

»»» NEWSLETTER «««

NEC AGRICULTURE

We deliver first class productivity-based industrial relations and advisory services to the agricultural industry in Zimbabwe.



TOP NEWS OF THE MONTH

A FOREWORD BY THE CEO

By David Madyausiku

»»» NEC AGRICULTURE AT ZITF

Read more about the exhibition done at the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair which ran on the theme : Transformative Innovativeness, Global Competitiveness

READ MORE «««

Our Commitment to to delivering productivity based industrial and advisory services to the Agricultural Industry in Zimbabwe

DEMYSTIFYING THE WORK OF NEC AGRICULTURE

By Cain Kagoro





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FOREWORD

Dear Reader

The year has already reached its half-way point. There has been so much accomplished in the industry, including setting records tumbling for the harvest of crops such as tobacco, while grain self-sufficiency has also been achieved for 2023. It is a testament to the hard work and synergy between employers and employees, who, for all the difficulties and volatilities and uncertainties prevalent in the environment, have found ways to reach common understanding and to keep the heartbeat of the industry pulsing. These achievements are to be lauded.

It is now widely recognised that it is not only wages that contribute to the attainment of industrial harmony which makes the above achievements attainable, but also a work environment that cares for the holistic well-being of employees. The NEC Agriculture strives to assist employers and employees in the industry to articulate the very standards that underlie this holistic approach to industrial relations. The focus of this newsletter touches on some of these standards, among them, the often-overlooked notion – that “Health is Wealth”. Without regard for health, the employee is incapacitated and incapable of continuing to render services. Injuries and illness in an unsafe work environment can beget reluctance to work, low morale and high staff turnover. These are a threat to productivity. Conversely, adequate investment in safety measures give rise to confidence to work in the security of occupational safety and health, which in turn increases productivity. The employer who ignores this axiomatic principle does so at his or her own peril.

In this quarterly newsletter, labour standards feature prominently, from conscientizing the employer and employee on the importance of first aid training, to the work of the NEC Agriculture in conducting relevant labour inspections to ensure that labour standards are always adhered to. The NEC Agriculture also takes every opportunity to interact with our stakeholders and share our experience and expertise in industrial relations issues, this past quarter at the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair, and endeavouring to continue to do so in other fora in the future. We also tackle problems that we come across in delivering our services, such as the pernicious issue of unwritten contracts that give rise to shouting matches of contrasting versions of what has been agreed between employer and employee. As the trend has evolved in preceding editions of the newsletter to ideate and inspire innovation in the industry, we also feature emerging production methods in the industry, this time putting aquaculture and fisheries in sharp focus.

It is my hope, dear reader, that you enjoy this informative offering. Knowledge is power, and we, at NEC Agriculture, strive to help our stakeholders to put their best foot forward through knowledge dissemination, thereby assisting decision-making that is informed, orderly, and compliant with the laws of the land towards greater agricultural prosperity. I take this opportunity to wish you a successful and productive second half of 2023!

Yours truly,

David Madyausiku

Chief Executive Officer

1. NEC AGRICULTURE AT ZIMBABWE INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR (ZITF).

By Dumoluhle L. Ndebele

The Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF) 63rd edition attracted 21 countries, 533 exhibitors and over 60 000 visitors. The exhibition for 2023 was running under the theme “Transformative Innovativeness, Global Competitiveness”. An organisation that aims to be a premier service provider cannot afford to miss such an event. NEC Agriculture as an organisation with high level of focus towards stakeholders’ engagement had a strong presence as an exhibitor at the 2023 ZITF. The ZITF exhibitions were held in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, from April 25 to 29, 2023.

The ZITF itself provides a buffet of choices for goods and services to local, regional, and international participants. In the same vein NEC Agriculture had an opportunity to interact with various stakeholders, chief among those employers and employees from various Agricultural sectors across the country. The engagement presented an opportunity to share with various stakeholders the role of NEC Agriculture in the industry. The presence of NEC Agriculture at the 2023 ZITF dovetailed well with its vision of becoming a premier industrial relations and advisory services provider in the agricultural industry in Zimbabwe.

The engagements with stakeholders provided an opportunity to raise awareness about collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) applicable in the agriculture industry. The principal CBA, Statutory Instrument 41 of 2022 was freely distributed to clients who visited the NEC stand and they received them with excitement. In the same platform some discussions about the contents of the CBA were held, much to the delight of the stakeholders.



