



THE STATE OF ERITREA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

MoA Newsletter

SAFE AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD FOR EVERYONE; EVERYWHERE!

100th
— I S S U E —





Advancing Safe and Nutritious Food
for Everyone, Everywhere

An Interview with H.E Arefaine Berhe, Minister of Agriculture on the Ministry's Strategies, Progress and Vision

On the occasion of the 100th issue of the Ministry of Agriculture Monthly Newsletter, the Public Relations Division of the MoA conducted a brief interview with the Minister of Agriculture H.E. Arefaine Berhe regarding the Ministry's strategies for advancing safe and nutritious food production across Eritrea.

What are the major strategies of the Ministry of Agriculture to achieve its roadmap of safe and nutritious food for everyone, everywhere?

The Ministry of Agriculture has developed three distinct strategies over the years. The first was introduced in 2013, when we sought to promote subsistence farmers toward small-scale irrigated agriculture, with particular emphasis on integrated organic farming. This approach is known as the Minimum Integrated Household Agriculture Package (MIHAP). At that time, we also shifted our focus from what we had previously called food security to food and nutrition security. One of the major strengths of MIHAP is its integrated organic approach. Its components include livestock such as cows or goats for milk, poultry for eggs, beehives for honey, vegetables, fruits, crop production, and forage land, among others. Livestock provides manure, while crops provide residues; together, these can be used to produce organic fertilizer or compost. The forage

supports the livestock, while crops and vegetables contribute to household food and nutrition.

The promotion of MIHAP resonated strongly with the population. We first ensured that catchments were properly treated through community participation. Then we constructed micro-dams, which became sources of water for irrigation. This was an important first experience in promoting a transition from rain-fed to irrigated agriculture.

We currently have approximately 5,000 MIHAPs throughout the country. Based on the formulation of the approach and subsequent assessments, a MIHAP family can produce sufficient food and nutrition for itself while also generating surplus for other four families. This surplus can contribute to meeting the needs of other families.

The second strategy is the Small and Medium Commercial Farmers Strategy (SMCFS). This category





consists of farmers who produce a wide range of commodities for the market. Their production is not limited to primary agricultural products; it can also include processed products such as cheese and yoghurt. They, therefore, play an important role in supplying what the market needs. Previously, many of these farmers concentrated on individual commodities, such as orchards or vegetables. Drawing on our experience with MIHAP, we encouraged them to adopt integrated and organic farming.

For example, farmers can introduce livestock into a farm with orchards, where there may be sufficient grass to support one or two cows. We also encourage the introduction of beehives because bees are excellent pollinators. While farmers normally depend on natural insects for pollination, beekeeping can make pollination more effective. Poultry can also be integrated into the farming system.

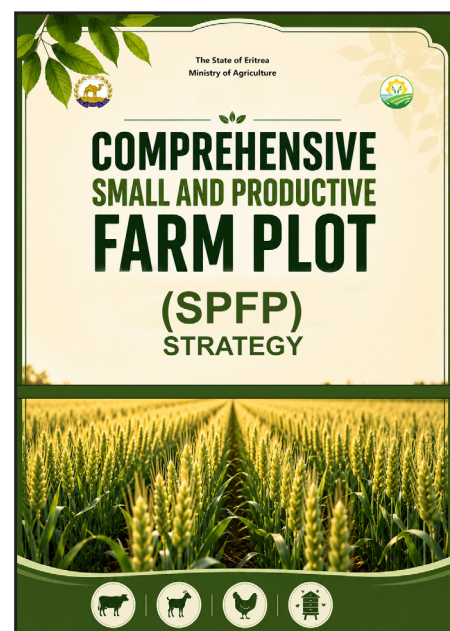
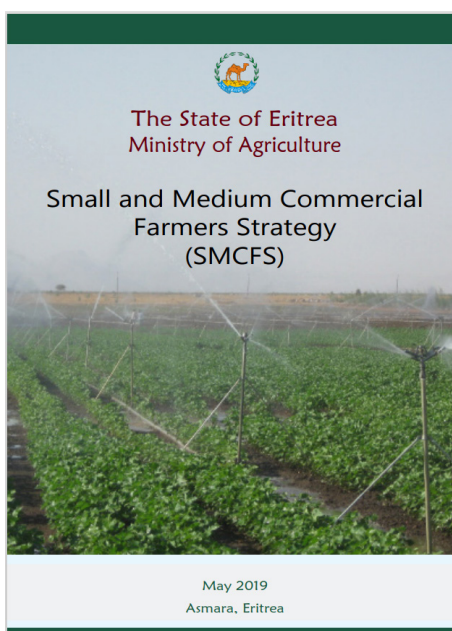
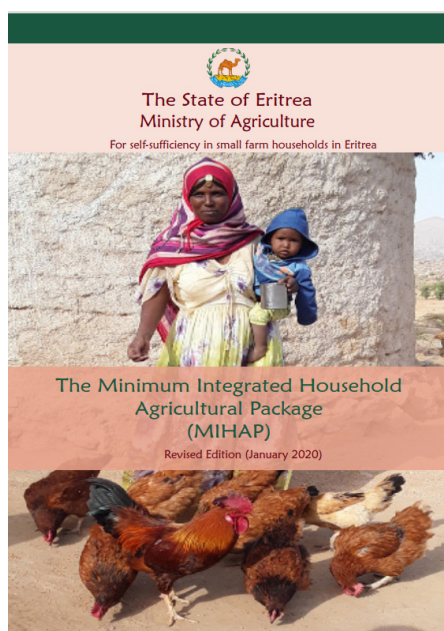
As I mentioned earlier, the integration of livestock and poultry provides manure, while pruned trees and shrubs provide additional organic material for composting. This can improve soil fertility and productivity.

