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The Contribution of Community Livestock Workers to Animal Production in Rural Ghana

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Abstract

A two month survey was undertaken to determine the contributions of community livestock workers (CLWs) to animal health and production in the Savelugu/Nanton District of the Northern Region of Ghana. In all, 100 respondents consisting of 80 livestock farmers and 20 CLWs were interviewed. From the CLWs, information on their particular activities was gathered, species of animals covered, activities carried out and charges per activity per animal and earnings per CLW per year were obtained. The farmers on the other hand provided information on the period for which they have worked with CLWs, how they thought the work of CLWs could be enhanced, what activities were undertaken by the various personnel, what prophylactic measures they took, what species of animals they kept and why they kept them. They also provided their opinions on which species of animals were more susceptible to diseases and what in their views were the causes of these diseases.

Sheep (1282) was the dominant species of animal handled by CLWs, while pigs (93) were the least. Deticking was the activity mostly (1484 animals) carried out by CLWs, while veterinary personnel mostly (59) carried out deworming. Most (50%) of the farmers became aware of the CLWs concept over 3 years ago. Most of the deworming (82.5%) and ectoparasites control (57.5%) were carried out by CLWs while vaccinations were mostly (75%) carried out by veterinary personnel. Most of the Farmers were of the view that provision of veterinary drugs to CLWs would help enhance their services. The highest proportion (37.5%) of farmers kept both sheep and goats. Animals were mainly kept for income. Half of the farmers' interviewed were the view that the species of animals most susceptible to infections was sheep, and about the same proportion believed that these diseases were caused by harsh environmental conditions and contact between the sick animals with their livestock. Most farmers occasionally dewormed (87%) their flocks and applied acaricide (97.5%) on their animals as a prophylactic measure.

Keywords: Acaricide, livestock workers, prophylactic, rural community, vaccination