two-seater and a model with a 450kg capacity load tray, specifically developed as a goods, feeds, fertiliser and equipment transporter for areas where normal vehicles will find the going tough.

**It is commonly known that mechanisation is crucial to increase productivity, efficiencies and profitability on farms.** Yet, not all farmers can afford to purchase expensive tractors and implements and this is particularly true in the case of small-scale farmers. ETGL is addressing this issue through the introduction of their Rent a Tractor platform that enables small-scale farmers to rent tractors and implements in their local area from larger commercial farmers.

This is possible through an innovative mobile phone application that connects these parties and makes it possible to complete online transactions in a safe, secure and transparent manner. Rajeev Saxena, CEO of ETGL commented: *“ETGL has been operating the Rent a Tractor platform very successfully in Tanzania and we are confident that it will find huge support from local farmers as well.”*

Farming and agriculture have their own unique risks and

for this reason ETG entered the risk management market through their own EIRS Insurance and Risk Solutions agency. When it comes to farming insurance requirements encompassing crop and farm assets, EIRS has an in-depth knowledge of the global agricultural sector, and consultants were available at NAMPO to discuss individual farmers' needs.

*“ETGL is serious about the agricultural and distribution market and, as you can see from this extensive display of products and services at the NAMPO agricultural show, we are confident that we will establish ourselves as a significant player through our respective brands,”* concluded Saxena.

**For further information, visit [www.etgldistribution.com](http://www.etgldistribution.com) or contact ETGL South Africa Business Head, Pavankumar Nair on +27 71 360 8369 or [Pavankumar.nair@etgworld.com](mailto:Pavankumar.nair@etgworld.com)**

