



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Farming successfully without formal education**

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#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Martin Lambert is a natural-born farmer who grew up in a traditional farming community with livestock and horticulture, and now prepares himself to enter the commercial livestock husbandry.

Lambert is a fulltime farmer who farms with cattle and goats. He has about a 130 animals altogether. His future plan is to expand his livestock husbandry enterprise, specifically cattle and sheep and venture into horticulture.

He owes his farming experience in the last five years to Agribank, whom he said had played a central role in his quest to become a commercial farmer. "I took out an Agribank loan and bought twenty cows. My biggest drawback is that I don't have bulls. I'm looking for bulls and rams for my cows and ewes," Lambert described.

He said he has already applied to Agribank for a loan to buy bulls and if successful it would be the missing piece of the puzzle for his livestock to reproduce. Currently, he relies on an unconventional mode to have his livestock reproduce. "I have been renting bulls from other farmers in my area, but now I want my own bulls."

Like most newcomers, Lambert recounts how he struggled with rearing livestock in the beginning but kept on searching for knowledge to keep his farming under control with skills he acquired from his mentors. "Actually I never went to school. In accordance with my culture when I was born I was awarded goats from my father, so you can say I grew up in an environment endowed with cattle and gardens," Lambert tells confidently.

The farmer has prioritised self-empowerment, learning from fellow farmers and experts, as being critical to the future success of his farming venture. He said he can't thank Agribank enough for assisting him in his endeavours, citing his mentor, Arnoldt /Gaseb, an agricultural advisory expert from Agribank. "So far I credit my experience to Arnoldt who assisted me greatly especially during the drought. He showed me a lot on how to care for my animals and treat various ailments, about feeds and natural supplements. I followed the advice and thus far I haven't lost a single animal," Lambert said proudly.

Sharing his experience with newcomers, Lambert, recommends agricultural start-ups to approach Agribank for financial assistance in their quest to become commercial farmers if they have no other options. "If you apply successfully for a loan from Agribank, make sure you have a proper loan repayment plan. However, there is a risk of failing to repay your instalments at some point because of unforeseen eventualities such as droughts. It is crucial to plan ahead for any eventualities as in farming something will eventually go wrong."

Lambert counsels that new farmers should also be prepared to act swiftly and decisively when things don't go according to plan. Without planning, he said, it's an invitation to failure. "Farming is not to sell your cattle for quick profit to compensate for lack of planning then claim that the livestock died from drought," Lambert warns.

He noted that Agribank should always do research on potential customers; qualifying the statement that there are many good farmers who are not exposed enough to access the bank's financing products. "I believe Agribank is the only dedicated agricultural financial institution that can assist new and old farmers to advance and develop their full potential in farming. I look forward to engaging Agribank in my next step to procure bulls and expand my livestock and gardening projects," Lambert concludes.

**End**

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*Martin Lambert attended Agribank's free evening lecture on livestock management recently in Outjo and pictured at the sidelines of the public lecture.*



*Martin Lambert and Agribank's Rino Muranda pictured recently in Outjo at the evening lecture on livestock management.*