Our third strategy is the Comprehensive Small and Productive Farm Plot (SPFP). This strategy addresses the much larger segment of farmers who depend on rainfall and live in drought-prone or water-stressed areas, who depend on rain-fed agriculture. These farmers are particularly vulnerable to climate



variability: when rainfall is adequate, they can produce; when rains fail, production can be severely affected. We therefore needed a strategy to address this vulnerable segment and move away from unreliable subsistence farming.

The idea for SPFP came from the experience of a progressive and an exemplary farmer, Mr. Bereket Tekeste from Beleza Village, who cultivated wheat on a 1,000-square-meter plot. Through composting, proper land preparation, watering, and row planting, the farmer achieved a harvest of 8.3 quintals, or 0.83 tons. That experience triggered the idea of launching the SPFP approach. Initially, the concept focused on wheat production once a year, but it was subsequently expanded. We realized that with irrigation, the same plot could be cultivated with row planting three times a year with cereals, pulses and oil crops along with vegetables based on the agro-ecological zones. Currently, the comprehensive SPFP incorporates honey production through locally constructed top bar beehives or frame hives, backyard poultry, and a cow or six goats for milk.





Through this approach, we are confident that we can advance toward our goal of ensuring safe and nutritious food for everyone, everywhere.

Among these strategies, which one is the Ministry of Agriculture giving greater emphasis to, and why?

Even though they are all important, the strategy receiving greater emphasis is the Comprehensive SPFP. The reason is that the farmers who remain most vulnerable are those who depend on rainfall and are located in water-stressed areas. This represents the majority of the farming population. Therefore, addressing the challenges faced by these farmers is essential.

In essence, what we are doing through the comprehensive SPFP is converting rain-fed agriculture into irrigated agriculture, even on a small plot. When a 1,000-square-meter plot is irrigated and cultivated three times a year using organic compost, proper row planting, and integrated poultry, livestock, and beekeeping, a vulnerable household can become a more reliable, year-round producer. By empowering this large segment of the farming population through comprehensive SPFP, we can reduce dependence on unpredictable rainfall and strengthen household-level food and nutrition security.



What have been the achievements of the Comprehensive Small Productive Farm Plot (SPFP) so far?

Establishing an exemplary Comprehensive SPFP in a village is a major step. We have already achieved this in approximately 85 to 90 percent of the targeted villages. Once an exemplary Comprehensive SPFP is established, it can serve as a Farmers' Field School. Villagers can visit the site in groups on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. Within at most two months, they can all have an opportunity to visit and learn from the demonstration farm how the system works, and begin applying it themselves.

We have deliberately set ambitious targets. We do not necessarily expect every target to be achieved at 100 percent immediately. However, setting a high target encourages greater effort and can result in substantially higher achievement than setting a lower target from the beginning. Even if the target is not fully achieved in 2026, we are confident that it can be achieved in 2027. The strategic plan extends to 2028, which will provide an opportunity to consolidate and fine-tune the achievements.

As more farmers see the results achieved by those who have already adopted the comprehensive SPFP, we expect more people to become motivated to follow their example. Our objective is that, by the end of the year, as many households as possible in each village will begin practicing the Comprehensive SPFP approach.

What are the main activities being carried out to ensure Comprehensive SPFP strategy is effectively implemented on the ground?

