

Millionaire farmer still leading normal life

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Raymond Matsaka, winner of the beMobile P4.5 million has retained his old life and does not behave like the millionaire he now is.

The 39 year-old still works as an accounts executive for Gaborone Insurance Brokers and has kept the same circle of friends he has always had prior to the windfall.



Naturally every now and again a colleague will tease him about his riches but that is about it. He is still the same lad from Peleng township in Lobatse.

Significantly though, the windfall has come with its own challenges and he now has to make periodic visits to the farm.

Matsake won the P4.5 million farm in the beMOBILE competition, which was run last year. He emerged victorious in the final draw, which was held in December.

The 6 x 6 km ranch has 200 herd of cattle made up of varying breeds and is located in the Boteti area. Other features of the farm include a three bedroomed barn and two boreholes. BeMOBILE has also provided him with farm labour and he has only had to hire a manager for the farm. Matsake proudly shows a file in his office, which contains all the information about the farm.

Matsake is already expecting 30 calves in April. When he first visited the farm in December there were already three additional calves.

Matsake still has fond memories of the day of the draw. "I was there physically," he said.

There were eight finalists but one of them was struck off after winning P100,000 in the first draw.

Matsake said a child was blindfolded and the finalists were made to pick an envelope from him. Matsake was the last one in the row.

"We had to open the envelopes and display them to the audience," he said.

Matsake said he was a bit shaky and had trouble opening his envelope. "I was battling." As he stood there shaking, he realised that the other six finalists had opened their envelopes, which had regrets.

After he snapped the envelope open, the letter "F" for farm flashed out in front of him. It was such a euphoric moment for him. He could not believe his luck.

"That was when my life changed. I never expected to win. I didn't do anything spectacular to win. I didn't even spend that much on airtime," he said.

Matsake could not believe that news could travel so fast. He said since that moment his cellphones started ringing continuously. He had to hand over the cellphones to his cousins who had accompanied him to the draw.

Matsake recalled that before the event he received a call from beMOBILE inviting him for the draw. He thought it was just a joke and nearly dismissed the whole thing. But he said during the draw he had a sensational feeling that things might work out well.

During the first draw for the P100,000 he was the first contestant, but did not win. But during the draw for the farm, he was the last finalist. To him, this meant something.

Matsake has tried his luck in competitions in the past but he never won anything before. However, he did not give up. He said it was only when he was taken to the farm that reality sank in.

Matsake has been visiting the farm on a regular basis since December. He has also acquired a 4x4 vehicle to access the terrain where the farm is located.

Matsake expressed gratitude to neighbouring farmers, who have offered their support and readily give him handy tips on farming.

Even the department of Veterinary Services and Disease Control and the Botswana Meat Commission have offered their assistance.

It is not the first time Matsake has tried his hand at farming. For the past 10 years he has been breeding goats, albeit on a small scale. "I am already used to farm life," he said.

Matsake has made it clear that his farm is not for sale. The married father of one son, who plans to eventually retire into full-time farming, intends to keep the farm for his children and their off-spring.

He has dispelled rumours that he has sold the farm and is now driving a brand new top of the range Range Rover. He however revealed that he has received many offers for the farm but has turned them down. Some people even offered to buy the farm for its actual value of P4.5 million, while some offered more. But Matsake will have none of it. By venturing into farming, Matsake said he is heeding government's call to diversify the economy.

To Matsake, farming has its own challenges that he is prepared to face.

Matsake is not planning to leave his job either and he reveals that many people were surprised that he was not planning to resign. "I still love my job. I do not intend to quit," he said matter of factly.

Fortunately for Matsake, his employers have also been supportive. After he acquired the farm, they moved him to a section, which enables him to have more time over the weekends. After the announcement was made, his bosses were among the multitudes of people who congratulated him.

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