

3659DE



Youth group take up value addition of local farm produce and its market linkages

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## Camera trapping field survey kicks off as part of the second National Tiger Survey

Compiled by Tashi Yangzom, ICTD with inputs from DoFPS



As part of the second National Tiger Survey, the foresters from different field offices are out in the tiger's territory setting up camera traps. These cameras are usually mounted and, strapped on trees or on other appropriate structure where there is high probability of tiger detection.

The Jomotsangkha Wildlife Sanctuary (JWS) commenced

the camera trapping field work with effect from 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022 as part of the National Tiger Survey 2022. There are 64 camera stations spread across JWS.

The team will carry out activities like camera Installation, Monitoring and Retrieval which will be done within next few months.

On the same day, The Camera trapping field survey for the National Tiger Survey commenced in Zhemgang Forest Division as well.

The survey kicked off with inauguration of the 1<sup>st</sup> station at Gompong with offering of Serkim to local deities and praying to the triple gem to

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bles the team for successful completion of the survey without any hindrance to the team members. The Zhemgang Forest Division has a total of 63 station covering seven Gewogs of Zhemgang Dzongkhag (Trong, Nangkor, Bardo, Shinghar, Bjoka, Goshing and Ngangla Gewog).

On 26<sup>th</sup> February 2022, a team led by Mrs. Sonam Yangden, Forestry officer, kicked off for the second National Tiger Survey from Dagana Forests Division. The team will be engaged in camera trap installation, monitoring, and retrieval in 62 camera stations, of which two stations fall under Chukha Dzongkhag, while the remaining camera stations are stretched along Dagana Dzongkhag from the foothills of Lhamoizingkha to the alpine regions of Tseza.

The Pemagatshel Division has also started camera traps in their area on February 26, 2022. The survey commenced with inauguration of 1st station at Natoraphu with offering of Serkim to the

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local deities and praying to for successful completion of the survey. Pema Gatsel forest division has total of 36 stations covering around 11 Gewogs. Out of this, 18 camera stations fall under Nganglam region, under high risk area.

Similarly, the camera trapping field survey for Tsirang Forest Division had also kick started on the same day. The deputed staff will install/ monitor and retrieve camera traps in twenty-seven plots.

The information on habitat variables, vegetation, human and anthropogenic disturbances will also be gathered from the sample plots. Scats and dung will also be collected along the trails and from the sample plots.

Whereas, The National Tiger Survey for Samtse Division has commenced from 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

The survey will enable to reliably estimate tiger abundance, density and understand tiger distribution.

The country was divided into two major survey blocks viz; Southern Block and Northern Block. Samtse Division falls under Southern Block. A total of 32 camera traps will be stationed in the survey grids.

This survey in Bhutan is the second National Tiger Survey since 2014-2015.

Currently, the country has estimated a total of 103 tigers between the estimated range of 89 to 124, occurring at

an estimated density of 0.46 tigers per 100 km<sup>2</sup>. The tiger population in Bhutan has increased by almost 39 percent from 1998 (75 numbers) in the last 17 years. Globally, an estimated 3900 tigers remain in the wild.

Tigers have been severely affected by illegal poaching, wildlife trade, habitat loss and human conflict. Although, conservation efforts have reaped some rewards, there is still lot more to do.

The nationwide tiger survey is being coordinated by Bhutan Tiger Center under the Department of Forests and Park Services . It is expected to be complete by the end of May 2022.



## Youth group take up Value Addition of local farm produce and its market linkages

ARDC wengkhar with pictures from NPHC SC Lingmethang



A four member youth group known as 4 Bite, take up value addition through agro processing of local farm produce. The group is currently engaged with NPHC SC - Lingmethang developing fruit candies. They are also getting linked with another enterprise M/S Bhutan Growers in Thimphu, who will do trial marketing and gradually form a proper market link.

Another batch of products has also been dispatched to OGOP in Thimphu for marketing.

The group had also applied

for entrepreneurial support from RAMCO, Mongar to expand their initiatives into a full-fledged self-employment enterprise. The group is technically guided by NPHC - SC Lingmethang and ARDC Wengkhar.

Recently OGOP took these candies from the youth group in Mongar to Druk Air. The candies from the youth groups will be now available on board.

The group currently under the incubation guidance of NPHC - SC, RAMCO and ARDC will soon run their post-harvest

value addition enterprise.

Currently they are market linked to OGOP providing Nu 500 to 900 per Kg of candies (wild apple, amla and ginger) which is sorted and, packaged and sold to Druk Air.

A part of their products is also under market link trial with Bhutan Growers, Thimphu and BLDC outlet Mongar.

ARDC Wengkhar, NPHC SC Lingmethang and OGOP collaboration began few years ago.



## Leisure

### Gray leaf spot (GLS) in Maize

The presence of this disease was first confirmed in Bhutan in 2007. It is mainly a problem above 1800 m asl. It reached epidemic status in 2007 when it affected 4,193 maize growing households and a total area of 4,822 acres. Production loss to the disease was estimated at 6,504 Mt, with between 50% and 70% of farmers affected.

Symptoms first occur on the low leaves of the maize plant. These slowly move upwards. Lesions begin as small (pin-point), regular, elongated brown-gray necrotic spots growing roughly parallel to veins. These spots usually have yellow or chlorotic borders (a halo). They are more easily observed when the leaf is held up to the light. Severe symptoms lead to the entire senescence of leaves and poor grain filling. Plants infected at or before tasseling appear as if they are blanched by hot boiling water. The entire maize field gives a brown appearance.

