

MASHONALAND WEST PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL SHOW 2015 REPORT

DATE: 06/08/15 – 09/08/15

FACASI managed to secure stand in Mash West provincial show under the department of mechanization which is one of its partners and exhibited its technologies. It was noted that the technology helps to reduce small farm drudgery. The exhibited items included two wheel tractor, double row fitarelli, boom sprayer and small scale maize sheller. The introduction of the two wheel tractor and its associated implements which help in moisture conservation has become an intervention of choice due to the shortage of draught animals in small farms coupled with climate change.

The exhibitors were from FACASI partners Mr Jaji from Agritex, Chingozha and J Mangoma from Mechanisation department and there were two exhibitors per day. The exhibition event was in Chinhoyi town from 6 August to 9 August 2015 of which the first day was more of preparation. People flocked in the show ground mainly on the second and third day, an estimated 250 people visited the stand during this exhibition, inquiring about the technology.

Farmers who managed to take part in the show have shown interest in the technology. All the benefits for use of two wheel tractor mechanization were emphasized to farmers which include its versatility, low procurement costs, high yield potential through timeliness of operation etc.

The objective of the FACASI in the show was to ensure that small scale farmers in the province keep abreast with the latest technology that improve their livelihood which is one of the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (Zim Asset) requirement under food and nutrition cluster. This is only achieved if these small and medium scale farmers shift from an animal traction based system which need extensive grazing infrastructure support system to an affordable conservation agriculture machinery being spearheaded by FACASI.

However the observation was that many farmers do not turn up for the provincial and Harare Agricultural show therefore there is need to organize field days at ward level so that every farmer has access to the technology. Apart from that, demonstrations can be executed at ward level since there will be enough space unlike at shows where the space is too confined. Farmers are interested to see how it perform on the ground rather than being lectured on its performance. On the other hand, participating in these shows also helps to demonstrate the technology to the potential contractors and private sector who take part in these shows that two wheel tractor are another option for farm power so that they play a part in manufacturing or importing the items.

There was a lot of interest in the potential of two wheel tractor and double row fitarelli but the question that arose was the local availability of the equipment (fitarelli) on the market. Therefore, there is need for the supply chain to be established with urgency, for our message to be real to farmers who are ready to buy.

The show was a success and FACASI should continue to utilize all the platforms to increase awareness of the technology and to continue to expose farmers to the 2wheel tractor technology, as it is attracting a lot of interest.

Compiled by J. Mangoma