Farmers cry out as dry spell persists

Voices

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"We call upon government to channel more funds to the Agriculture sector which could help fund the valley dams construction for farmers within the cattle corridor areas."
EZRA KAMUNDA, LIVESTOCK FARMER

"The farmers reportedly hire a mobile water tank with a capacity of 10,000 liters at Shs40, 000. This rate could rise if the dry spell persists. We appeal to the government to intervene and help of our farmers,"
SAMUEL KIGULA, NAKASONGOLA DISTRICT CHAIRPERSOMN

"We must search for pasture and water despite the cattle quarantine. The farmers in our area are not comfortable because we predict hard times ahead as the dry spell persists. It is only well established farmers who are safe because they can even afford hiring mobile water tanks ...,"
ERASMUS SSEMANDA, LIVESTOCK FARMER

"Nakasongola did not get enough rains to help fill up the water dams. This perhaps explains why some valley dams are getting dry. The farmers should not panic because of the animal movements," Dr Eswagu said.

" We have sensitised the farmers and many have had their respective animals immunized against FMD. It is true that all cattle markets are closed, but we have particular areas where we have allowed farmers to sell cattle," he added.

Nakasongola District has about 260,000 head of cattle with Nakitoma and Nabiswera Sub-counties having the biggest number.

Government constructed some valley dams which are supplemented privately owned dam.

The only challenge with the privately owned dams is that they are not easily accessed by all farmers.

"These dams are fenced off. Our prayer is that we possibly get more water dams which benefit the general public," Dr Eswagu said in an interview.

Appeal

Mr Ezra Kamunda, a livestock farmer at Nakitoma Sub-county, claims that unlike the previous years where Nakasongola had two short rainy seasons, most parts of the district had little rainfall throughout 2017.

"It is true that the water we have for animals is not enough. We also fear that the dry spell could extend to early March which could see some of the animals starve to death. Not all our farmers can afford to hire the mobile water tanks to re-fill the valley tanks," Mr Kamunda said.

"We call upon government to channel more funds to the Agriculture sector which could help fund the valley dams construction for farmers within the cattle corridor areas," he added.

He, however, appealed to livestock farmers and pastoralists to start planting trees as many clear forests and bushes for settlement.