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## COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

### Office of the Principal


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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Utilizing sugarcane industrial wastes for animal feeds and fuel**

Makerere University College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences has made a milk booster to mitigate malnutrition, extreme hunger and poverty through improved milk production, nutrition and improved daily cash flow among farmers. The milk booster is a new innovation involving the use of sugar cane industrial waste of molasses mixed with other ingredients like maize bran, cotton seed cake, urea, mineral salts and lime.

The project entitled, "*Participatory research for technology development on use of Molasses Urea Blocks (MUB) and local feedstuff for improved dairy cattle production in Uganda*", was spear headed by Dr Fred Kabi of the Department of Agricultural production. The project started in September, 2008. The first production was recorded in December 2011.

At the factory level, enough knowledge has been acquired through public private partnership with MAK scientists to translate molasses, a by-product of sugar production, into the milk booster which awaits commercialization. At the farm level, sugarcane tops and other crop residues are to be used to produce feeds and fuel briquettes as a way of diversifying sellable products at the household level.

Sugar cane tops, trash or dry leaves that animals cannot feed on are usually burnt to reduce on the excessive mulching on the farm which does not allow proper sugar cane growth after harvest. However with the current innovations at MAK the farmer should be smiling since they will be able to diversifying on their income at the farm by producing fuel briquettes from trash and a beef booster from sugar cane tops.

The Milk booster has a rear component which is urea that facilitates proper functioning of the microbial population in the rumen. With the new technology from Novus International, the milk booster has been fortified with micronutrients and aflatoxin binders which will not only improve on productivity of the dairy animals but also step up the keeping ability of the feed for over one year.

A farmer therefore, needs to accustom the animal to the feed for four days before for full supplementation. The moment the animal gets used to it, it will improve on its digestibility because it increases the rate of food fibre breakdown by the microbial population in the gastro-intestinal tract. By supplementing 1 kg per animal per day, a farmer increases milk production by over 30% percent .For instance a cow producing 10 litres will increase milk production to 13 litres while the one producing 20 litres increases to 26 litres per animal per day hence improved daily cash flow, better household nutrition, better health of the calves that will constitute tomorrows herd for the farmer.

The milk booster was evaluated by farmers in a stakeholders meeting that involved scientists, the private sector, local government and the farmers in 2009 and by then the farmers set a price of 800 shillings per kilogram. This price is likely to be revised since molasses and other major ingredients of the milk booster have gone up.

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