

did you know? **Farmers seek irrigation**

August 15 of every year was a day every farmer in South-western region looked up to with eagerness. It marked the beginning of the rain season.

Rain would come on this day after two or three months of drought. Planting kicked off immediately.

However in the recent years, it has not been raining on this day.

Seasons have changed and rain is no longer predictable. Drought lasts longer, rains last a short period.

This often results in high crop failure, low milk production, deaths of livestock and hunger.



The phenomenon has left farmers such as Nathan Mutungi in a dilemma. Mutungi, a pineapple farmer in Ndeija Sub-county, Mbarara says such conditions, the ongoing government efforts to improve agriculture and household incomes through Operation Wealth Creation

(OWC) programme cannot bear tangible fruits.

He urges government to heavily invest in irrigation. Mutungi says, "It is good the water sources are still intact and we can get enough water for irrigation but without affordable irrigation technologies it remains difficult to water our garden. We have an overwhelming demand for pineapples but are let down by drought, we cannot expand our gardens and get enough yield to meet the market demand."

— **Rajab Mukombozi**

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