

Tobacco is 7.5 times more profitable than Maize

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Acting Director in the Department of Agriculture Alick Daka said Tobacco is 7.5 times more profitable than maize production.

Speaking at a stakeholders meeting in Lusaka, Daka stated that “Tobacco has become recognised as a lucrative and quick win cash crop in the Agriculture sector.



According to the research findings in Zambia, Tobacco is seven and half (7.5X) times more profitable per hectare than maize

production and fourteen times (14X) more profitable than cotton production.

This is a clear indication that Tobacco has great potential to contribute to the growth of the economy through employment and wealth creation,” he noted

And the ministry of Agriculture says it expects all players in the industry to observe laid down procedures and not do things outside the legal stipulation.

Government has also called on farmers that have not remitted levies to do so through the Tobacco Board of Zambia.

Meanwhile, Tobacco Board of Zambia – TBZ Chief Executive Officer James Kasongo says he would rather have reduced Tobacco production with a well-structured marketing system supporting more local farmers as opposed to an increased production that benefits only few individuals.

The TBZ CEO says his boards effort to restructure the Tobacco industry in the country will not be frustrated by anyone.

He lamented that it is sad that some people in the industry are doing everything possible to frustrate his organizations effort and that of government to restructure the Tobacco industry.

“I have mentioned this before and I mention it again now, as chief executive, I am not moved at all, we are better off with reduced Tobacco production that encompasses locals than an increased one that benefits only a few people.

For example this year, by putting things together with the farmers, production has increased from 23 to 30 million kilograms.

Kasongo also revealed that in a quest by his board of changing the operations and brining sanity to the industry, the Board has engaged a specialist to capture data that will help in farmer registration and their specific locations.

“In this case, what I am trying to emphasis is that whether the merchants come or not, it doesn’t move me as chief executive officer as structure will deliver more alternative markets.

What I am targeting is to work with the government to ensure that we have a conducive environment where all entrepreneurs that work in the marketing system in the tobacco industry starting with the small scale farmers, the commercial farmers and everyone else, the merchants themselves operate in an environment that is stable,” he said.

Tobacco production has potential to grow as even neighboring countries such as Malawi and Zimbabwe have much higher annual volumes and directly liked into the global Tobacco value chains.

Source: <https://zambiabusinesstimes.com/2018/09/20/tobacco-is-7-5-times-more-profitable-than-maize/>