NEC staff members in addressing visitors at NEC Agriculture stand in 2023 ZITF.

It was fulfilling for our friendly staff to field questions about NEC Agriculture and to give advice concerning disputes they have encountered.

The event, being one of the most important trade exhibitions in Zimbabwe, was graced by the presence NEC Agriculture's Chief Executive Officer, Finance and Administration Manager and other staff members in the various departments of the organisation to ensure that stakeholders were left without doubt that they are valued and much appreciated.



NEC Agriculture delegates at ZITF

Dumoluhle Ndebele is a Designated Agent at NEC Agriculture based in Bulawayo.

2. DEMYSTIFYING THE WORK OF NEC AGRICULTURE

By Cain Zivai Kagoro

At NEC Agriculture, we are determined to deliver top-end industrial relations in line with our mandate. We are committed to delivering productivity based industrial and advisory services to the Agricultural Industry in Zimbabwe. We have calibrated our systems to be highly responsive to the industry we serve with all its sub-sectors. Our services are customised to address real challenges bedevilling the Agricultural Industry in Zimbabwe. Our Customer Service Charter speaks to credible and sustainable solutions to pertinent labour issues emanating from our jurisdiction. We are there to ensure growth is achieved at all the entities we serve. Our responsibility is to ensure that both employers and employees in the Agricultural Industry in Zimbabwe are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities. We achieve this through various measures such as monitoring workplace environments for total compliance to enacted pieces of legislation governing the agricultural industry in Zimbabwe. We are also guided by our strategic goals for the period 2022 – 2024.

We conduct labour inspections in workplace establishments or enterprises to check on compliance to labour laws in terms of working conditions set by authorities as minimum legal standards of employment. The object of NEC Agriculture's labour inspections is to prevent and/or minimise labour disputes which have negative effects on the workplace productivity as a result of lost production outputs, operation, and management costs in times of industrial disputes (strikes) which usually disrupt normal workplace activities.

We advise employers and employees about the relevant labour laws as they relate to wages and conditions of service, as well as disciplinary matters. We also initiate or recommend litigation in cases where employers continuously ignore warnings for breaching the provisions of relevant labour laws. We constantly supply information and provide advice to employers and employees concerning the most effective means of complying with legal provisions in the Agricultural industry in Zimbabwe. Importantly, we are empowered by the Labour Act (CAP: 28:01) to conduct inspections of the records that the employer is obliged to keep. Our Officials are empowered to investigate any complaints made to them by either employers or employees and enforce compliance by securing an undertaking by the parties at fault. It must be noted that NEC Agriculture officials are authorised to enter agricultural premises without warrant or prior notice, at any reasonable time, for the purpose of monitoring and enforcing compliance to the Labour Act, relevant Collective Bargaining Agreements and Statutory Instruments. Cooperation of employers is therefore mandatory in terms of the law.

We endeavour to detect potential causes of disputes and eliminated them since they threaten productivity. The principle of labour inspections conducted by NEC Agriculture is a modern preventative strategy applicable to all functional areas of labour inspection enforcement responsibilities. Our

inspections promote adherence to occupational safety standards, monitor general conditions of work, curtail illegal employment, curb unfair labour practices, enquire on complaints and ultimately settle disputes.

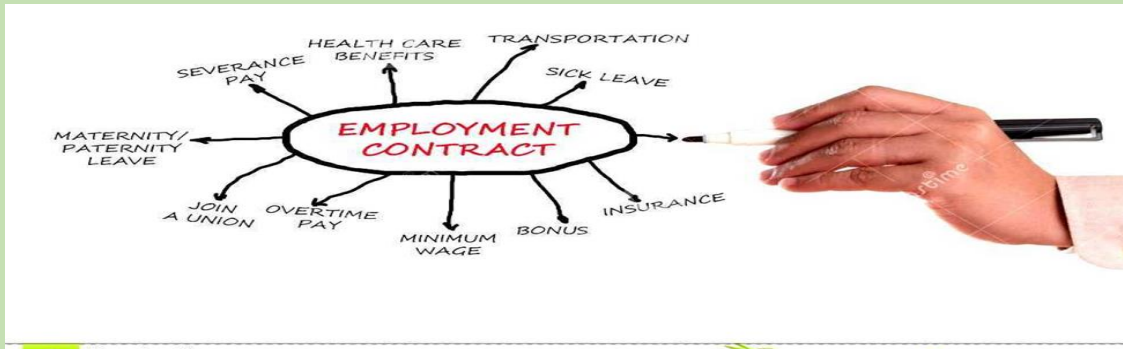
To achieve all of the above, NEC Agriculture has put in place a dedicated team of Designated Agents and Accounts Analysts to spearhead achievement of our strategic goals while providing value-based services to the Agricultural Industry in Zimbabwe. Our staff is highly trained, professional, and dedicated to duty to meet stakeholders' expectations. We are very mindful of varied circumstances of our clients hence we endeavour to offer unique solutions to peculiar situations. We have a strong network of Regional Offices across the Country's provinces to reach out to every client in the industry. We serve our Industry with due diligence fully supported by our various service departments such as Legal, Administration, Industrial Relations, Accounts, and Finance among others.

