



Kabatsi giving a certificate to a participant at Ruhengeri government farm in Kiruhura district

# Minister Kabatsi seeks more funds for breeding centre

**KIRUHURA**

By Abdulkarim Ssengendo

The Minister of State for Animal Industry, Joy Kabatsi, has decried the limited funding for government institutions.

She, appealed to the Government to increase the budgetary allocation to the National Animal Genetic Centre and Data Bank (NAGRC&DB) to operationalise the new NAGRC&DB organisation structure and investment plan.

The minister's call followed concern raised by the NAGRC&DB's executive director, Dr Charles Lagu, who said the organisation gets sh12.5b annually from the Government, which he said was not enough to finance all the organisation's activities.

Lagu said they need at least sh70b if they are to fully support their activities and be in position to address challenges currently affecting the organisation. He said the challenges include low staff salaries, insufficient water reticulation to farms, threats of

## BETWEEN THE LINES: Meeting 2020 target

The Minister of State for Animal Industry, Joy Kabatsi, appealed to the National Animal Genetic Centre and Data Bank to increase beef production increase by 77%, pork by 52% and that of goat by just under 5% to meet the 2020 livestock projection target in order to generate a combined value of \$2.5b (about sh9 trillion) annually.

epidemic diseases, lack of titles, boundary opening, and land encroachment.

The minister made the call during the closing of the artificial insemination training at Ruhengeri Field Station in Kiruhura district, where 29 participants were awarded certificates.

She cautioned communities neighbouring government ranches to stop grabbing land. At Ruhengeri, about four square miles have been encroached on.

She said the strategic plan of the agricultural sector is based on increased productivity by farmers to at least 50% of yields at research stations. Kabatsi said this will transform subsistence

farmers into enterprise farmers, boost food security in every part of the country and increase earnings from agricultural exports to at least \$4b (about sh14.5 trillion) per year.

She noted that the livestock and fisheries sub-sectors contribute about 23% of the national agriculture gross domestic product.

However, she said the sector has been characterised by low annual growth rates, averaging 2.5% and 0.9% between 2010 and 2015 for the livestock and fisheries sub-sectors, respectively.

Kabatsi added that the current total livestock production stands at 263,000 metric tonnes in

comparison to a combined target of 602,607 metric tonnes by 2020.

Specifically, she said beef production should increase by 77%, pork by 52% and goat meat by just under 5% to meet the 2020 livestock projection target, generating a combined value of \$2.5b (about sh9 trillion) annually by 2020.

Kabatsi appealed to the management of NAGRC&DB to avail liquid nitrogen and high quality semen to all the regions in Uganda.

The minister urged the organisation to continue with refresher and mentoring programmes for all actors in the livestock industry and also asked the artificial insemination technicians, who had received training, to use the knowledge acquired to benefit farmers in their areas.

Lagu said their target is to contribute to the transformation of the agricultural sector by enhancing sustainable livestock productivity through the conservation and improvement of animal genetic resources.

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By Jeff An

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