

INSIDE FARM BREEDING UGANDA'S

By Herbert Musoke

Until one sees them weighed, it is hard to believe a goat can exceed 100kg.

"When I told showgoers that one of the goats I exhibited weighed 120kg, many thought I was exaggerating. But once we weighed the animals, they saw for themselves," says Edmund Kenneth Muganyizi during a tour of his farm. Muganyizi is the chief executive officer of Sinza Breeding SMC Ltd, commonly known as Sinza Goats, located in Namuhuru village, Namasuba sub-county, Mukono district. The farm breeds goats, sheep and dogs. It currently has 120 exotic goats, including boer, Kahlari red, savannah and saanen breeds, as well as 70 dorper, white dorper and merino sheep.

THE BIRTH OF SINZA BREEDING Muganyizi started by breeding dogs in 2015. However, during the COVID-19 lockdown, business slowed as people focused on essentials. "I had to think of another venture. While still working with government, I had received some exotic goats and left them in someone's care. When I later checked, only crossbreeds remained. I sold five goats for sh2.7m, with one male going for sh2.5m. That opened my eyes to the profitability of improved goat breeds," he recalls.

He then searched for quality breeds and better goat farming practices, only to discover that most farms in Uganda had crossbreeds. "I realised many farmers faced the same challenge," Muganyizi says. Farmers advised him to source genetics from South Africa through live animal imports. However, importers recommended bringing in at least 30 goats at about sh5m each to justify transport costs. "I could not afford that alone, so I spoke to friends interested in goats. Within a week, I had bookings for 65 goats, even though I only owned three boer goats at the time — one male and two females," he notes.

Since then, importing live animals has become a core part of Sinza Breeding's business. The company imports animals every two months, not already booked by clients.

To date, it has supplied more than 3,000 exotic boer, Kahlari red, savannah and saanen goats. It has also supplied over 1,000 dorper and merino sheep and 100 cattle to more than 400 farmers across Uganda.



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Savannah, boer and saanen breed male goats at Sinza Breeding farm

BUSINESS AT SINZA BREEDING Muganyizi says the company's focus is captured in its slogan: "Sinza Goats, Excellent Genetics."

"Our goal is to provide farmers with goats that grow fast, multiply quickly and gain good weight," he notes.

"With proper care, our breeds can reach 30kg in 90 days, 50kg in six months and 100kg to 120kg at maturity, especially the males. Even farmers who cannot afford pure breeds can improve their local stock through crossbreeding."

DOGS AS SECURITY

Sinza farm is fenced and access is controlled through a gate where authorised visitors are disinfected before entry to minimise the risk of disease transmission.

Timothy Ainechanya, the farm's operations manager, says the farm also breeds dogs for business and security purposes.

"We breed German shepherds for home security and companionship," he says, adding that the dogs are sold at about sh2m.

The farm also breeds Anatolian shepherds, known for protecting livestock. "These dogs naturally bond with animals and become highly protective of them. But for the best results, they should be raised alongside the livestock from puppyhood," he explains.

EMPLOYEES

Sinza farm employs eight permanent workers, who receive housing, meals and medical care in addition to salaries. The farm also hires casual labour depending on the workload.

Edmund Kenneth Muganyizi, the chief executive officer of Sinza Breeding SMC Ltd, says most of the farm's earnings have been reinvested into expanding the business.

says this includes animal health, housing, accounting and record keeping.

Sinza uses ground-floor housing, which he says is warmer and easier to clean than raised structures.

"If raised houses are poorly cleaned underneath, droppings and urine produce gases that can cause respiratory diseases," he explains.

Muganyizi advises farmers to build well-drained, easy-to-clean shelters with enough ventilation and exercise space. Floors can be concrete or compacted mud.

Housing should protect animals from rain while keeping kids warm to prevent pneumonia. Pens should be cleaned at least two to three times daily.

Farm waste is converted into manure and applied to pasture fields to improve feed quality.

BREEDING BUSINESS

Breeding is the backbone of Sinza's operations. Muganyizi says the farm synchronises breeding cycles so goats kid at the same time, easing management.

"We ensure each doe produces three times in two years. Kids are weaned at two to three months before the mothers are served again. Before mating, we improve feeding to increase egg production and the chances of twins," he says.