We, at NEC Agriculture, are also up to date with ICT with a highly functional department whose mandate, among others, is to ensure our website is always interactive. We have already taken significant strides going for growth in line with Industry demands as we remain pro-active to provide solutions to any form of challenge cropping up in the Agricultural Industry in Zimbabwe. We take pride in our Secretariat led by the able Chief Executive Officer, Mr. D. Madyausiku. He is hands-on and works 24/7 to ensure the industry is always serviced.

Based on statutes, NEC Agriculture staff has powers to enter workplaces at reasonable times, to interview employers and employees about compliance with employment standards and to inspect and copy any wage, payroll, and time records. An employer must make these available straight away. We call upon all the employers in the Agricultural Industry in Zimbabwe to register and regularise their operations if they have not done so.

We further urge all the stakeholders in the agricultural Industry to co-operate with NEC Agriculture officials when they digitally and/or physically reach out to you. We are all duty bound to be responsible good corporate citizens who totally comply with all the provisions of Labour Act (CAP 28:01) and relevant statutory instruments. We aim to provide premier industrial and advisory services to the Agricultural Industry in Zimbabwe. Our national goal is to promote employment in the agriculture industry and to achieve food security and nutrition for the nation.

Cain Zivayi Kagoro is the Lead Accounts Analyst for NEC Agriculture based in Chinhoyi.



3. IS ISSUANCE OF WRITTEN CONTRACTS OF EMPLOYMENT COMPULSORY?

By Ishmael Daga

It is indeed compulsory.

When employers engage employees for work, it is usually the norm that issuing of the written contract takes time or sometimes does not happen at all. It is important to note that it is a legal requirement or obligation on the part of the employer to issue certain written information to the employee, that amounts to the essential elements of the employment contract.

This cures the mischief whereby some employers claim that they never employed a particular employee forgetting that Section 12(1) of the Labour Act Chapter 28:01 recognizes even verbal contracts. Those verbal contracts are dangerous because it is easy for either party to claim terms that were never agreed upon. For example, an employee who is being paid US\$120.00 inclusive of allowances may claim that he was not being given allowances if the employer did not give him a written contract separating basic pay and allowances. The NEC provides for minimum wages and allowances, and it may be difficult to successfully argue claims which are above NEC minimum wages but are not specified in writing. This places an undue evidentiary burden on the employee when making a claim.

It is therefore in the interest of both parties to have written contracts of employment, so that whenever there is a dispute, reference can always be made to the contract. It is also important to note that the Law puts the obligation to give a written contract on the employer so whenever a dispute arises which ordinarily would have been resolved had there been a written contract, it would be very difficult for the employer to be believed. The employer will not be allowed to benefit from his own illegal action.

For the avoidance of doubt the following legal provisions requiring the issuance of certain written details to the employee from the Labour Act Chapter 28:01

and the NEC Agriculture CBA SI 41 of 2022 are reproduced or paraphrased below.

The Labour Act Chapter 28:01 Section 12(2) states that “An employer shall, upon engagement of an employee, inform the employee in writing of the following particulars.

- (a) the name and address of the employer.
- (b) the period of time, if limited, for which the employee is engaged.
- (c) the terms of probation, if any.
- (d) the terms of any employment code.
- (e) particulars of the employee's remuneration, its manner of calculation and the intervals at which it will be paid.
- (f) particulars of the benefits receivable in the event of sickness or pregnancy.
- (g) hours of work.
- (h) particulars of any bonus or incentive production scheme.
- (i) particulars of vacation leave and vacation pay.
- (j) particulars of any other benefits provided under the contract of employment.