As mentioned earlier, the strategic plan runs from



2024 to 2028. Initially, we focused on increasing the number of farmers practicing the comprehensive SPFP. In 2024, about 12,000 farmers practiced SPFP. In the second year, the number increased to approximately 38,000 farmers. Although this represented an increase of more than three times, we felt that a more practical and effective approach was needed to accelerate implementation. By the end of 2025, we therefore decided to focus on establishing at least one Comprehensive SPFP model in every village where farming is practical. By the time of our mid-year assessment in July 2026, approximately 85 percent of the villages had established a comprehensive SPFP. We then instructed the remaining villages to establish their prototypes as quickly as possible, with the objective of reaching full coverage. Implementing a plan effectively requires a certain institutional culture. One of the challenges we identified was the need for more regular meetings, follow-up, and assessment at the Zoba level. We therefore worked closely with the Zobas to establish a regular system of weekly meetings and assessments. For example, Sub-

zobas meet every Tuesday, while Zobas meet every Thursday. The weekly progress from the Sub-zobas is compiled and submitted to the headquarters, where the Planning and Statistics Division receives the reports every Friday. We then meet every Monday to review the progress. This regular system has helped us significantly.

We have also introduced measures to verify the accuracy of reported information. For example, when a Zoba reports that a Comprehensive SPFP has been established in every village, it is required to provide the name of the village, the name of the exemplary farmer and the farmer's telephone number. The monitoring team can then randomly call farmers, while the phone speaker is on, directly and ask them about their experience and progress regarding SPFP in the presence of relevant officials and experts. This allows us to verify whether the information being reported corresponds to what is actually happening on the ground.

Are there stakeholders supporting the implementation of these strategies?

Yes. Stakeholder participation is very important. At the national level, we have a tripartite system involving the National Union of Eritrean Women, the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students, and other relevant partners. At the village level, the approach involves the village administrator, youth representative, women's representative, and agricultural extension agents. These stakeholders can work together to support the implementation of the strategies at community level.

How would you evaluate the Public Relations Division (PRD) in communicating accurate and timely information about these strategies to the public?





The Public Relations Division is doing a very good job in communicating the status of agriculture, the progress of farmers, and the activities of those involved in the sector. The Division uses different media platforms, including print media, radio in nine languages and television, among others. One of the factors contributing to the Division's performance is its internal capacity-building and on-the-job training. There is also training provided through the Ministry of Information in areas such as editing, graphics, journalism and related fields. This combination of training, capacity building, professional development, promotion, and motivation is helping the Public Relations Division provide effective service.

Looking ahead, what would you like to see the PRD further strengthen in its communication efforts?

The PRD is doing well, but there is always room for improvement. The broader and more diverse the information base becomes, the more comprehensive and representative the coverage can be. The Division already has some agents in different Zobas, but having only one or two agents is not sufficient. I would suggest strengthening representation across the country's nine ethnic groups. Having representatives across all ethnic groups would help make agricultural communication more holistic and balanced. It would provide a more representative picture of Eritrea and the country's agricultural activities.

This interview is being conducted on the occasion of the 100th issue of the Ministry of Agriculture Monthly Newsletter. What message or reflection

would you like to share with our readers regarding the newsletter?

Time flies. I could never have expected that more than eight years would have passed since we launched the newsletter. One of the things I appreciate is its consistency, both in terms of publication and content. The issues have consistently provided interesting messages and information about the agricultural situation in Eritrea and have highlighted exemplary farmers and their achievements. There are farmers who have accomplished remarkable things—for example, transforming small, difficult areas of land into productive farming areas. The consistency of the newsletter is one of its strengths, and a lot has been accomplished over the years.

However, there are also areas where we should continue to work. Today, more and more information is being shared through social media, and we need to take full advantage of these platforms. The creation of a website is also important. I know this is already on the agenda, and accelerating the establishment of the Ministry's website would be an excellent step forward.

Your Excellency, thank you very much for taking the time to share these insights and progress updates with us and our readers on this milestone, the 100th issue of the Ministry of Agriculture Monthly Newsletter. We sincerely appreciate your reflections on the Ministry's agricultural strategies, their implementation, and the way forward.

Thank you very much. It has been a pleasure.





Public Relations Division: Connecting Agriculture with the Local and International Public

The Public Relations Division (PRD) of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) is an important body which communicates the Ministry's activities, agricultural information, achievements, experience of farmers and agricultural professionals to the wider public. Since its establishment, the Division has evolved alongside the Ministry, expanding its communication activities through radio, television, newspapers, magazines, newsletters, publications, documentaries, and events.

The present development of the PRD is the result of decades of effort by its members and the Ministry of Agriculture. The Division was established in 1993 as the Public Relations and Human Resources Development Division. At that time, its major responsibilities included coordinating human resources development and training, developing agricultural extension materials, and producing media-related publications. Following organizational restructuring, the PRD was placed under the Office of the Minister from 2003 to 2020. During this period, the Division and the Ministry undertook initiatives to document, preserve, and promote Eritrea's agricultural heritage, including preparing Eritrean agricultural history book, collection of agricultural materials and the presentation of an agricultural exhibition at Expo in Asmara. An initiative was also undertaken to establish an Agricultural Museum.

