



Empowering the Zambian Farmer.

The Agricultural Knowledge and Training Centre

In view of its objective, the Agricultural Knowledge and Training Centre (AKTC), offers short courses to all interested and serious farmers who want to improve their farming activities and make profit in all their farming enterprises.

The Agricultural Knowledge and Training Centre (AKTC) on the 19th and 20th of October, 2016 conducted its usual one day trainings on Tractor Maintenance by Martin Sikanyika, AKTC agricultural machinery expert and Fertilizer Spreader Calibration by Leslie de Jager, AKTC crop production expert respectively.

The workshops targeted farmers, farm employees, drivers, agricultural service providers and machine operators.

The workshops were conducted at the Golden Valley Agricultural Research Trust (GART conference Hall) for the first part, they being theoretical and later in the field at Chaloshi Farm 65km north of Lusaka along T2, for the practical.

On the 19th, the training started on a good note with an average attendance of 20 farm workers, who were in this regard mainly tractor drivers.

Under tractor maintenance, the training focused on daily check-ups, tractor servicing and maintenance intervals. The training started from looking at the different tractor types, their parts in general and getting into more details that would help a farmer ensure that their tractor's operation life was longer.

The training further focused on the various parts of a tractor and the means of ensuring they were up to task. The expert emphasized the importance of understanding the varying functions of the different tractor parts and the means and ways of maintaining them.

As a way of wrapping up with the training, the attendees were directed to the tractor yard where they had an actual inspection of AKTC's Arion tractor, at this stage, the trainees had a detailed view of what was previously taught from the lecture.

Furthermore, on the 20th of October, 2016, the training focused on Fertilizer spreader calibration using an Amazone Spinning Disc Spreader, in this training, the importance of calibration of a spreader and the infield operations with it were learnt by the various farm workers.



Figure showing Fertilizer Spreader Calibration training by Leslie de Jager, AKTC crop production expert.

And just as with the tractor maintenance workshop, the attendees were first given a fertilizer spreader calibration theory, in which the farmers as a class had to first understand and list out the many factors that affect fertilizer spreading, with this done, they further went on to identify the vital factors a farmer would have to consider before he embarked on a calibration of his fertiliser spreader.

Conclusively, having all important factors worked on and well understood, the farmers then went into the field for the practical calibration exercise, and by the close of the workshop, the tractor drivers were more confident and sure of what was expected of them as farm workers, both in the workshop and in the field.

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