

## ZPBA NEWSLETTER Issue 3 of 2016

### 1. WHO ARE WE

ZPBA is a **membership-based, not-for-profit, non-political, professional association** of Zimbabweans based locally or abroad active or interested in plant breeding and/or plant breeding-related fields (e.g. seed agronomist, seed inspectors, seed technologists, geneticists, germplasm conservation specialists, biotechnologists, molecular biologists, etc) launched on the **26<sup>th</sup> of January, 2016** at Holiday Inn, Harare.

ZPBA hopes to contribute towards agricultural and industrial development in Zimbabwe through creating a platform for information exchange amongst plant breeders and related professionals, contributing towards policy dialogue, building capacity in both the public and private sector through relevant training.

ZPBA is governed by **an elected Executive Committee**, which **derives its powers** from the **membership** and functions through an **appointed Secretariat**.

### 2. IN THE NEWS

## CELEBRATING 2016 – THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PULSES (cont.)

2016 was declared as the INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PULSES by the 68<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly and FAO facilitated implementation of the year, read more [www.fao.org/pulses-2016/about/en/](http://www.fao.org/pulses-2016/about/en/)

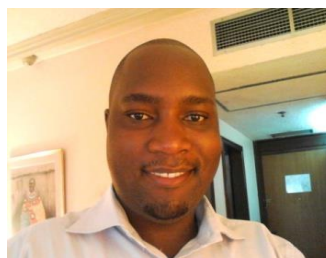
We continue featuring pulses in this issue of ZPBA newsletter, ENJOY !!!

### Bean Seed Systems in Zimbabwe

#### Contributors



**Enock K. Maereka:**  
Seed Business  
Development  
Specialist – CIAT



**Bruce Mutari:**  
Coordinator of the  
National Bean  
Programme – DR&SS

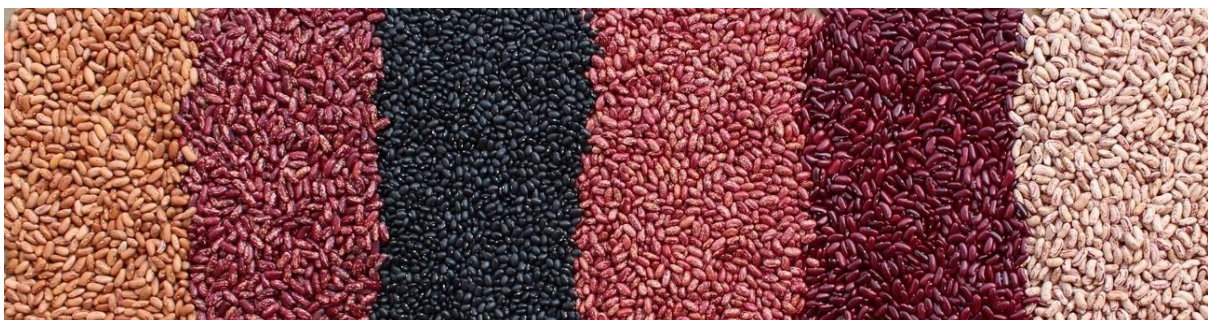
Over the years, public and private institutions have invested in the development of common bean cultivars in Zimbabwe. While it may sound obvious that the cultivars are meant to be accessible to farmers for improved productivity, nutrition, incomes and resilience to climate change; investment in seed systems that expediently move cultivars from research to farmers is not as obvious and farmers continually bemoan lack of access to quality seed.

Zimbabwe, with an advanced seed industry, leans towards the formal seed system for most field crops including the common bean which is marketed by about 10 seed companies.

The common bean cultivars grown in Zimbabwe are predominantly sugar type. The term sugar bean refers to red speckled beans with a creamish background colour, but in Zimbabwe and South Africa, it has been incorrectly used to denote all types of common bean. In Zimbabwe, most consumers have not been exposed to other bean types, and are therefore reluctant to accept them, yet different grain colour may be a cue to nuances of taste, flavour and other culinary qualities. This presents a challenge when desirable traits are introduced through new cultivars of unfamiliar background colour such as red-mottled, carioca type, black type and red kidney type. For example, the current trending attributes in new cultivars such as early maturity, high Fe and Zn content, fast cooking and drought tolerance do not always come in sugar type beans.

The public sector may be leading in terms of cultivars released by a single institution, but the volumes of certified seed produced and distributed in the country are dominated by a few cultivars from the private sector. More than 90 % of the bean certified seed sold in the country is sugar type, coming from only three of the 10 bean cultivars currently marketed in the country. Some private seed companies selling bean seed in Zimbabwe have been quite aggressive in extending the stocking of various pack sizes of bean seed to ordinary rural shops. One would think that farmers are getting adequate certified seed supply, but the stocks often run out fast, leaving farmers to look elsewhere for planting material. Similarly, the canning industry now has to import canning beans from Ethiopia, South Africa and China due to the absence of well-designed seed system that would support quality grain production for canning beans.