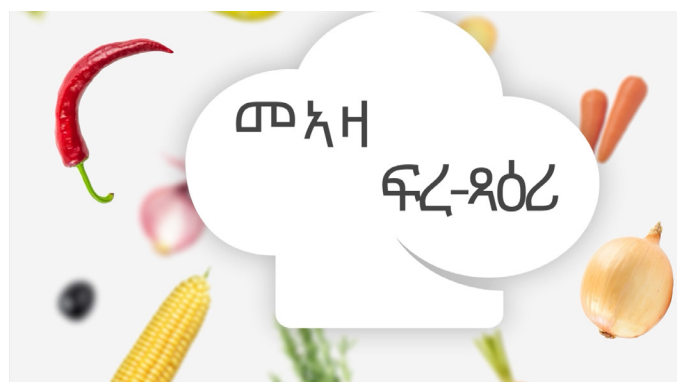
Agricultural communication has remained at the heart of the Division's work. Agricultural programs have a long history in Eritrea, with radio serving as one of the earliest channels for reaching the public. During the pre-independence period, agricultural programs

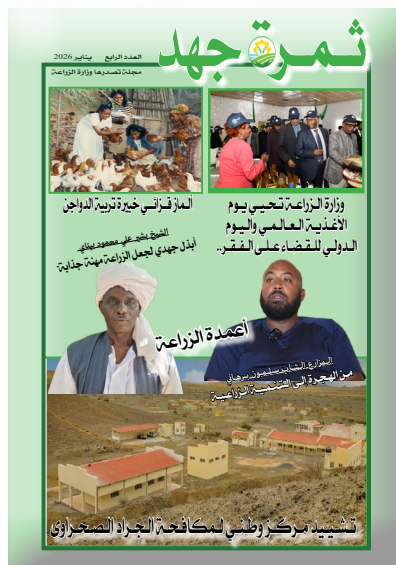
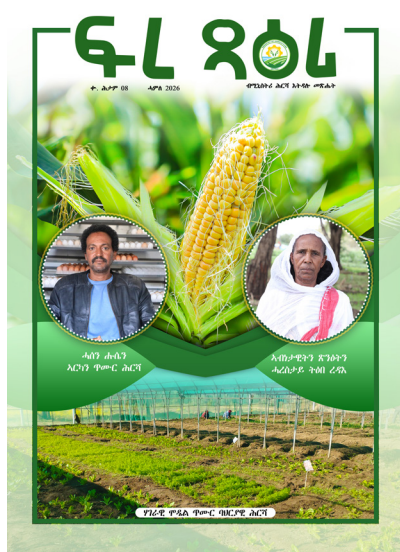
were broadcast through Dimtsi Hafash ("The Voice of the Masses"), including the Tigrigna-language program Hrshana Nesesan ("Let's Thrive Our Agriculture"). Over the years, agricultural communication expanded to television and newspapers, creating broader opportunities to share agricultural knowledge and information.

Since 2020, the PRD has contributed to radio and television programmes through its Audio-Visual Production Unit. Weekly Fre Tsaeri radio program is produced in the nine languages of Eritrea and includes expert's view 'Hito Fre Tsaeri', Focused program 'Atekuro Fre Tsaeri,' and the Fre Tsaeri Nutrition Program 'Meaza Fre Tsaeri'. The Fre Tsaeri television program which started in 2018 is broadcast biweekly on Eri-TV. The television program features exemplary farmers, selected agricultural events, agricultural experts, and other relevant personalities, while a nutrition program is also broadcast on Eri-TV.

The Publication and Documentation Unit is another important part of the PRD's communication work. The unit produces magazines, newspaper articles, and other publications and participates in preparing academic and technical publications. The Fre Tsaeri magazines are produced in Arabic, Tigrayt, and Tigrigna languages. The Tigrigna edition is published twice a year, while the Arabic and Tigrayt editions are published annually.

Agricultural information is also shared through the national newspapers. PRD agricultural columns began appearing in the national newspapers in 2011, initially in Tigrigna under the column Hrshan Megbn ("Food and





Agriculture”). The articles are now published under the ‘Fre Tsaeri column’. The Tigrayt-language version began appearing in 2024, while the Arabic-language version began in 2026. The articles are published weekly in the national newspapers.

