

Project providing training and support to develop dairying in Mozambique

IT was a real pleasure to meet Arnaldo, Isidro and Acio from Mozambique. This was their first visit to the UK and apart from difficulty with a few technical words the conversation was free flowing and very uplifting. Such enthusiasm.

The previous day they had visited a 900-cow herd in Somerset. This one farm has more cows than in the whole of Mozambique, but rather than being swamped by the scale the visitors were enquiring and learning and increasing their understanding of dairy cattle management.

The XL Vets Farm Skills Africa Project has a waiting list of veterinary surgeons from within the XL Vets group who wish to follow in the steps of their colleagues and undertake support for the Land O' Lakes dairying initiative in Mozambique.

Gripped by Africa

Peter Edmondson admitted that he has been "gripped" by Africa, having visited the continent many times. Sitting around a table with the visitors within the Shepton Veterinary Group, Peter explained his involvement.

On his first visit, over 50 smallholders gathered under a tree to learn how to manage a dairy cow. Many had walked several miles, the men carrying a chair, and his words were translated into Portuguese and then into Shona.

After a while one of the audience was asked what he had now understood and the man stood up, hands behind his back, and recited almost word for word what had been said.

A second topic was raised and another man repeated this high level of understanding. As Peter points out, this involvement is challenging for the vet, but people who have visited the

project refer to it as life-changing.

Arnaldo Gomes trained as a veterinary surgeon in Cuba and he had observed a caesarean operation on a cow during his visit and had taken notes of procedures and materials. He has had little opportunity to conduct this surgery at home.

Isidro Araujo is a dairy outreach co-ordinator supporting technicians and training for paravets, who in turn support the smallholders. Acio Muteque has a particular involvement

RICHARD GARD meets a group of visitors from an African nation and some of the UK vets who are helping them in the Land O'Lakes project

in AI as well as dairy outreach.

The aim is to enable smallholders to manage an in-calf Jersey heifer, and the impact of this is outstanding. One well-managed cow will provide an income over three times that earned by a schoolteacher.

These three officers were sponsored for the two-week visit to the UK last month by Novartis Animal Health and veterinary surgeon Simon Wheeler from the company took the opportunity to review the finer details and benefits of the project.

In-calf heifers are brought into quarantine in Mozambique from South Africa. Bovine TB in the quarantine unit is a major problem, with 46 cattle shot last year and a further 38 this spring. Tick-borne diseases are also a problem.

Placing heifers

To date over 400 in-calf heifers have been placed with trained smallholders and over 200 people are waiting for a cow. The ambition is to place 4,500 heifers.

There is no history of dairy cow management in the bush and a major production unit is five cows. The project continues to develop milk collection centres and smallholders will travel miles, with little available transport, often carrying the milk on their heads.

A well-managed cow



Arnaldo Gomes, Oliver Tilling, Isidro Araujo, Peter Edmondson and Acio Muteque with Simon Wheeler from Novartis Animal Health.

will produce 25 litres per day but the yield can be as low as six litres, according to the ability to deliver adequate nutrition. Some trained paravets also develop model farms and the quality of management is rapidly improving.

The first female calf is reared and inseminated and given back to the project. Male calves are kept and a bull may also be reared, although the management of Jersey bulls is difficult. The second and subsequent female calf is to be kept by the smallholder. There is much to be taught, learned and supported.

Short supply

Basic materials are in very short supply. With only one cow it means a loss of income for a week if it is treated with antibiotics.

Hygiene products and insecticides, etc., are not readily available and are expensive, therefore the visiting veterinary surgeons adapt to finding basic and effective solutions to heifer, calf and cow management.

Peter Edmondson explained that the XL Vets practices are gathering some fundamental aids (stethoscopes, castrators, suturing materials, etc.) to

be taken back by the visitors. Simon Wheeler is looking into the availability of various products and the ways and means of supporting this infant dairy industry.

The first three-year phase of the Land O'Lakes Project finished in June 2012 and during that period 12 vets attended, each for two weeks working in pairs. There has been limited funding and individuals work out the finance with their practices as best they can.

The second phase started last November and four vets are due to leave now with six in 2014 and six in 2015. Oliver Tilling has been involved with the training at Shepton and has yet to visit Mozambique.

Vets who have been to the country want to go again. Other projects are also under development there that may involve castrating dogs to prevent rabies.

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Animal vaccines market expanding

A NEW report on the global animal vaccines market forecasts that it will be worth \$US8.6 billion by 2018, up from \$US5.4 billion in 2012.

Called "Animal/Veterinary Vaccines Market [Products (Livestock – Bovine, Companion – Canine, Poultry, Equine), Diseases (Rabies, Distemper, Foot & Mouth, Gumboro, Avian Influenza, Strangles), Technology (Live attenuated, DNA, Recombinant)] – Global Forecast to 2018", the report by MarketsandMarkets (a market research and consulting company based in the US) analyses the major market drivers, restraints and opportunities in Europe, North America, Asia and the rest of the world.

The market is segmented by products, animal diseases, and technologies that are involved in developing vaccines for veterinary administration; and is further broken down into seven segments covering companion animal vaccines, livestock, poultry, porcine, equine, aquaculture, and other animal vaccines. The livestock segment dominates the market with a 37% share.

DNA vaccines are forecast to be the fastest-growing technology due to its cost effectiveness, easy production and rapid development against emerging diseases, plus added thermo-stability between 4°C to 20°C.

The market is driven primarily by factors such as the growing prevalence of animal diseases, increasing incidences of zoonotic diseases in humans, increasing investments by government bodies and animal welfare associations and introductions of new products, the report says. But factors such as increasing maintenance costs for vaccines and consumers' increasing preference for vegetarian food will restrict the growth of the market.

Europe and North America collectively hold around a 70% share of the global animal vaccines market and are fast reaching maturity. Asia, Africa, and LATAM are poised to grow at double-digit rates owing to increasing investments by companies in these markets and improving healthcare facilities for animals.



Acio Muteque inseminating a Jersey heifer.