The Agriculture Industry Collective Bargaining Agreement Statutory Instrument 41 of 2022 Section 22(1) states that, “An employer shall inform every employee, in writing, upon engagement, of the nature of his or her contract, including.

- (a) his or her grade; and
- (b) his or her wage and when it will be paid; and
- (c) provisions for accommodation; and
- (d) the period of notice required to terminate the contract of employment; and
- (e) hours of work; and
- (f) details of any bonus or incentive production scheme in operation; and
- (g) provision for benefits during sickness; and
- (h) provision for vacation leave; and
- (i) industrial holidays; and
- (j) code of conduct.

It is important to note that these two legal provisions are motivated by the same aspects and are speaking to the same thing. Failing to adhere to these provisions constitute material breach of the Labour Act Chapter 28:01 and Statutory Instrument 41 of 2022 the Agriculture Industry Collective Bargaining Agreement and employers may be taken to court for unfair labour practices.

It is therefore critical that employers and employees assist each other by reminding each other of the need to fulfil these legal provisions by having a properly crafted and endorsed contract of employment which cover specific items as stated in both pieces of legislation.

Ishmael Daga is a Designated Agent for NEC Agriculture based in Chinhoyi.

4. FISH FARMING



By Moreen Mudyiwa

Fishing is the activity of trying to catch fish. Fish are often caught as wildlife from the natural environment but may also be caught from stocked bodies of water such as ponds, canals, park wetlands and reservoirs. Fishing techniques include hand-gathering, spearing, netting, angling, shooting and trapping. It also includes catching crustaceans (shrimp/Lobster/crabs), shellfish, cephalopods (octopus/squid) and echinoderms (starfish/sea urchins).

Fishing has been an important part of human culture since hunter-gatherer times, and is one of the few activities directed at securing food supplies that have persisted from prehistory into modern age. Besides of being caught to be eaten for food, fish are caught as recreational or sporting pastimes. Fishing tournaments are held, such as the annual Kariba Tigerfishing Tournament, and caught fish are sometimes kept long-term as preserved or living trophies.



Zimbabwe is known for its world-class fishing in a safari setting, and it provides some fantastic fishing chances. There are numerous significant dams or well-known fishing spots in Zimbabwe where bass fishing is accessible for example the: -.

- **Zambezi River** fourth longest river known with species like tigerfish and yellowfish,
- **Lake Kariba** a well-known and popular fishing spot for Kapenta and majority of the by-catch is tigerfish.
- **Lake Chivero** is known of longfin tilapia, Redbreast tilapia, and Rednose Labeo fish species.

- **Mutirikwi Lake** is the largest inland man-made lake within Zimbabwe which has Greenhead bream, Red-breasted bream, Limpopo sardine, Straight fin barb, Mottled eel, Smallmouth yellow fish, Red-eye mud sucker, Catfish or barbell, and Banded bream have all been caught in the lake.
- **Limpopo River** is the river which has fish species like, Eels, Yellowfish, Tigerfish, Barbel, Electric catfish, Mudfish, Imberie papermouth, freshwater prawns.
- **Darwendale Recreational Park** is also known as the "Heart of Peace" and is managed by National Parks. It has Mozambican bream, bass fish, and hunyani salmon are among the fish that may be caught.

Fish farming has taken on new value in Zimbabwe's economy. It is applied to harvesting fish raised in controlled cultivations. It is a form of aquaculture in which fish are raised in enclosures to be sold as food. It is the fastest growing area of animal food production. Today, about half the fish consumed globally are raised in these artificial environments. Commonly farmed species include salmon, tuna, cod, trout and halibut. These "aquafarms" can take the form of mesh cages submerged in natural bodies of water, or concrete enclosures on land.



Fish farming, or pisciculture involves commercial breeding of fish, most often for food, in fish tanks or artificial enclosures such as fish ponds. It is a particular type of aquaculture, which is the controlled cultivation and harvesting of aquatic animals such as fish.

A facility that releases juvenile fish into the wild for recreational fishing or to supplement a species' natural numbers is generally referred to as a fish hatchery. Worldwide, the most important fish species produced in fish farming are carp, catfish, salmon and tilapia.



