



Tropentag, October 5-7, 2011, Bonn

“Development on the margin”

Identification of a Suitable Farm Type for the Development of Smallholder Beef Production in a Mountainous Province of Northern Vietnam

HUYEN LE THI THANH¹, THI TUYET VAN DINH², PERA HEROLD¹, ANNE VALLE ZÁRATE¹

¹ *University of Hohenheim, Dept. of Animal Production in the Tropics and Subtropics, Germany*

² *University of Hohenheim, Dept. of Agricultural Economics and Social Sciences in the Tropics and Subtropics, Germany*

Abstract

In Vietnam, beef is in a high national demand. The aim of this study is to identify the farm type and socio-economic conditions of the household farm suitable for the development of smallholder beef production in mountainous regions of northern Vietnam.

This study was conducted on a stratified sample of 2 farm types: smallholder mixed farms with individual integrated crop and livestock production (small farms) and smallholder mixed farms with a tendency to increased herd size based on natural pastures and cooperative organisation (medium farms) in the uplands of Son La province. Further, data from a representative random sample of 299 smallholder mixed farms were collected in a second survey. In this survey, the relative poverty status of the household was assessed using terciles, based on per-capita daily expenditure as a measure of monetary poverty or wealth.

Results of the first survey show that lowland small farms had higher costs for cattle than medium and small farms in the highland, those having access to communal pastures. Lowland small farms had high outputs from the non-market value of cattle, while small and medium highland farms had high output from stock value. This was due to the fact that the small farms in the lowland kept fewer cattle than the small and medium farms in the highland (average of 2 cattle per farm compared with 4 cattle per farm and 9 cattle per farm, respectively) because of forage and labour shortage. In the highland, medium farms working as groups of farms kept more cattle than the individual small farms. The results of the second survey show that better-off farmers reduced competition between cattle with other livestock species by more frequent adoption of innovations, while poor farmers reduce the numbers of animals. For the poorest farmers small animals were more suitable than cattle. In conclusion, smallholder cattle keeping in the study region has not yet been practised as a beef production activity to generate regular income. Highland farms organising cattle keeping cooperatively based on natural pastures and thus saving labour were identified as the most promising farm type for future development of profitable beef production.

Keywords: Cattle production, interdependency, livestock production, mountainous regions, poverty levels, Vietnam