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➤ Commercial Farmers

Early crop (Irrigated)

- The early irrigated commercial contract crops have grown out well, with reaping and curing coming to an end this month with good yields and excellent quality being reported to date. In total ninety percent of the "Irrigated crop" has been harvested and cured.
- Maturity and quality of this leaf represents a very encouraging standard, with clean, soft, open grained lemon to light orange leaf being predominant throughout, with a very promising cross section of top quality ripe "F" mature leaf being characteristics of leaf from the southern and central region.
- Generally speaking, our commercial sector is having a very promising and productive year so far, with a lot of favourable and encouraging feedback being reported.
- Commercial crops are looking strong and well established, benefiting from the conducive climatic growing conditions and initial irrigation.
- Very minor pest and disease incidents have been reported to date.

Mid to Late crops

- Commercial dryland crops have been 100% transplanted and topped and are currently at the initial stage of reaping and curing, with 20% reported harvested and cured, while later transplanted crops are reported to still be developing and filling out with good yield and quality potential. 100% of seedlings have been transplanted.

Small scale - Project Tobacco (Dryland)

- Our Small-scale crop development is marginally uneven, and slightly down in planted area due to the dry spells experienced in early November, through to mid-December, followed by rejuvenating and favourable steady to heavy growth rain to date.

The southern province in particular is facing some challenges due to the initial dry start to the season, however with agronomy managed initiatives, farmers are expected to reach their full yield and quality potential. Topping is currently at 10%.

- Transplanting in regard to project (Small-scale tobacco) on average is roughly 3 to 4 weeks later than previous seasons, however at this stage we don't see any major issues or concerns with this.
- Roughly 70% of the dryland project crop was topped by the end of February. Reaping and curing commenced at the end of the month. The remaining 30% will be topped within the first two weeks of March. Initial quality across the board, is looking very promising from the 25% of cured tobacco to date.
- Overall, most of our project farmers are coping well this season under the instructive guidance of Agronomy department. Currently farmer assistance is carried out by field technicians, coordinators and real-time interactive farmer training and open discussion chat groups, proving on-the-spot problem solving solutions.
- Project inputs, fertilizers, and approved chemicals have been distributed consistently throughout the growing period, with Flue pipes, barn roofing sheets, baling boxes, baling paper, string, and Hessian etc, being the last deliveries to our project growers.
- General project crop quality continues to improve from season to season, with this crucial and key sector expanding and showing great potential, with tangible results, consistently in line with demand.
- Production and quality in this vital sector continue to be extremely exciting as small-scale farmers partners to achieve better and more desirable quality for our much-valued international customer base.

- To date this season seems to be second to none, as quality evaluated on recent leaf assessment trips by our agronomy department is too a very desirable standard. Current indications for small scale quality to date are expected to be in line with quality and volume expectations

➤ **Zambian Tobacco Leaf Crop Cycle**

PROVINCE	Transplanting %	Topped %	Reaped %
Northern Region	100 %	100 %	40 %
Western Region	100 %	100 %	50 %
Central Region	100 %	100 %	50 %
Eastern Region	100 %	100 %	40 %
Southern Region	100 %	100 %	50 %

➤ **Tobacco Varieties and Proportion CY25**

- 30% = Seed varieties KRK66, KRK26, KRK29—from Zimbabwe Tobacco Seed Association and Kutsaga.
- 70% = Seed varieties CC35, CC13, K326—from Cross Creek Seed Suppliers in United States of America.

➤ **Crop Development 2025**

Crop Status	Seedbeds	Transplanting	Topping	Harvesting	Curing	Buying	Processing
January							
February							
March							
April						Mid-April 2025	
May							
June	Start 1 June 2024						
July							
August							
September		Start 1 Sep 2024					
October							
November			Start 1 Nov 2024				
December				Start 1 Dec 2024	Start 1 Dec 2024		

