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➤ Crop Forecast 2024

General Growing Conditions

- Weather in general for January, although sporadic in most regions, has been fair to reasonably good for tobacco growing, with crops across the country developing at differing stages, due to the varying precipitation rates. However, even under these challenging circumstances, most regions are producing fair to good crops, which seem to be flourishing under long sun filled days, and intermittent rainfall, with some dams throughout the country benefiting from the replenishing rainfall.
- Sporadic and intermittent rainfall countrywide has been a very welcome refrain, after the concerning initial late, dry start to the tobacco growing season.
- Currently, we are experiencing dry to moderate rainfall conditions as we move into February, this will allow for crop uptake of Nutrients (fertilizer) and give plants time to grow and fill out. However, the late planted crop is still very much in the early stages, having not yet reached its full growing potential, but with expected further rains, this crop should develop and achieve its full potential in due course.

➤ Crop Development 2024

2024	Seedbeds	Transplanting	Topping	Harvesting	Curing	Buying	Processing
January							
February							
March							
April							
May							
June	Started 1/06/2023						
July							
August							
September		Started 1/09/2023					
October							
November			Started 1/11/2023				
December				Started 1/12/2023	Started 1/12/2023		

➤ Commercial Irrigated Crop Status

- The early irrigated commercial crop planted from September onwards has grown well, with reaping and curing expected to finish towards mid-February. To date, half of the irrigated crop has been reaped and cured.
- Maturity and quality of irrigated crop to date is to a very desirable standard, with clean, soft, open grained lemon to light orange leaf being predominant, with an inclusion of a smaller quantity of some riper soft natured styles carrying a degree of spot.
- As an overview to the start to our commercial season, our commercial sector is having a very encouraging start to the year, with steady positive feedback being received.

➤ Commercial Dryland Crop

- Commercial dryland crop has been topped and is at the initial stage of reaping, while late crops are still developing, with good potential, due to satisfactory growing conditions to date. Initial dry planting conditions have allowed for good root development and hardening of seedlings, with occasional rainfall allowing for plants to grow out under lengthy rich sun filled days.

➤ Small Scale Crop Status

- The dryland crop has to date been transplanted under sufficient precipitant conditions. Reports, present the crop at a good healthy stage of development, with farmers working jointly with our very experienced agronomy team, through regular training updates in good field management, with hands on coordinators, field technicians and knowledgeable agronomy personnel, and a very successful web-based monitoring and interactive farmer group program.
- The Small-scale dryland crop with this expertise, is so far weathering the effects of El Nino this season, through promoting soil retention by implementing, bigger ridges, tie ridges, water planting, scouting for pests and maintaining good disease control etc.
- Late rains in the South and East delayed transplanting, which enabled the seedlings to harden and develop with the onset of the late precipitation. Current reports indicate that we have a good well grown out crop, with little disease pressure and topping at ten percent.
- Western and Central tobacco crops have grown out well, with eighty percent topped in the West and seventy percent topped in the Central region. Reaping and curing has begun in these areas, as we anticipate a good quality outturn from these two traditionally good regions.
- Kamanga Barns building is fast paced, as we reach three thousand sustainably fuel-efficient barns completed this year. Kamanga Barns use twenty-five percent of the renewable wood fuel used for a conventional barn.

➤ Zambian Tobacco Leaf Crop Cycle – Crop Year 2024

PROVINCE	Transplanting %	Topped %	Reaped %
Northern Region	100 %	25 %	5 %
Western Region	100 %	70 %	10 %
Central Region	100 %	80 %	40 %
Eastern Region	100 %	25 %	5 %
Southern Region	100 %	80 %	40 %

➤ Tobacco Varieties and Proportion

- Most Tobacco varieties are available locally in Zambia from DDV Seed Services.
- 30% = Seed varieties KRK66, KRK26, KRK29—from Zimbabwe Tobacco Seed Association and Kutsaga.
- 67% = Seed varieties CC35, CC13, K326—from Cross Creek Seed Suppliers in United States of America.
- 3% = Seed varieties DDV33—from DDV Seed Services, developed and produced in Zambia.

➤ Weather Forecast

- Due to the El Nino phenomena, a drier start to the new tobacco season was experienced, however sufficient growth rains have been received throughout the various regions in Zambia, with a long-term forecast of normal to below normal rainfall anticipated.