Documentation and publication support have likewise become important elements of the Division’s work. In 2022, the PRD prepared an English-to-Tigrigna agricultural dictionary containing approximately 7,300 words. The Division has also participated in publishing research-based books and booklets prepared by different departments of the Ministry. Its contribution has included coordination, editing, layout and design, facilitated printing, and supported the quality of publications.

The Event Coordination Unit contributes another dimension to the PRD’s responsibilities. The Division has played an important role in organizing and coordinating conferences, workshops, and seminars at Ministry, zonal, national, and international levels. These include the International Potato Conference, International Wheat and Maize Conference, International Organic Fertilizer Conference, International Dairy Value Chain Conference, and the National Conference on Eritrean Agricultural Studies 2026. The PRD also coordinates national workshops in collaboration with Ministry departments, development partners, and stakeholders.

The PRD also provide agricultural news to the national tv and radio service, where content is broadcast in the languages of Eritrea. Through these combined communication channels, agricultural information

reaches communities across the country and different groups interested in Eritrea’s agricultural development.

The Ministry of Agriculture Newsletter: A Continuing Journey

Among the PRD’s communication activities, monthly newsletter has provided a regular written platform for presenting agricultural information, professional knowledge, Ministry activities, developments, and news to readers. The newsletter was originally launched in 2006 as a means of sharing information about the internal activities of the Ministry. Several issues were published during this initial period before publication was temporarily discontinued. It was later revived and developed into a more regular publication, gradually expanding its content to cover a broader range of agricultural information and Ministry activities.

The publication has undergone several stages in its development. It resurrected in June 2018 as the “Fall Armyworm Newsletter,” with Issues 1–9 published between June 2018 and February 2019. From March to December 2019, it became the “Ministry of Agriculture Technical/Professional Newsletter,” covering Issues 10–18. Since March 2020, it has been published under the title “Ministry of Agriculture Newsletter” and has continued as a monthly publication.

The journey of the newsletter reflects the expanding communication needs of the Ministry. What began as a publication focused on fall armyworm gradually developed into a technical and professional newsletter before becoming a broader Ministry publication. This progression has allowed the newsletter to



provide space for a wider range of agricultural subjects and Ministry activities, while maintaining its role as a regular source of information for its readers.

The newsletter also complements the PRD's other communication platforms. While radio and television provide agricultural information through broadcast media and newspaper columns offer regular agricultural articles, the monthly newsletter provides an opportunity to bring different stories, activities, professional information, and developments together in one publication. Its monthly format also provides continuity, creating a regular record of the Ministry's work and the agricultural sector's activities.

Over the years, the newsletter has become more than a collection of monthly articles. It has developed into an important documentation and communication product of the Ministry. Each issue provides an opportunity to highlight agricultural activities, share knowledge, present developments, and document events and achievements. In this way, the newsletter contributes

both to current information dissemination and to preserving a record of the Ministry's ongoing work.

The newsletter's reach extends beyond the immediate readership of the Ministry. It is regularly posted on the Ministry of Information's website, Shabait.com. The PRD also disseminates the newsletter by email to Eritrean embassies around the world, development partners, and interested subscribers. This distribution helps extend agricultural information to readers inside and outside Eritrea.

As the newsletter approaches its 100th issue, the milestone provides an opportunity to reflect on this journey and the role the publication has played in agricultural communication. The 100th issue is not simply a numerical milestone; it represents years of continuous effort to document activities, share agricultural knowledge, communicate developments, and maintain a regular connection with readers.

The Ministry of Agriculture Newsletter stands alongside the

PRD's radio and television programs, newspaper columns, magazines, publications, documentaries, and events as part of the Division's broader communication work. Together, these platforms support the dissemination of agricultural information and strengthen communication between the Ministry, farmers, agricultural professionals, development partners, and the wider public.

The Public Relations Division continues to serve as an important communication and information platform of the Ministry of Agriculture. Through its diverse activities, the Division communicates achievements, challenges, knowledge, and opportunities within Eritrea's agricultural sector. The continued publication of the Ministry of Agriculture Newsletter, culminating in its 100th issue, remains an important part of that enduring communication effort—documenting the Ministry's work while keeping agricultural information connected to the people and institutions it is intended to serve.

Newsletter

A Monthly Newsletter prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture of The State of Eritrea, Issue No 1 - June 2019

Eritrea's decisive and instant measures help to reduce Fall Army Worm population

Reports from all Eritrean regions witness that Fall Army Worm (FAW) population is decreasing thanks to the decisive and instant measures that included digging out and burning of FAW infected maize taken by the Government and the people of Eritrea prior to the up coming main rainy season.

According to the reports from the regions, the number of male FAW moths being caught by the indicative pheromone traps distributed throughout the country are getting lower and lower in the past two months. In the month of March, it was reported that on average 10 male moths per trap in a week were being caught. In April, the number decreased to six and in May it was reduced to only two.