Gray leaf spot (GLS) is only a problem above 1800 m asl. It can be controlled by adopting good cultural practices and utilizing GLS tolerant maize varieties that are now readily available in Bhutan.

For detailed information visit NPPC website

## JOKES



A traveling salesman had got lost one day while driving through the Midwest farm country. So he stopped at a farm house for directions. While the farmer was giving the salesman directions, he noticed all the farm animals were penned except a 3 legged pig roaming around the farm yard.

Curious the salesman asked the farmer what was the story about the 3 legged pig. "Why this is no ordinary pig. In fact he's quite amazing! Even what you might call a legend around these parts. Why just last year our youngest boy fell down the well and this pig jumped in and saved his life."

"And that's how the pig lost his leg?" "No, no, no. A few months ago my little girl Holly got lost in the woods. We searched all night and couldn't find her. Come morning here she'd been found by this amazing pig who had fought off a pack of wolves to keep her safe, slept next to her to keep her warm and led her back home."

"And that's how he lost his leg?" "Oh no. Not at all! Just a week ago one night the house caught fire from a spark out of the fireplace. Well this amazing pig smelled the smoke. Then somehow broke out of his pen and dragged each of us out through the flames & smoke saving our whole family's lives."

"Well that's certainly an amazing pig. So is that when he lost his leg?" "Oh no You don't understand. You see with as amazing a pig as this one is, you can't eat him all at once."

## Did you know?

*Ducklings are born ready to leave the nest within hours of hatching - their eyes are open and they are able to find some of their own food.*

Please submit your articles for RNR-Newsletter at

*communication@moaf.gov.bt*



# The Ministry's week

## Supplementary feed for yaks to reduce yak mortality



The winter feed shortage is a challenge for the majority of the livestock farmers and it is more severe for the highland livestock, the yaks.

Last week, as an immediate response to the situation, the National Research and Development Center for Animal Nutrition, Bumthang formulated and handed over 2 MT of organic yak feed to the National Highland Research Development Center for

further distribution to yak herders of Bumthang.

The ministry issued a notification to ensure feed supplement during harsh winter to improve yak nutrition and reduce yak mortality caused by starvation such as by recent snowfall.

The program was implemented with the fund support from the National Organic Program.

## Domestic sourcing and distribution of vegetables and Fruits

Ministry issued a notification to all concerned Ginger farmers producing ginger at commercial scale in the dzongkhags of Samtse, Chukha, Sarpang, Tsirang, Dagana, Pemagatshel, Zhemgang, Samdrupjongkhar & Trashigang, that the government has decided to buy the ginger produce of the year 2021, from



This notification is to all concerned Ginger farmers producing ginger at commercial scale in the dzongkhags of Samtse, Chukha, Sarpang, Tsirang, Dagana, Pemagatshel, Zhemgang, Samdrupjongkhar & Trashigang, that the government has decided to buy the ginger produce of the year 2021, from the farmers within the month of March 2022 (1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>). This decision is as per the approval of the Lhengye Zhungtshog held on 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2022, considering very low price in the ginger export market and other related challenges both outside and inside the country in the pandemic era.

The Food Corporation of Bhutan Limited (FCBL) shall implement the buying, storing and marketing of the product. The ginger will be graded (specifications to be announced by FCBL) into three quality categories in this buy-back scheme. FCBL shall make upfront payment to the farmers at the rate of Nu.30/- per kg for grade A, Nu.25/- per kg for grade B, and Nu.20/- per kg for grade C. At the collection/consignment centre, Assesment/evaluation centre shall

the farmers within the month of March 2022 (1st to 31st).

This is decision was taken as per the approval of the Lhengye Zhungtshog held on 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2022, considering very low price in the ginger export market and other related challenges both outside and inside the country in the pandemic era.

## List of essential items

The Ministry of Economic Affairs issued notification on list of essential items for importation and distribution. Under the RNR sector, the essential items included animal feed, milk, cheese, butter, rice, edible oil, doma and pani, vegetables and fruits, eggs and

agriculture and livestock items (inputs).

While doma-pani, vegetables & fruits, and eggs were allowed for imports based on domestic availability.

Category	Items	Unit	Wholesale Price (Nu./kg)	Retail Price (Nu./kg)	Source
Vegetables	Beans	Kg	85	110	Local
	Chard/leaves	Kg	85	110	Local
	Chick peas	Bundles	25	30	Local
	Bunching onion	Bundles	25	30	Local
	Cucumber	Bundles	25	30	Local
	Spinach	Bundles	25	30	Local
	Tree Tomato	Kg	25	30	Local
	Turnip	Kg	15	20	Local
	Broccoli	Kg	15	20	Local
	Cabbage	Kg	30	40	Local
	Radish	Kg	30	40	Local
	Chilly	Kg	155	200	Local
	Carrot	Kg	50	65	Local
	Pump	Kg	65	85	Local
	Potato*	Kg	29	40	Local
Brussels*	Kg	45	60	Imported	
Cabbage	Kg	20	25	Imported	

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Post Box: 1095, Thimphu-Bhutan  
Tel. (PABX): 02-323765/321142  
Fax: 02-324520  
Email: ictd@moaf.gov.bt  
Website: www.moaf.gov.bt

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