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Intensification of Smallholder Livestock Production through Utilization of Crop Residues for Livestock Feed in Tanzania



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"Solidarity in a competing world - fair use of resources"

Ben Lukuyu¹, Gregory Sikumba², Job Kihara³ and Mateete Bekunda⁴

¹International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), ASSP, Kenya

²International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Tropical Soil Biology and Fertility (TSBF), Kenya

³International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Tanzania

Corresponding author email: b.lukuyu@cgiar.org

Introduction

Babati district in Manyara region, Tanzania is a high potential mixed crop livestock production area producing crop and animal sourced foods for major urban areas in northern Tanzania. With expansion of arable land and resultant decline in grazing resources, crop residues are becoming an increasingly important component of livestock feeds and a key livelihood resource in these systems. Although farmers in Babati district already practice diversified farming system, the crop and livestock components co-exist more or less independently from each other. A series of studies were conducted to characterize the use of crop residues for livestock feed as an option for enhancing intensification on smallholder farms.

Research activities undertaken

- Used the Feed Assessment tool (FEAST) to characterize the types, distribution and use of crop residues in existing livestock production systems in Babati.
- Quantified stover yield on farms (Figure 2).
- Introduced feed choppers through village learning approaches and assessed their performance under farm conditions.

Key findings

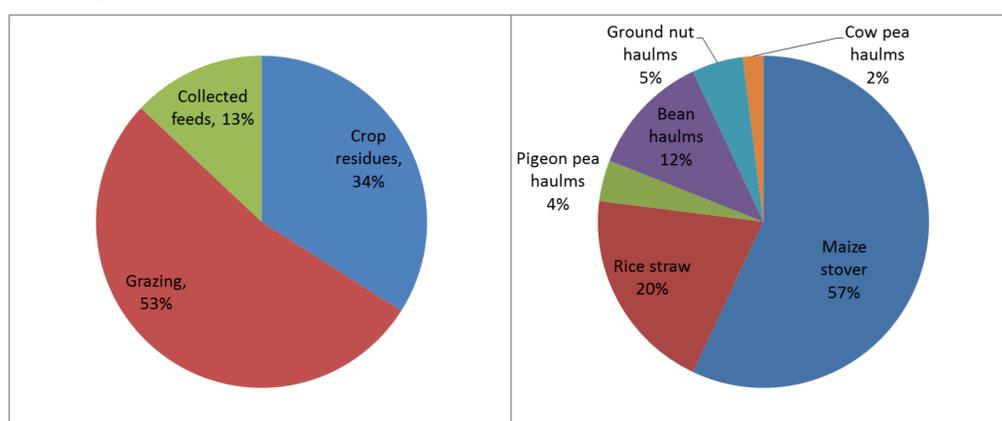
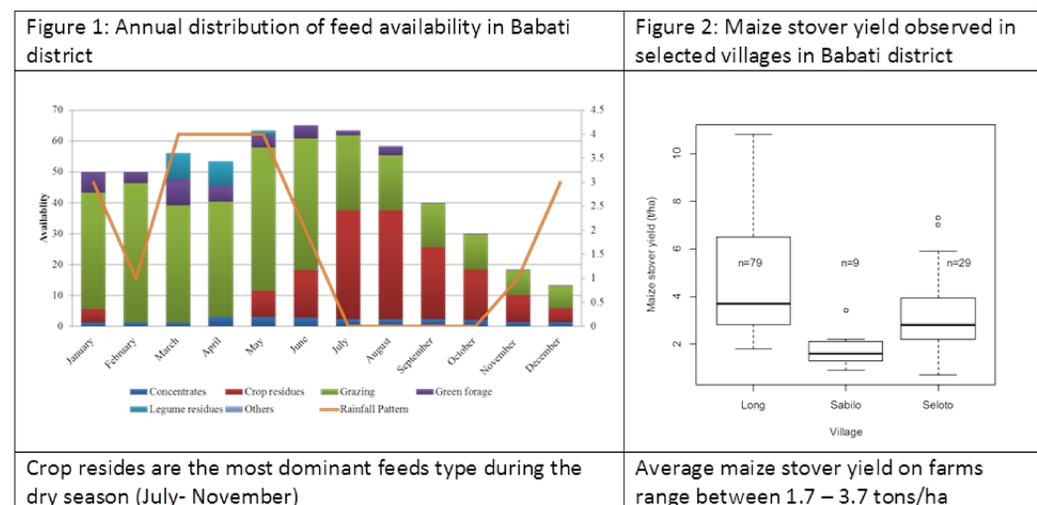


Figure 3. The contribution of crop residues in general and of different types to livestock diets



Un-chopped crop residues stored on a farm



Chopped crop residues stored on a farm

- Crop residues are the most dominant feed type during the dry season (July- November- Figure 1)
- Average maize stover yield on farms ranges between 1.7 – 3.7 tons/ha (Figure 2), enough to feed a cow for 213 - 463 days (7-15 months).
- Crop residues contribute 34% of the total feeds available on farm in Babati where grazing and collected feeds contributes 53% and 13% of the diet respectively (Figure 3a).
- Maize stover is the most abundant and commonly used crop residue (Figure 3b)
- There is a lot of feed waste on farms due to poor feeding troughs (Plate 1)

Figure 3: Nutrient composition of crop residues in Babati district

Type of crop residue	Nutrient composition	
	Crude protein (%)	INOMD (%)
Maize stover	5.9	40
Rice straw	4.3	30
Bean haulms	8.8	56
Groundnut haulms	13	64
Pigeon pea haulms	10	56
Cow pea haulms	14	64

Farmers training on use of choppers



The output capacity of forage chopped for different feed types on farm.

Type of crop residue	Form of residue	Amount chopped (kg/hour)
Crop residues		
Beans/Rice straw	Dry	72
Maize Stover	Dry	137
Napier grass	Green (wet)	400
Grain residues		
Maize	Broken grain	72
Sunflower Cake	Fine flakes	51
Maize cobs	Fine flakes	53

Figure 4: The output capacity of forage of different feed types on

Testing of feed choppers and maize stover baler:

- On average, it took two (2) hours less time to chop crop residues when using a forage chopper compared to a machete (panga).
- The forage chopping machine chopped 137 kg/hour of maize stover (Plate 4).
- We successfully demonstrated to farmers in Babati that forage choppers can have a very significant role in reducing forage wastage and labour (time and cost) required to harvest and process feeds.



Plate 1: Poor troughs lead to a lot of feed wastage on farms



Plate 2: A farmer transporting maize Stover for feeding cattle