"Although, these facts are promising, it doesn't mean that we will be free from FAW in the coming rainy season. Since this pest is going to be one of the permanent pests in our country, we need to put an integrated pest management systems in place," said Mr. Tedros Sium, head of Migratory Pests Control Unit at the Ministry of Agriculture.

According to Mr. Tedros, in line with the efforts that have been taken to prevent FAW distribution through integrated control mechanisms, the Ministry of Agriculture conducted various high-level meetings, gave various trainings, distributed educational publications in different local languages. Moreover, he reached rural communities on time through various information sharing mechanisms. The Ministry has so far disseminated essential information related to the incidence of FAW and management mechanisms through local media outlets, documentaries, TV

spots, circulars, and other informative programs that are related to FAW have also been broadcasted in all local languages.

It is to be recalled that FAW has been detected in Eritrea in the month of February, 2018 in small plots of irrigated farms in some regions of the country. FAW was detected mainly in maize plant interspersed with vegetables. Then, the Ministry of Agriculture took urgent mechanical and cultural control measures in collaboration with farmers and other stakeholders to address the issue in its early stage.

Mr. Tedros stressed that since the pest could not be eradicated and is here to stay in the country, some outbreaks are likely to occur in the country in areas that receive early summer rainfall.

He finally urged all regions of the country to strictly follow and adopt the directives being sent to them from the Ministry of Agriculture head quarters.

It is to be noted that Integrated Pest Management is so far the best option to control FAW.

Mr. Tedros told the visiting team that the control operations kicked off in the late November 2018 in Karama sub-zone and is still continuing. He underscored the proactive actions taken by the Ministry of Agriculture that included vast surveillance and monitoring activities as major sources of the success to reduce sharply the DL outbreaks in the region. He further mentioned that six ground control teams were established in Karara, Ghid, Gubuh, Sheh, Embemai and Fono.

According to Prof. Adugna Hale, the training on FAW management in December city from 15-20 May, 2019, to 40 plant protection, agronomy and horticulture experts representing at the Ministry's sub-regional and the Eritrean Crop and Livestock Corporation.

The training which was given by senior plant protection experts from the Ministry and Prof. Adugna Hale from Harambee Agricultural College focused on field biology, scouting and trapping FAW on field biology, scouting and trapping FAW management as well as communication strategy to combat Fall armyworms.

Ministry gives FAW management training

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Technical / Professional Newsletter

A monthly newsletter prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture of The State of Eritrea, Issue No 10, March 2019

Successful locust control operations in Eritrea will come to an end within this month

The Minister of Agriculture H.E. Arifane Berhe made a three days visit from 22-24 February 2019 to current desert locust (DL) control sites in the sub-zones of Sheh, Abibat and Karara.

Mr. Tedros Gebregabriel, head of crop production in the Northern Red Sea region briefed the Minister and his team about the strategies they have been using to minimize DL infestation to its lowest level.

According to Mr. Tedros, these control teams have so far treated nearly 28,000 hectares of land and shortly they will totally put the outbreak under full control. He confirmed also that they have not let any desert locust to fly anywhere.

Minister Arifane in his visit applauded the diligence of desert locust control ground teams for their incredible works. He said "Thanks to your dedicated hard work, our crops are safe. You did not only save Eritrean but

all the countries in our region and beyond.

Finally he reminded them to stay tuned for any DL incidences that could come from neighboring countries.

Farmers of Karara sub zone took the opportunity to thank the Ministry of Agriculture and all government bodies that took part in the control operations that enabled them to harvest their crops without any loss due to desert locust.

Mr. Henry Asghedom, Director General of Agricultural Extension Department participated in the 31st Session and 37th executive committee meeting of the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Central Region (CRC) that was held in Amman, Jordan from 17-21 February, 2019.

In the paper he presented, Mr. Henry outlined that the country experiences desert locust incidences almost every year with different magnitudes of

Minister Arifane along with relevant government bodies' representatives and farmers

Minister Arifane presenting Eritrea's DL experience and contingency plan

Ministry of Agriculture Newsletter

A Monthly Newsletter prepared by Public Relations Division, Issue No 21, March 2020

Eritrea controls new Desert Locust invasion in its Northern Red Sea Region

A new desert locust invasion that appeared on February 21, 2020 and covered around 400 hectares of land in the Northern Red Sea Region was put under control from February 28-26, 2020 with the collaboration of the Ministry of Agriculture experts, the Military in the area and Regional administration staff.

This newsletter interviewed coordinators of this successful control operation and their opinions are as follows.

