Improving productivity in Kenyan Smallholder Dairy systems through selective, intensive education and supported adoption

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Introduction

• Improving productivity of smallholder dairy has the potential to improve milk supply and quality and rural incomes.

• Average milk yield is 1.8-3.0 l/d in W. Kenya.

• Low milk yield is often attributed to poor genetics, BUT we discovered that frequently production is constrained by a lack of knowledge, regarding husbandry and feeding.

• Currently existing training, but is short-term, narrow and untargeted in terms of recipients.

Methods

• Target early adopters.

• Identifying innovators in a number of communities in Western Kenya.

• Provide an 1mth intensive course covering:
  • husbandry,
  • animal nutrition,
  • forage/crop agronomy
  • dairy technology
  • business analysis skills.

• Farmers will be supported to implement knowledge and technology in his/her community.

• Beneficiaries of training will serve as a focal point and source of knowledge in their communities.

(First) Results

• 83 farmers trained (2 schools); follow-up concluded on 1\textsuperscript{st} School (33 farmers).

Table 1: Practice adoption and training given by course attendees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology/ Practice</th>
<th>Trainee Adoption</th>
<th>Farmers trained by trainees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forage Preservation (Hay making/Silage production)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forage/ Fodder Cultivation</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved feeding/ Milk yield</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved Husbandry</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved milk Handling</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manure handling/ Compost Production</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

• Targeted selection of course participants results in high rates of adoption and dissemination.

• In-depth training improves comprehension and allows individuals to select interventions that best apply to their situation.

• Uptake and persistence of adoption will be improved by providing ongoing logistical support.

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Date Year