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➤ Commercial Farmers

Early “Irrigated” Crops, Dryland and Late Crops

- The early “irrigated” crop is currently being sorted and graded.
- The quality and maturity of this leaf is to a high standard, with the majority of leaf being characterized as clean, soft natured, open grained, lemon to light orange leaf. Predominantly classified into the cleaner less spotty styles, with the remaining balance being mature ripe styles carrying some degree of blemish, which is characteristic of styles normally found in our western areas.
- Commercial dryland reaping and curing is currently progressing well, with somewhat of a delay, brought on by the late start to the seasonal rains, at the beginning of the season.
- Farmers are busy working towards completing reaping and curing, juxtaposed preparing seedbed sites and lands for the 2026 season.
- The focus now for this time of year for our contracted growers turns towards grading and presentation of leaf, that is destined for the Zambian tobacco sales markets.
- Commercial farmers are being instructed to be strict on grading quality, colours and plant position, along with paying special attention to moisture and NTRM content on tobacco delivered to the sales floors.
- Overall, our commercial sector, having faced some initial climatic challenges at the start of this season, are faring well, with our growers looking forward to a very promising, and productive year, which is in line with lots of positive reports and feedback from our field and agronomy personnel.
- Commercial dryland tobacco assessed to date is generally fair to above average quality and if grades well should yield favourably for dedicated farmers.
- On recent field visits by senior management, most commercial farmers voiced their concerns over diesel costs for curing, as farms have been severely affected by power shortages, blackouts, due to the current ZESCO situation, along with significant rising cost of inputs, fertilizers and chemicals.
- Fortunately, at this stage fuel prices remain stable for March as gazetted by government and watched over by the consumer Energy Regulation Board (ERB).

Small scale (Dryland)

Historical Project Tobacco Quality Characteristics by Region

- North (Serenje) Predominantly producing, top quality, soft natured, open grained, oily, lemon/light orange to full orange tobacco styles. Superior first and second quality yielding area.
- North/Central (Mukonchi) Producing very good quality, firm bodied, grown out leaf, lemon/light orange to full orange tobacco, excellent first and second quality tobacco. Some lower qualities from this area, carrying a small amount of sponge.
- Western (Kaoma) Predominantly producing, ripe to overripe tobacco styles. Common leaf characteristics are good top quality, ripe to over ripe, “F” Style (Frogeye), orange to full orange/mahogany tobaccos.
- Eastern Region: Fair to good quality, lemon to light orange, with a reasonable to high degree of spot. Characteristically a good thin to firm leaf producing region.
- Southern Region: A big producing region, which produces a wide variety of preferable, top to fair quality, good grown out tobacco styles. The majority of which fall into the lemon to light orange category.

Contract Project Tobacco (Dryland)

- Small-scale crops are progressing well with the improved March climatic conditions. The Southern region in particular faced scattered and an initial dry start to the season in November and early December, with below average rains in February, which is currently thought, will impact yields to a certain extent, thankfully climatic conditions have now normalized for this time of year. Fortunately, most of these climatic challenges have been overcome through good agricultural practices implemented by agronomy personnel, resetting, transplanting, gap-filling, topping, and reaping etc.
- Generally, project farmers are managing well this season under the instructive and informative guidance of agronomy departments' refined skills in project management.
- Daily support and assistance through cultivated expertise are carried out by on the ground coordinators, field technicians and real-time interactive farmer training and open discussion groups, providing the latest, most up to date instruction, information.
- We estimate that all the contracted dryland crops at this current stage have been topped, with reaping completion at just over half the crop. Most project farmers at this point are on their fourth and fifth reaping.
- Crop quality at this early stage of the season is pleasing and progressing in a positive direction, as this essential sector continues to improve production quality and quantity year by year, through steady growth and refined quality consistency.
- Production and quality assessments, plus grade presentation requirements are currently being carried out throughout all regions by the leaf department personnel, feedback to date from Northern central and Western regions is extremely positive, with expectations high for the commencement of buying in mid-April.
- Leaf assessments country-wide, carried out by seasoned buyers, is encouraging. Current indications for small scale quality to date is expected to be fair to above average.