Mr. Dawit Angomem, Head of Massawa Sub Zone, Ministry of Agriculture Branch and a member of the coordinating team said, "We got information from the people around Maichew, Demsa administrative area, that a new locust invasion appeared in their area on February 21". Then, instantly a survey team was deployed to assess the exact whereabouts and size of the locust swarm. After all the necessary preparations, we along with the Military around as started control operations at 2 AM on the 24th February. This operation was conducted with manual and motorized sprayers because the area was not suitable to deploy sprayer mounted vehicles."

According to Mr. Dawit, some part of the swarm fled to Yango area. There, it was relatively possible to support the man-powered spraying operation with sprayer-mounted vehicles. Finally, on February 24th, the operation was concluded successfully without any harm to crops.

Mr. Ghilely Kifley, also a member of the operation coordinating team, disclosed

that the operation was just part of the ongoing locust control measures that started from July 2019 and affirmed the readiness of experts to control any new swarms that might come in the future.

Anamuel Kideme, member of the Army in the Northern Red Sea Region and also one of the coordinators of the control operations, informed this newsletter that thanks to the experience gained from participating in last year's desert locust control activities, all the military personnel around are now capable of protecting the land from locust infestation.

"After we got the information from the Ministry of Agriculture experts, we quickly organized our members in to different teams. Then we took the necessary spraying equipment from the Ministry and directly started our long journey to the rugged valleys and mountains. The spraying process was started exactly at 2 AM," Anamuel explained.

According to his information, working during night-time was really challenging but thanks to the usual dedication of the military the operation was concluded in just few days.

Based on a report from the Migratory Pests Control Unit, during the low control operation days, 12 experts, 700 people, four sprayer-mounted vehicles, seven survey and transport vehicles, water trucks, 30 motorized sprayers and six manual sprayers were deployed.

Moreover, a new mature adult locust swarm that appeared in the same region on February 29th and covered around 200 hectares of land was put under control on March 3rd around Embemai area by four sprayer-mounted vehicles.



Summary of Feedback on the Ministry of Agriculture's Monthly Newsletters from Nationals inside the country and abroad

Dear readers, the Public Relations Division has received a wide range of valuable feedback from readers regarding the Ministry of Agriculture's Monthly Newsletter. While many responses were collected, we cannot present them all. Hence the following presents a brief summary of the key comments, suggestions, and observations. The Division sincerely thank all our readers for taking their time to share their views and helping us improve our publications. Your feedback matters!

1. Awareness, Reach, and Distribution

- **Reader Longevity:** Readers have followed the newsletter across varying durations, ranging from its initial launch in 2018 and the last four to five years, to the past one to three years.
- **Discovery Channels:** Readers came across the publication through direct email notifications, the Eritrean Embassies, agriculture-focused professional support groups, and networks.
- **Information Sharing:** Readers actively circulate the publication internally among professional group members and colleagues, as well as externally with diaspora professionals, YouTube bloggers, young agricultural graduates from Hamelmalo Agricultural College, and institutional counterparts.

2. Impact on Professional Work and Studies

- **Alignment with National Goals:** The publication bridges national strategies with field-level realities, helping sister ministries track progress and identify collaboration areas for food security.
- **Operational and Strategic Guidance:** Professionals utilize the content to set meeting agendas, build professional slide presentations, social media posts, guide departmental priorities, and support war-disabled veterans connected to agricultural livelihoods.

- **Reference and Archiving:** Readers maintain physical box files of past issues to review historical developments and inform ongoing research.





3. Recommendations for Future Issues

- **Technical and Scientific Depth:** Readers want more focus on soil chemistry, local fertilizer innovations, bioherbicides, post-harvest preservation, food quality analysis, and user-friendly summaries of professional research papers from NARI.
- **Broader Regional and Local Coverage:** Suggestions include expanding coverage beyond headquarters to include regional developments (Zobas), diaspora contributions, case studies on young researchers and successful farmers, and lessons from major East African agricultural research institutions.
- **Data-Driven Insights:** Readers call for more data-supported progress reports spanning the

past three decades, statistical data on diverse sectors, quantifiable agricultural market pricing and trends, and transparent discussions around failures as valuable lessons learned.

4. Congratulatory Messages to the Team

- **Commendation on Consistency:** Readers congratulate the team on reaching the monumental 100th issue milestone, praising their unwavering commitment, professionalism, and dedication since 2018.
- **Encouragement and Support:** Contributors are lauded for providing an inspiring bridge between field achievements and the global Eritrean professional community, with encouragement to keep up the dynamic work.

Feedback from an International Organization Desert Locust Commission (CRC)

Background and Discovery: I have been following the Ministry of Agriculture's monthly newsletter since 2021. I first came across it following our meeting in Asmara during a DLCO-EA meeting, and it has since become a useful source of updates on Eritrea's agricultural sector.

