

Livestock Product Marketing

Taruinga Magwirotu

Today I want to touch a very important topic. If we all agree that one of the reasons we engage in livestock is to make money, then it is important to consider markets and marketing strategies. Of course I know most people think about markets and marketing in terms of "we cross the bridge when we get there".

Most people engage in livestock without an idea of their market. And to be honest, sometimes it is neither necessary nor feasible to make an exhaustive market analysis. What is required is to be competitive and innovative in the market. How do you set yourself apart? How do you penetrate an already congested market?

1. **Price**:-In a competitive market, the cheapest products are bought first. Minimising prices depends on efficient production. Avoid deaths, avoid feed wastages and save wherever you can. Good husbandry practices ensure that your product can be competitive on the market. However, if you can add some value to your product, consumers may be willing to pay a little for extra convenience. An obvious example is flexibility in payment; accepting bank/money transfer/mobile money, etc. Extra quality can also result in higher/better prices.
2. **Place**:-One simple way of endearing yourself to consumer is to deliver your products. I know of one person who will deliver chicken to your doorstep for the same price as the market prices. And people like the personal touch.
3. **Packaging**:-Simple clean packaging can transform even ordinary products. Simple, cheap packaging adds a professional look to products.
4. **Promotion**:-Make yourself and your products known. Walk around the neighbourhood on foot, on your bike. Make use of hikers. Be a fixture, be entertaining! Posters, word of mouth, simple texts, and WhatsApp groups are all outlets for promoting your product. Don't be modest: promise BIG.

Be prepared to hustle. There will always be competition: be prepared to fight for a place. At the same time, think hard about opening new untapped markets. For example schools, NGOs, restaurants, food outlets, supermarkets, hospitals and clinics will always be looking for

suppliers at some point. The trick is to discover these hidden markets and supply a good quality, well-priced product.

Warehousing/Storage

Sometimes your product will reach marketing stage without you finding a market. I know some people who keep broilers for 8-10 weeks because they can't get a market at 6 weeks. In such situations, the ideal is to slaughter and store in a deep freezer. However in the absence of electricity, it would be prudent to sell at a credit. Keeping the birds and feeding them beyond 8 weeks will lead to loss.

Follow the blog to get automatic updates. Give us feedback on what you want to hear, we will deliver!