➤ Zambian Tobacco Leaf Crop Cycle

PROVINCE	Transplanting %	Topped %	Reaped %
Northern Region	100 %	100 %	90 %
Western Region	100 %	100 %	80 %
Central Region	100 %	100 %	80 %
Eastern Region	100 %	100 %	80 %
Southern Region	100 %	100 %	80 %

➤ 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						Start 22-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		

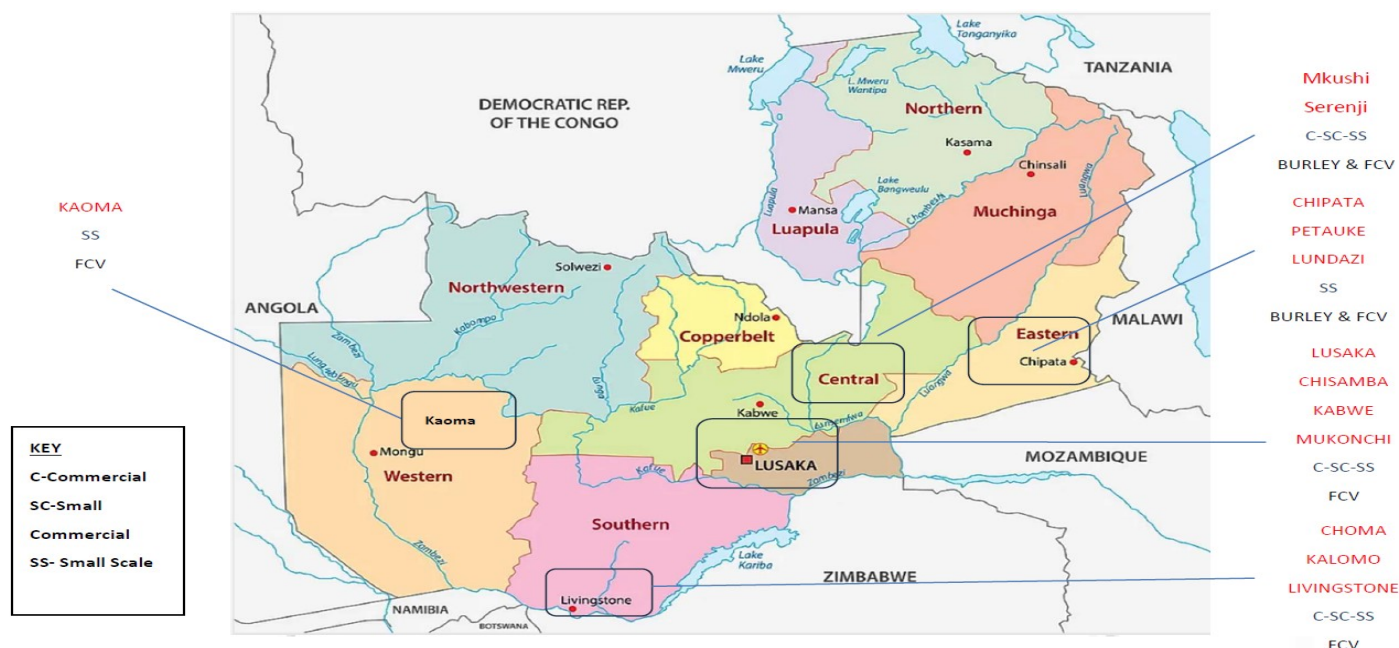
➤ Crop Forecast - CY25

- Zambia's National crop size for this year is anticipated to be between 40 & 42 million kilograms.
- Zambian Burley volume estimated availability this season 8.5 million kilograms green.
- Tobacco markets this year will open in mid-April, with TPL factory startup in mid-May.

➤ Weather Conditions

- March weather throughout Zambian tobacco growing regions, continues to be satisfactory to above average, with middle to late crops flourishing under very favourable growing conditions, marked by warm sun filled days and steady precipitant levels.
- Currently we have seen renewed development in our late crop, in the few central areas that had received marginal scattered rainfall in the last three months, however with good consistent March rains, we are starting to realize our full potential in these smaller effected areas, and the region as a whole.
- Steady rainfall from mid-December till to date has contributed significantly towards raising the water table and replenishing farm dams to near capacity, which in turn will positively impact the start of the new season (Early Irrigated Crop) as we progress forward with the 2026 crop.

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



➤ Political and Economic Update

- **Constitutional amendments** led by Justice Minister Princess Kasune, aiming for equity, accountability, and governance efficiency.
- **Central Bank policies** to reduce inflation, stabilize the Kwacha, and support agriculture.
- **Ambitious budget targets** for 2025, including GDP growth, inflation reduction, international reserves, and fiscal deficit reduction.
- **New Currency** “Zambian Bank Notes” issued 31st March 2025.

➤ Electricity (Power shortages- ZESCO)

- ZESCO - Energy Regulation Board (ERB) has extended the Emergency on electricity supply in the country for an additional 3 months until 30th April 2025. The emergency period declared comes with scarcity usage tariffs, which are much higher than standard regular tariffs.

➤ Exchange Rate – As of 7th April 2025

U.S. Dollar	Chinese	Zambian	British	Euro	Zimbabwe
USD 1.00	RMB 7.16	ZK 28.07	GBP 0.77	EUR 0.93	ZIG 26.77

End of Report

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