➤ Crop Forecast 2024 Estimated Volumes

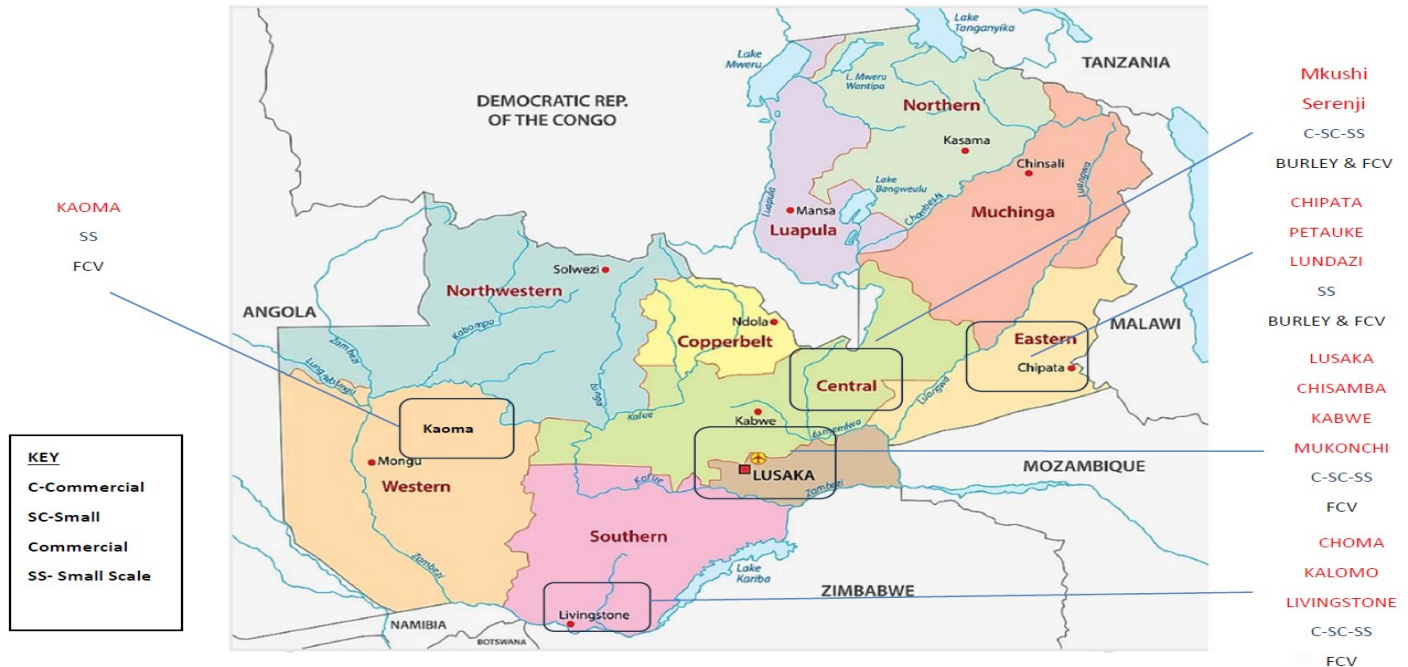
- Zambia's National crop size is anticipated to be 36,000 to 38,000 million kilograms.
- Zambian Burley - potential volume available 700 to 1,000 tons green.

Crop Variety	Planned Volume Kgs (Est.)
Flue Cured Virginia	38,000,000
Burley	1,000,000
Combined Total	39,000,000

➤ 2024 Sales Markets and Factory Operations

- Tobacco markets, sales floors opening dates for TAZ and Small-Scale floors are still to be determined, however estimates are that they will open early to mid-April.
- Firm sales dates will be notified in due course.
- Factory processing operations for the Crop Year 2023 crop closed down on the 11th of January for maintenance and factory upgrades. Processing test runs, and operations are expected to start in early May 2024, when we will start processing the new crop.

➤ Zambian FCV & Burley tobacco growing map, Commercial and Small Scale.



➤ Political and Economic Update

- As Zambia enters 2024, under good governance, Policy Monitoring and Research Centre (PMRC) remains optimistic that the combination of policy reforms, favourable commodity prices, and concerted efforts towards fiscal consolidation will contribute to a robust and sustainable economic growth trajectory.
- In a recent statement, the Policy Monitoring and Research Centre (PMRC) has forecasted a robust economic growth for Zambia, projecting a growth rate exceeding 4 percent in 2024. The positive outlook is attributed to continued policy reforms, higher global copper prices, and increased market confidence resulting from ongoing fiscal consolidation measures.

➤ Exchange Rate – As of 5th February 2024

U.S. Dollar	Chinese	Zambian	British	Euro	Zimbabwe
USD 1.00	RMB 7.17	ZWK 27.14	GBP 0.80	EUR 0.93	RTGS 10,152.39

End of Report

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