



Past dairy feeding interventions and lessons learnt in Tanzania



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1. Message

- Feeding interventions could increase milk production from dairy cattle in Tanzania.
- Why is adoption of these interventions so low?

2. Introduction

Seasonal variations in quantity and quality of animal feeds is a common problem in Tanzania. In most cases animals are poorly fed, hence their production potentials are not realized.

A number of practical feeding interventions have been tested in different parts of the country, some showing positive results but adoption is low.

3. Objectives

To review some of the past feeding interventions and adoption status for teasing out the possible lessons learnt and strategies to be taken for improved uptake of dairy production technologies and innovations

4. Methodology

Information on past dairy feeding interventions were obtained from published articles in local and international journals, proceedings, grey literature including PhD thesis, MSc dissertations, research, consultancy and agricultural reports backing up with personal experience.

5. Findings

Past dairy feeding interventions in Tanzania included:

- Cultivation of fodder grasses (Plate 1)
- Alkali treatment of crop residues
- Strategic harvesting and utilization of crop residues for dry-season feeding
- Use of urea molasses mixtures and blocks (Plate2)
- Home-made dairy concentrates and supplementation (Plate 3)
- Use of water melons

Adoption and sustainability of these interventions has been limited ($\leq 15\%$) despite of their technical merits

Possible reasons for low adoption

- Short duration of promotional projects
- Relatively high capital investments
- Technical versus socio economic dimensions of the technologies, neglecting gender issues
- Minimal foundation for trans-generational transfer of technologies

Conclusions

There is not only a need to change approaches or the method of dissemination of some proven technologies to farmers, but also location-specific socio-economic conditions need to be investigated.

Use of innovation platforms is being advocated for in Tanzania.



Plate 1: Fodder garden technology Introduced in 1960s and 1980s on small scale farms in Kilimanjaro region Tanzania



Plate 2: Molasses urea storage tanks built in the villages as supply depots in Kilimanjaro in mid 1980s (now unutilized)



Plate 3: Compounding home made dairy concentrates

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