

Series 4, Episode 11

Cecilia and Philip's Farm, Kimutwa, Machakos

This leaflet contains information on: Water pans, fodder trees, East Coast Fever vaccinations, farmer groups, and growing Sorghum



Make your farmer group successful

Joining a Farmer Group in your area is a good way to make your farm into a good business. Groups of farmers can get good prices for inputs, sell more produce to bigger buyers for a better price, save more and help each other to grow.

To make sure your farmer group can help you get the best returns, the group needs to have organised structures.

The group should have:

1. A **Registration Certificate**
2. A **Constitution** showing what the rules are, how the group operates and where it is registered
3. **Records** of what was grown, by which members, where and when it was sold, for how much, how much profit the group makes and what savings it has made
4. A **Business Plan** to show what the group plans to do, how it will do it and with what money
5. An Inventory of which members have how much land, how much they can grow of each crop and how much they contribute to the group every season.
6. **Good leadership** structures - the leaders should be honest, accountable and able to tell you exactly what the plans are, how much money the group has and what it is used for.

Banks like to deal with groups which have all of these things in place. If you have a good business plan and you need to find **financing** to get the business running, a **bank or SACCO** is more likely to lend you money if it can see **what you have done in the past**, how much you have sold and that the **leadership is good**.

To get good prices as a group, you should make sure that you can supply the **buyer** with the **right quality** they asked for, the quantity they asked for, at **the price and time or date** they agreed with you and that you can bring all the crop together **at one place** so it is easy for them to collect the product.

Buyers will always buy from reliable groups who give them what they want. If you change your mind or cannot give the buyer what was agreed, the buyer is likely to find another place to buy.

For more information, SMS 'FARMER GROUP' to 30606

East Coast Fever



East Coast Fever (ECF) is a **tick borne** disease, carried by the **brown ear tick**. Spraying your animals properly, including inside their ears, under their bellies and under their tails, will help to stop these ticks.

The **symptoms** of ECF are:

- **Swollen Lymph Nodes** under the ear and in front of the front leg
- **Loss of appetite** - the cow will not eat
- **Foaming at the mouth or drooling**
- **Temperature**
- **Dull look**
- In dairy cows, the **milk production will fall**
- **The animal can die**

To fix a cow with ECF can cost 6,000KSH in medicines and your cow will never fully recover. Milk production of infected cows is always low, even once they are better.

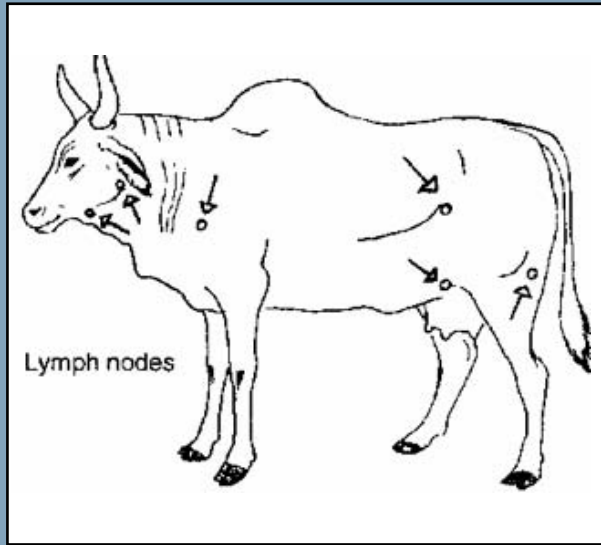
To **vaccinate** your cow against ECF for life costs 1,000KSH per cow. You will also be able to spray once every 2 weeks.

The cows will have an **ear tag** once they are vaccinated, which will show everyone that your cows are not likely to die of ECF, so they get a better price at the market.

To vaccinate your cows against ECF, you need to call a vet. The vets will come and will need to vaccinate **40 cows** so you must get all your neighbours together to collect enough cows. The vet will weigh your cow, check its health, **deworm** and inject it with **antibiotics** and the **vaccine**.

