

New drug to fight ticks

By Vision Reporter

President Yoweri Museveni has attributed the rampant loss of livestock in the country to the failure by veterinary officials to sensitise farmers on proper drug use against ticks.

He also said lack of zoning regions for easy management, farmers' laziness and government laxity over control of animal drugs distribution channels to the farmers as well as violation of livestock rights, are the other causes of loss of livestock.

Museveni was yesterday speaking during the launch of a new drug (Vectoclor Acaricide) against ticks. The drug is sprayed on cattle to protect them from drug-resistant ticks that have threatened cattle in the country for many years.

The acaricide is a combination of three drugs and is manufactured in Brazil. The demonstration was conducted at Kiruhura district headquarters in southwestern Uganda by a technical team from the agriculture ministry, led by the commissioner in charge of animal diseases control, Dr Agnes Rose Ademun.

The launch opened a massive national campaign to eradicate ticks in the country, according to a statement issued from State House.

"Ticks did not come yesterday. In western Uganda's cattle corridor, the nomadic way of life was caused by the presence of ticks and worms, which hindered animals from multiplying at a reasonable rate since 1958. By independence, Uganda had seven million head of cattle. But because of political



Veterinary workers spraying the animals with vectoclor during the launch ceremony yesterday. Photos by PPU Enock Kakande

BETWEEN THE LINES:

President Yoweri Museveni said he is convinced the drug is going to be effective and that if it succeeds, it will be legalised for public use.

turbulence, the number had reduced to three million by 1986," the President explained.

"However, since the inception of the National Resistance Movement, the number of cattle has increased to 14 million because of the prevailing peace. But there have been mistakes by

the veterinary section that never guided farmers properly, yet they had the knowledge, equipment and capacity to educate them," he said.

"I am convinced that this new drug is going to be effective. If it succeeds, it will be legalised for public use," he added.

Museveni, therefore, urged the mobilisers to create awareness of the new drug through the use of the mass media.

He pledged six water tank trucks to cattle-keepers in Kiruhura district to tackle drought and water scarcity. He said the trucks will help the community access water for animals.

Museveni also reminded the

people about wetlands protection, adding that not preserving water sources such as lakes, rivers and swamps is indiscipline.

The state minister for animal industry, Joy Kabatsi, said national income from livestock is one of the economic pillars as Uganda seeks to attain middle-income status.

Ademun said following the launch of the acaricide, the technical team from the agriculture ministry will roll out and conduct a cleansing exercise on selected cattle farms to evaluate the performance of the drug.

She added that the ministry will also gazette two zones; one north of the River Nile and another south of it to be able to control ticks.

Kaweesi suspect medical

By Farooq Kas

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