Nearly 80 % of bean farmers do not use certified seed all the time, but more than 70 % of them purchase in cash, their planting material, which however is not seed *sensu stricto*. This gap represents an opportunity for private seed companies to timely supply quality seed to farmers and lift national average grain yield beyond the current ignominious 500kg/ha. Seed entrepreneurs need to take advantage of numerous initiatives on nutrition, poverty alleviation as an opportunity for bean seed demand enhancement. Efforts should be towards developing a sustainable bean seed system through creation and dissemination of information awareness tools to extension officers, supply chain actors and policy makers to help farmers and consumers not only to accept diverse cultivars, but be able to identify them by name and associated benefits also.



AND here is just a sample of the bean varieties released in Zimbabwe, look out for them



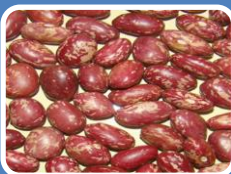
## IRIS

- A drought tolerant, good tasting and fast cooking cultivar of the pinto market class



## NUA45

- The only released micronutrient dense bean cultivar in Zimbabwe of the calima market class



## CHERRY

- Medium sized grain, Good tasting and Fast cooking cultivar of the calima market class

Different cultivars of the sugar market class



GLORIA-A high yielding and highly marketable cultivar



SWEET VIOLET - A large seeded, fast cooking & high yielding cultivar



SWEET WILLIAM - A high yielding, very early maturing & drought tolerant cultivar

AND MORE TO COME.....

*P.S. ZPBA is putting together a feature on PULSES on it's soon to be unveiled website, contact if you want to contribute*

## ZPBA HOST ITS FIRST SEMINAR

ZPBA hosted its first seminar on 12 October, 2016 focussing on Genetically Modified Crops. The main presenter was Mr E Mhandu, The Executive Director of Quton Seed Company and currently a doctoral student with Nottingham Business School, UK.

In his presentation he highlighted that

- By 2050 Zimbabwean farmers will be required to feed 30 million people from the current 15.6 million.
- The land available for cropping remains static and climate change is for real
- Zimbabwean farmers may need to embrace some technologies, such as GM crops that will make them produce more with less.
- Currently the government's policy is 'NO to GM plants'
- He showed how in Zimbabwe there is a compelling argument for GM cotton
- As a way forward, professionals need to continue engaging the policy makers on GM crops in a simplified language that they understand. Hopefully the policy on GM crops will change.

The event in pictures





## CONGRATULATIONS

The **2016 CFU Farming Oscar** was awarded to **Dr John MacRobert**.

The CFU Farming Oscar was introduced in 1961 by Mr C G Tracey. Over the years winners of this annual award have been selected in recognition of their significant contribution to agricultural progress in Zimbabwe.

**CONGRATULATIONS to our fellow Crop Breeder.**

### 3. UPCOMING EVENTS

#### THE ZPBA FIRST ANNIVERSARY EVENT

*Theme:* **CLIMATE CHANGE**

*Come expecting*

- **ZPBA AGM (president & treasurer report, voting for vacant posts)**
- **ICRISAT Presentation (to be confirmed)**
- **Dr Jill Cairns of CIMMYT presentation on maize**
- **Dr Claid Mujaju 'Regional policies and their effect on formal seed systems in Zimbabwe'**
- **Dr Leonard Unganai 'Climate change and its Implications for Agriculture in Zimbabwe'**
- **ZPBA T-Shirts will be on sale. Support this fundraising effort**
- **You can pay your subscriptions too**

<b>VENUE:</b>	<b>HARARE HOLIDAY INN</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>27 JANUARY, 2017</b>
<b>TIME:</b>	<b>08:00-15:00 hrs</b>
<b>ADMISSION:</b>	<b>FREE (Registration required- limited seats available)</b>
<b>RSVP: (by 18/01/2017)</b>	<b>Mobile phone: + 263 (0)784 618719 ; Email: <a href="mailto:zimplantbreedersassociation@gmail.com">zimplantbreedersassociation@gmail.com</a></b>



#### 4. WHAT ZPBA EXPECTS FROM MEMBERS

- ✚ Paid-up membership
- ✚ Participate in activities e.g. sponsor a branded event in honour of your product or outstanding professional, sponsor an award to promote healthy competition & excellence, make presentations, attend events, be part of the leadership
- ✚ Help shape ZPBA into an association you will be proud to be associated with
- ✚ The ZPBA Newsletter currently has 3 issues per year (end April, end August, end December). Send your contribution by the 21<sup>st</sup> of April/ August/ December

#### 5. WANT TO BECOME A ZPBA MEMBER

**Membership** to the association is **open to all Zimbabwean professionals** and **corporates** actively involved with or interested in any activity **involving scientific plant breeding** in Zimbabwe based locally or abroad following application to and approval by the Executive Committee. Members should accept terms and conditions of the association and pay up subscriptions. The categories and **annual membership fees** are as follows:

i.	Ordinary membership	<b>\$100.00</b>
ii.	Student membership	<b>\$10.00</b>
iii.	Retired membership	<b>\$50.00</b>
iv.	Corporate membership	<b>\$250.00</b>

***The fees can be paid quarterly or half-yearly but this will attract an extra \$5.00 charge.***

#### 6. ZPBA CONTACT DETAILS

ZPBA mobile phone: + 263 (0)784 618719 ;

ZPBA email: [zimplantbreedersassociation@gmail.com](mailto:zimplantbreedersassociation@gmail.com)

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