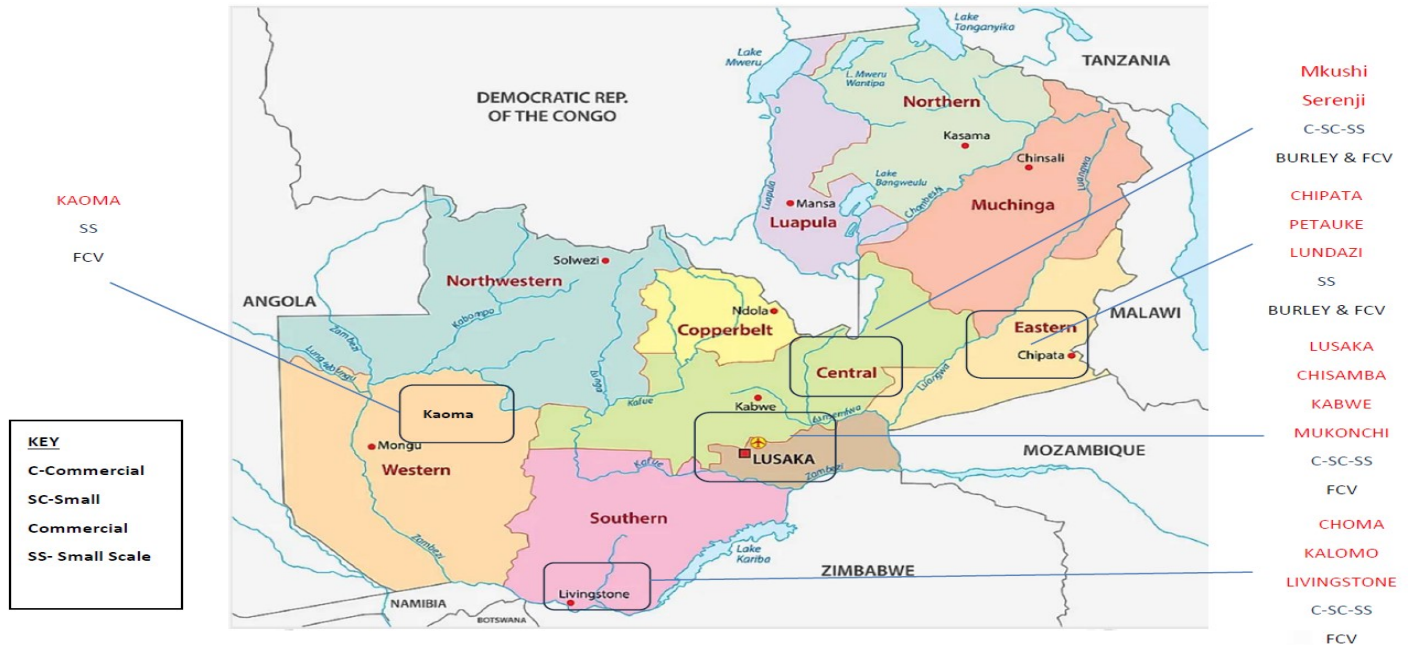
➤ **Crop Forecast - CY25**

- Zambia’s National crop size for this year is anticipated to be between 40 & 42 million kilograms.
- Zambian Burley volume estimated availability this season 700 tons, green.
- Markets this year are expected to open mid-April, with the factory startup in mid-May.

➤ **Weather Conditions**

- Zambia received its first rainfall in mid-October; however, these were inconsistent and very scattered, not substantial enough for tobacco growth, however the western region as per normal received planting rains in November.
- Our central region received very patchy rainfall during November, which lead to only the odd farmer transplanting, causing some crop establishment delays.
- The Eastern and Southern regions of Zambia received their first rains in mid to late December.
- Therefore, transplanting of the 2025 project tobacco in the Central, Eastern and Southern regions of Zambia took place in the second half of December, through to mid-January.
- From mid-December to late December, weather in general across the country for most regions has been good for tobacco growing, with crops flourishing under the intermittent warm temperate sun filled days and steady rainfall, which has replenished most dams to viable levels, for this and next cropping season, and has had the added effect of raising the water table in most regions.
- Continuous and in some areas heavy rains from late December have been very welcome to most dryland farmers after an initial dry start to the season, reminiscent of last year’s seasonal start.
- The heavy rains in some areas, has caused some disease pressure concerns, however negligible at this current stage. These consistent growth rains have allowed for the uptake of fertiliser and growing out of the early to mid-planted tobaccos, however the late planted crop is still developing and not yet at full growth potential.
- With these persistent climatic conditions conducive to tobacco growth, we have the potential for a very good quality crop this season.

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



➤ **Political and Economic Update**

- “STABLE FUEL PRICE A BOOST TO ZAMBIAN ECONOMY: ERB MAINTAINS MARCH 2025 PRICES”
- The Energy Regulation Board (ERB) has announced that fuel prices will remain unchanged for March 2025. This decision is a welcome relief to many Zambians, as it will help maintain stability in the economy.
- This move demonstrates the UPND government’s commitment to maintaining economic stability and protecting the interests of its citizens.
- By keeping fuel prices stable, the government is helping to control inflation and promote economic growth.

➤ **Exchange Rate – As of 11th March 2025**

U.S. Dollar	Chinese	Zambian	British	Euro	Zimbabwe
USD 1.00	RMB 7.29	ZK 28.61	GBP 0.78	EUR 0.95	ZIG 26.59

End of Report

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