

A STUDY ON MILK PRODUCTION IN THE AMPARA DISTRICT

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Dairy farming has been an integral part of the rural economy of Sri Lanka. At present, the milk production only meets about 26 percent of national milk requirement. The largest cattle populations and low milk productions are reported from the dry and intermediate zones. Therefore, a detailed investigation of the present status of milk production, constraints and problems of milk production in the Ampara District, in dry zone is timely and relevant.

This study was conducted in the Ampara district from September 2009 to February 2010. Stratified random sampling method was used for 120 dairy farmers from 24 villages.

The study revealed that, only 25% of dairy farmers rely on livestock farming alone and 54% dairy farmers practicing extensive system. Only 17.5% of farmers were rearing diary animal for milk purpose. The study proved that almost all the animal present in the surveyed area were indigenous and cross breeds and there were only 6% of farmers were practicing artificial insemination only. The average milk production from the indigenous cattle, cross breed cattle and buffalo were 1.31 litre / animal / day, 2.65 litre / animal / day and 2.92 litre / animal / day, respectively. The average lactation period was 7.6 months while average calving interval was 14.6 months. In the study area, majority of farmers (95%) complained on constraints and problems of resource availability, 74% of farmers on economic, 69% of farmers on technical and 61% of farmers on marketing.

The potential for dairy farming in the Ampara district was under utilized. This district can contribute in greater proportion to the economy of country through the development of the dairy production and removing constraints and problems of dairy farming in the Ampara district.

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