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## Preliminary Report on Nutritive Value of Tree Foliages Available In Yezin Area, Myanmar

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### Abstract

Tree leaves are considered to be the most abundant protein source in nature. These form a bulk of ruminant diets in tropical, arid and semi-arid, and hilly regions. Conventionally, tree foliages have been fed together with agricultural by-products, mainly crop residues, containing low levels of nitrogen to enhance rumen microbial fermentation and hence the animal productivity. In Myanmar, the use of tree leaves has received little attention in the feeding systems for ruminants, mainly because of inadequate knowledge on their nutritive value. We have undertaken studies to:

- evaluate the nutritive values of locally available tree foliages,
- conduct feeding trials and assess the feeding value of tree foliages in large
- evaluate the nutritive values of locally available tree foliages,
- conduct feeding trials and assess the feeding value of tree foliages in large and small ruminants,
- examine the usage of tree foliages as replacement of commercial concentrates,
- introduce tree foliages as protein supplements in Urea Molasses Multinutrient Blocks (UMMB), and
- transfer feeding strategies to farmers in the region.

This paper reports our preliminary findings on some nutritive value parameters. Proximate analyses of leaves from 30 species of trees were carried out from October 2001 to March 2002. The values of DM (8.3–86.5%), OM (66.89–98.05%), CP (8.03–32.43%), neutral detergent fibre (16.93–71.10%), and acid detergent fibre (7.37–53.10%), respectively. These results suggest that some of tree leaves, (e.g., *Fluggea leucopyru*, *Leucaena leucocephala* and *Gliricidia sepium*, with CP levels 28.78%, 22.0%, 18.64% respectively) could be good sources of protein for ruminants. Dried *L. leucocephala* leaves have been incorporated in the UMMB at 8% level. Acceptability and intake studies on these blocks and their response on dairy cows in Yezin area are being investigated.

**Keywords:** Nutritive values, tree foliages