Informed Insights: The newsletter provides me with a regular overview of agricultural activities and achievements. It helps me stay informed about national priorities and the work being undertaken by the Ministry and its partners, particularly regarding desert locust activities.

Information Sharing: When an issue contains information relevant to our work, I share it with colleagues and partners involved in desert locust management and agricultural development.

Professional Utility: In my role with the FAO Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Central Region, the newsletter helps me understand the broader agricultural context in which Eritrea's desert locust surveillance and control work takes place.

Suggestions for Future Issues: I would welcome more field stories and updates on early warning, plant protection, climate resilience, and practical innovations. Additionally, short accounts of lessons learned from national programmes would be valuable to readers in other countries.

Message for the 100th Issue: Congratulations on reaching your 100th issue. Producing a newsletter consistently over eight years is a significant achievement, and I thank you for sharing Eritrea's agricultural work with readers at home and abroad while wishing the team continued success.

Mamoon Alsarai AlAlawi, PhD
Executive Secretary
Desert Locust Commission (CRC)
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
(FAO)
Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa
Cairo – Egypt





World Rabies Day 2026 Commemorated

The Ministry of Agriculture commemorated World Rabies Day under the theme “Stronger Together,” at the hall of the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers (NCEW), in Asmara on 28th September 2026, emphasizing the need for coordinated action among the human and animal health sectors, government institutions and development partners to prevent and ultimately eliminate rabies.

The commemoration brought together about 60 participants, including the Acting Director General of the Agricultural Extension Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Health Organization (WHO), development partners, government ministries and corporations, as well as related experts.



Mr. Kahsai Negash

The program began with speeches highlighting Eritrea’s progress and the importance of continued collaboration in rabies prevention and control.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Kahsai Negash, Acting Director General of the Agricultural Extension Department, said that rabies is almost always fatal once clinical symptoms appear, but can be prevented through timely post-exposure care and sustained prevention, particularly mass vaccination of dogs.

He outlined progress made over the past decade, including mass vaccination campaigns against dog-mediated rabies, strengthened surveillance, improved laboratory diagnostic capacity through local and overseas training, and awareness-raising activities through media and community outreach. He also highlighted dog population estimation censuses were conducted aiming at improving vaccination planning and reaching high-risk communities.

Mr. Lenin Gradiz on behalf of Ms. Ariella Glinni the FAO Representative in Eritrea, stressed that rabies remains one of the world’s deadliest zoonotic diseases but is preventable through responsible animal ownership, mass dog vaccination, community awareness, effective surveillance and timely





Mr. Lenin Gradiz

medical intervention. FAO also commended Eritrea's efforts, particularly the integration of rabies vaccination with livestock vaccination campaigns, which has enabled veterinary teams to reach herders and their dogs in remote areas.

The WHO Representative in Eritrea, Dr. Mary Stephen, emphasized that rabies elimination requires a coordinated One Health



Dr. Mary Stephen

approach, bringing together human health, animal health and environmental considerations. Citing WHO estimates, she noted that rabies causes approximately 59,000 human deaths annually worldwide, with children accounting for a significant proportion of fatalities. She underscored mass dog vaccination, surveillance, public awareness and timely access to post-exposure treatment as essential components of prevention.

The speeches were followed by a series of technical presentations. "Rabies Situation: Global, Regional and National Perspective" by Dr. Yonas Woldu of the Agricultural Extension Department, "Rabies Diagnosis Capacity," presented by Mr. Filmon Weldu from the National Animal and Plant Health Laboratory (NAPHL), "Progress in Rabies Control and Prevention in the Public Health" by Mr. Abraham Haile from the Ministry of Health, "Rabies Control – Legal and Regulatory Instruments" by Ms. Luwam Yossief of the Regulatory Services Department (RSD) and "Dog Population Management in Asmara," presented by Col. Ghebrehans Weldegergish from the Maekel Administration, addressed issues

surrounding management of the dog population in the capital.

The presentations were followed by a discussion and panel session focusing on practical measures for strengthening rabies prevention and control. Participants stressed that diseases transmitted between humans and animals require continuous collaboration and integrated surveillance. They also called for additional expert training, awareness-raising programs and preparedness to respond to zoonotic diseases.

The panel also discussed dog population management, including the need for collecting reliable and systematic data on both owned and stray dogs.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Yonas Woldu reaffirmed that eliminating rabies by 2030 remains the goal. He said awareness-raising programs will be conducted throughout the country and that annual dog vaccination will continue. He also called for the establishment of a technical committee to strengthen coordination and called for all stakeholders to strengthen their collaboration.

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