Male goats are kept during mating to avoid inbreeding and maintain breeding strength. Kids are also grouped by sex and age for proper feeding and management.

At Sinza, goats are fed on pastures such as alfalfa, valued for its bypass protein, and chloris gayana grass (rhodes grass) used for hay production.

Management is equally important. Muganyizi says

KIDDING Muganyizi says

GIANT GOATS WEIGHING OVER 100KG



Some of the Dopa and Meat master sheep at Sinza Breeding farm



One of the goats weighing 92kg. Some Sinza goats weigh up to 120kg

In goat and sheep farming depends on numbers, which requires healthy mothers and healthy offspring.

"We deworm the mothers and provide essential minerals through supplements and mineral blocks. During the last trimester, pregnant goats receive extra care because foetal growth is fastest in the fourth month," he explains.

Poor nutrition during this stage can lead to abortions or even death of the mother.

During delivery, he advises farmers to keep goats in warm conditions and disinfect the umbilical cord with iodine to prevent infection. Newborns should also consume enough colostrum within the first three hours to build immunity.

He adds that female goats can come on heat as early as five months if well fed. However, he recommends breeding them only after reaching about 40kg, usually between eight months and one year, to ensure continued productivity.

MISTAKES AND LESSONS In the early years,

Muganyizi says poor management led to heavy losses, with more than half of the farm's kids dying from infections and poor care.

"There was a time we had nine kids and lost five. But with experience and better management, we now rarely lose kids. Currently, we have more than 40 healthy kids at three months," he says.

DAIRY GOATS Muganyizi says he initially introduced dairy goats



Muganyizi and his employee showing some of the boar male goats at Sinza Breeding farming

to provide milk for kids from his meat goats, which often produce twins or triplets but lack enough milk for proper growth.

However, growing demand for goat milk and dairy breeds encouraged him to expand the enterprise.

He keeps saanen goats, which produce between two and nine litres of milk daily, averaging about five litres.

"My grandchildren and I drink goat milk. We also feed it to kids and puppies while selling the surplus to the community at sh8,000

per litre as more people appreciate its nutritional value," he says.

READY MARKET Muganyizi says goats

are sold at about eight months, once they attain at least 50% of their mature body weight and after all physical defects have been assessed.

"With us, clients book goats and we keep them until they are ready at eight months. A male meat goat costs about sh3m while a female one goes for sh2m. For dairy breeds,

males cost about sh1.5m and females around sh2m," Muganyizi says.

Andrew Mutaina, the farm's marketing manager, who is also Muganyizi's son, says demand for quality livestock breeds in Uganda is growing rapidly.

"Farmers are looking for quality breeds such as Mubende goats, but many are unavailable because of poor selective breeding and inbreeding. A good Mubende goat can cost up to sh1m," he says.

Mutaina adds that goat

CHALLENGES

Edmund Kenneth Muganyizi, the chief executive officer of Sinza Breeding SMC Ltd, cites the high cost of feeds as one of the farm's biggest challenges.

"Growing and harvesting pasture is expensive. During the rainy season, pasture alone is not enough because nutrients are washed away, forcing farmers to supplement with minerals and mixed feeds," he says. He also notes that parasite and disease pressure rise during rainy seasons, increasing treatment costs.

Future plans: Muganyizi says his goal is to build a self-sustaining farm that can support future generations while remaining profitable.

"I want the farm to become a lasting testimony that farming is a profitable business. We also want to help Ugandan farmers access quality breeds that can support sustainable export markets," he says.

meat also has a ready market with a kilogramme costing about sh26,000. A local goat weighing 30kg can produce around 15kg of meat, earn roughly sh300,000. Improved breeds weighing up to 90kg can yield about 45kg of meat worth about sh900,000.

FAMILY AND SUSTAINABILITY Muganyizi says all his sons are involved in the farm's management. Timothy Ainechanya serves as operations manager. Andrew Mutaina heads market sales while Tyler Tukumuhale oversees sales.

"The two elder sons also shareholders in Nakasongola farm, we keep about 300 sheep

COMMUNITY IMPACT Muganyizi says his surrounding community has benefited through employment, supply inputs and access to livestock breeds and modern goat farm practices.

"Beyond the community, Sinza Breeding has influenced Uganda's sector by supplying genetics over the last years," he says.