The cow may seem sick for a few days after the vaccination. It will soon recover. The vet will monitor the cow for 3 weeks after vaccination to make sure that it has taken the vaccine well.

For more information, SMS 'ECF' to 30606



'If your cow's Lymph Nodes are swollen, get a Vet immediately



The ear tag will show when the cow was vaccinated and by which Vet

Controlling pests in sorghum

Shootfly is a pest, which infests the sorghum in the first few weeks. If your crop has Shootfly, the **first leaf will dry up**. If you pull out the dry first leaf, it will have a **bad rotting smell**.

To control Shootfly, spray with **Duduthrin** or other pyrethroid insecticide.



Signs of Shootfly are the dried first leaf and the bad smell when you pull the dried leaf off

Stalk borer is a caterpillar which eats the inside of the stalk of the sorghum. Stalk borer infests the crop in about 1 month. When you see rows of **holes in the leaves** or **purple marks on the stalks** you know your crop has stalk borer.

To control stalk borer, pour **Bulldock** or similar Beta Cyfluthrin insecticide down the funnels of the plant.



Grow sorghum, make money

EABL needs **white sorghum** to make beer. If you grow **Sila or Gadam** sorghum, and sell to a supplier of EABL, you are guaranteed a market.

To grow sorghum, follow these instructions:

1. Plough and harrow the field to a fine tilth
2. Make furrows **75cm** apart with dips between the furrows to catch rain water
3. Mix DAP with soil along the furrows
4. Drill the seeds 2-3cm deep along the furrow
5. At three leaf stage (2-3 weeks), **weed and thin** the seedlings to **one seedling every 20 cm**
6. At the same time, spray for **Shootfly**
7. At 1 month, **stem borer** attacks the plant. Look for holes in the **leaves** or purple/brown marks on the **stem**
8. When the plants are knee high (1 ½ foot), **weed and then top-dress with CAN (1 bag per acre)** with the rain
9. Flowering takes place at 45-52 days
10. Bird scaring should be done at grain filling for 3 weeks
11. **Gadam sorghum is ready to harvest after 90 days**
12. Dry the grain on the head
13. Thresh and winnow the grain
14. Store in sacks off the ground and not touching the walls until the buyer collects or you take to market

You should get **12 bags per acre of sorghum**



For more information, SMS 'SORGHUM' to 30606

Fodder trees - save your soil, feed your cows

Trees are a good way to diversify your farm, shade the soil, improve the soil, and feed your family and your animals. Lines of trees reduce **soil erosion and pests**.

Fruit trees can **stabilise** the soil and provide food for your family. Some fruit trees can also be fed to your animals. **Mulberry** is a good tree to plant on **steep soils** as it will hold the soil together and use a part of the farm where you cannot grow crops. Do not plant mulberry near your crops, as it will take the nutrients from them.



Calliandra is a good fodder tree to grow in your farm - it **fixes Nitrogen**, provides **mulch** and **food for the cows** and **shade for the soil**.

Plant Calliandra trees in holes 2 feet deep and 1 ½ feet apart. Water the seedlings well.



You can harvest your fodder trees after 3 months, and they will last 15 to 20 years.

For more information, SMS 'FODDER TREES' to 30606

Water pans

A water pan is a good way to catch and store water on your farm. The pan can catch water from your roof or from furrows or channels in your farm.

To make a water pan for 120,000 litres of water, dig a hole 10 metres long, 4 metres wide and 3 metres deep. Make the sides sloping so they do not collapse.

Line the pan with **dam liner** and secure the edges of the liner with stones or soil. Plant **fodder trees** around the pan to stabilise the soil and shade the water.

Keep animals and children away from the water pan.



Secure the edges of the liner with bricks to stop it slipping

For more information, SMS 'WATER HARVESTING' to 30606

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