Global demand is increasing for dietary fish protein, which has resulted in widespread overfishing in wild fisheries, resulting in significant decrease in fish stocks and even complete depletion in some regions. Fish farming allows establishment of artificial fish colonies that are provided with sufficient feeding, protection from natural predators and competitive threats, access to veterinarian service, and easier harvesting when needed, while being separate from and thus do not usually impact the sustainable yields of wild fish populations, and while satisfying the demand for dietary fish protein.



Home based Fish Farming

There are three major fish industries in Zimbabwe: **Bream and Tilapia** Farming, **Trout** Farming and **Kapenta** Fishing.

Bream and Tilapia Farming

The **bream** and **tilapia** are some of the most prized freshwater fish for the table. The flesh is firm and the taste is incomparable. **Bream and Tilapia** farming in Zimbabwe provides an export product that has demand around the world.

Trout Farming

This industry is found largely in the Eastern Districts of Zimbabwe and produces an exceptional product for local and overseas consumption. The range includes frozen whole trout, trout fillets, smoked trout, and trout pates.

Kapenta Fishing

The epicentre of Kapenta fishing in Zimbabwe is Lake Kariba. This industry supplies Kapenta to the country where it is eaten by a large cross-section of the local population and even served as snacks and starters in hotels.

Fishing and Fish Farming is an emerging powerhouse of the agricultural economy, giving access to quality nutrition and sustenance of communities. The government aims to ensure sustainable utilization whilst maintaining biodiversity with a general thrust to increase production from both capture fisheries and aquaculture in order to strengthen the rural economy, create employment and enhance household food security.

Moreen Mudywa is a Receptionist at NEC Agriculture based in Chinhoyi.

5. FIRST AID

By Sibusisiwe Maruma

First aid refers to medical help or attention that is given immediately after one falls sick or when one gets injured. It is often a one-time, short-term treatment at the location the sickness or injury occurred. Crucially, the timely administration of appropriate first aid can save lives, as an adequately trained first aider can manage a sudden illness, emergency, or injury when it arises, and at its most crucial stages before irreversible harm occurs. The first aider is also an important source of information about signs, symptoms, and circumstances of the accident to the secondary medical care provider.

In some cases, such as in Section 70 of the Road Traffic Act, administration of first aid is a legal obligation when an accident has occurred. First aid training may also be required in the workplace context, such as by the Occupational Safety, Health, and Environment Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Agriculture Industry (S.I. 197 of 2020), which in its Section 6 places a duty on the employer to organise first aid and emergency preparedness and response arrangements against occupational hazards and risks. The range of training required to administer the medical attention can vary, from basic to advanced first aid training courses.

It is important that the person administering first aid as a first responder assesses the situation, manages it appropriately, and where necessary, makes sure that an ambulance or the emergency number is called so that the patient gets secondary help quickly. It is also important to hand over the patient to secondary help, as well as any information that can assist diagnosis and further assistance.

Examples of emergency situations at the workplace

- Shortness of breath – from running or exercise or sport
- Fractures and Concussions – from falls on slippery ground, bicycle fall, impact trauma, blunt force trauma etc
- Seizures – from shock or epileptic patient
- Heart attack or Stroke, including heat stroke
- Respiratory emergency e.g., asthmatic attacks, emphysema, smoke inhalation
- Diabetic attack
- Allergic reaction (especially Anaphylaxis) - pollen, animal dander, dust mites and mold, stings from bee, wasp etc
- Cuts
- Burns – caused by electrocution, chemicals, open fire, boiling water



Basic first aid kit items

A basic first aid kit may contain:

- plasters in a variety of different sizes and shapes
 - small, medium, and large sterile gauze dressings
 - at least 2 sterile eye dressings
 - triangular bandages
 - crêpe rolled bandages.
 - safety pins
 - disposable sterile gloves
 - tweezers
 - scissors
 - alcohol-free cleansing wipes
 - sticky tape
 - thermometer (preferably digital)
 - skin rash cream, such as hydrocortisone or calendula
 - cream or spray to relieve insect bites and stings
 - antiseptic cream
 - painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen
 - antihistamine cream or tablets
 - distilled water for cleaning wounds
 - eye wash and eye bath
- *It is very critical to have people who are trained in first aid at an institution.*
- *It may also be useful to keep a basic first aid manual or instruction booklet with your first aid kit.*
- *Medicines should be checked regularly to make sure they're adequately stocked, and within their use-by dates.*

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