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Identification of Field-Level Implementation Issues of Dairy Cattle Breeding Policy in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Dairy cattle breeding is a long-term process of selection and mating of cattle. Sri Lanka has a well-defined comprehensive and legalized Dairy Cattle Breeding Policy (CBP). Artificial Insemination (AI) is the primary tool that use to implement the dairy cattle breeding programme. However, typically cattle breeding is just a mating focusing only on the immediate progeny and there is a distinct gap between the scientific recommendations of CBP and the implementation at the farmers' level. Hence this study was conducted to identify the implementation gap of the policy recommendations. The data were collected via pre-tested questionnaires from cluster-based purposively selected 103 Livestock Development Instructors(LDIs) representing all the agro-climatic zones. The degree of following of CBP was analyzed with a Mean score index and Kruskal-Wallis test, which was applied to test whether there is any significant difference in the level of the above score by provinces. Chi-squared test was used to find out whether there is significant associations between the degree of following up the policy and the profile factors of LDIs. The majority of the LDIs (97%) were aware of the CBP. 57% and 34% of LDIs have recommended the CBP(2010) without any change and with minor amendments respectively. The majority of the LDIs (96%) conduct dairy cattle breeding following a specific breeding plan. The Central Province has shown a significantly higher level of following the CBP ($P < 0.05$) while it was least in Eastern Province. Moreover, gender and age of LDIs are associated with the degree of following the CBP ($P < 0.05$). Semen of some of the recommended breeds such as Ayrshire and Sahiwal were not available at the field level and 75% of LDIs intensively use Girolando semen without official recommendations due to its popularity and unavailability of some recommended semen types. In conclusion, the existing CBP(2010) has been recommended by the LDIs as a comprehensive guideline for local dairy development. but there is a distinct implementation gap in the policy recommendations and it must be addressed by the relevant authorities for a successful CBP at the farmers' level.

Keywords: *Dairy cattle breeding policy, Field implementation, Issues, Sri Lanka*