

EVALUATION OF THE PERFORMANCE OF SMALL AND MEDIUM HOLD  
CATTLE FARMING UNDER CURRENT FEEDING PRACTICES AND  
POTENTIAL FEED RESOURCES IN HOROWPOTHANA DS DIVISION OF  
ANURADHAPURA DISTRICT



By

MAHMOOD ATHEM AHAMED AHZAN



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## ABSTRACT

Horowpothana Divisional Secretariat (DS) of Anuradhapura district is famous for agriculture activities such as paddy cultivation and animal husbandry. Next to paddy cultivation, the income source of farmers is animal husbandry especially cattle production which was mostly reared for milking purpose (100%) under different type of rearing system such as tethering, extensive, semi intensive and intensive. There was mostly observed tethering of small holders and extensive systems in medium holders were mostly observed rearing system in the Horowpothana DS division.

The study was conducted in Horowpothana DS division for a period of four months (May 2015 to August 2015) by using a questionnaire based survey system. A total of 100 small and 100 medium hold cattle farmers from 8 GN divisions of Horowpothana DS division were interviewed using a formal questionnaire. The questionnaire included issues on socio economic condition of farmers, data on cattle farming; data on cattle production, problems faced by the cattle farmers and extension services.

The study revealed that more than half of the small (52%) and medium (54%) hold cattle farmers had cattle farming experience more than 2 years, which is sufficient for better management and care for more milk production. Almost 77% of the small hold cattle farmers were practicing tethering rearing system while 53% of medium hold cattle farmers were adopting extensive system. All farmers were rearing cattle for milk purpose. With regard to educational level, most of the smallholders were coming under secondary level (49%) but mediumholders 43% under primary level and another 9% and 15% of small and mediumholders were not even schooled. Most of farmers reared their cattle under grazing while no one fed their cattle with concentrates.

Most of the farmers reported that the major constraint (100%) in farm was high cost for concentrate feeds followed by lack of knowledge about concentrate, poor performance of cattle, lack of credit facilities, and lack of water due to the drought.

The result of the study showed that the small and medium hold cattle farming increase the farmer's annual income significantly. This enables them to feed their family more months than before because of most of farmer's occupation were in other jobs such as labour, carpenter and small business.

To conclude, the implementation of small and medium hold cattle farming highly benefited the farmers in improving their livelihood. But the management systems were very poor, in some special cases like rearing system and feeding specially concentrate feeding. By improving these practices, performance of cattle farming in the Horowpothana DS division will enhance in future.

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