



Forage development and utilization for fattening in Bure, Ethiopia
Photo Fanos Mekonnen/ILRI

Context

- Use of planted forages is very limited in Ethiopia - <1% of livestock feed and more use of planted forage could transform productivity especially for dairy animals
- A lot of forage seed currently sold is of questionable quality and provenance
- Access to reliable and affordable seed could really help and we have been rallying key stakeholders, establishing a Forage Seed Consortium, to deal with this issue
- We recently published a [White Paper](#) outlining the core problems and presenting some solutions

Our innovative approach

- We are proposing the establishment of a simple Quality Declared Seed (QDS) scheme to provide some quality branding to support the efforts of small-scale private seed producers
- This would be administered by the producers themselves and would help to give them competitive advantage over unscrupulous suppliers of poor quality seed



NUTRITION & FOOD SECURITY

Forage seed quality and availability in Ethiopia is constraining use of forages which could otherwise transform dairy production

- Forage seed supply is heavily dominated by public research system
- Government and NGO handouts stifle small-scale commercial seed supply
- Introducing a simple seed quality assurance scheme could increase confidence among buyers and provide a boost to small-scale producers



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Outcomes

- A small group of forage seed producers has already been convened by our partners ACDI/VOCA
- A draft set of QDS guidelines has been developed and is being reviewed
- A virtual network of around 15 forage seed stakeholders meets regularly to exchange information and agree actions

Future steps

- Our aspiration is that the Seed Producers Group will gel and adopt the QDS approach, hopefully producing the first branded forage seed in 2021.
- Meanwhile, through the Forage Seed Consortium we continue dialogue with important stakeholders including policy makers to level the playing field for small-scale seed producers in Ethiopia
- We hope that large development projects will take an interest in this initiative and adjust the practices of their programmes

Partners and Stakeholders

ACDI/VOCA, SNV, Agricultural Transformation Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research



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