

Sand Dams Notes

For over a decade, sand dams built with MCC support have brought new life, crops, and hope to arid regions of Kenya, Mozambique, and Tanzania. Water scarcity is a limiting factor for people in East Africa, determining their ability to provide for their families and exposing them to the risk of drought.

The sand dam was first developed by a Kenyan agricultural scientist, Joshua Mukusya, who observed that sand could retain water and shield it from evaporation. He built his first dam at his home in Kola, eastern Kenya in 1979. His Utooni Development Organization now partners with MCC to build sand dams across the region.

Sand dams are low concrete walls built across riverbeds during the dry season. When the rains come and the rivers fill, sand builds up behind the dam wall and works like a sponge, soaking up water and holding it there. During the dry season, the water can be retrieved from the sand by digging a hole and allowing water to flow into it, as if you were wringing out the sponge. The ground around the dam also holds more water, making it much more fertile for farming. Now, instead of traveling miles to a well, water can be stored near a community.

Meat Canner Notes

Every year MCC's Mobile Meat Canner travels across the United States and Canada meeting volunteers who prepare cans of turkey, beef, chicken and pork to be sent around the world. Over 30,000 people a year volunteer to fill, weigh, wash and label every can.

Four canner operators travel with the meat canner to 34 different locations across the US and Canada and help the volunteers at each location. Once they're finished, cans are shipped to MCC partners, providing important nutrients when meat is hard to obtain. Canned meat can be used worldwide under almost any conditions, as it doesn't need refrigeration and is pre-cooked, and aids victims of famine, natural disasters, and war.

Last year, MCC shipped 774,067 pounds of canned meat to Burkina Faso, North Korea, Haiti, Lebanon, Ukraine, Zambia, Canada and the U.S., including Puerto Rico for hurricane relief.