Tropentag, September 18-21, 2016, Vienna, Austria

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

Inhibiting Factors and Promotion Strategies for Increasing Adoption Levels of Improved Forages in Cattle Production

Lisbeth Rocio Ruiz[1], Stefan Burkart[2], Jhon Jairo Muñoz Quiceno[1], Karen Enciso[2], Jhon Freddy Gutierrez Solis[2], Andres Charry[3], Cristhian David Puerta Rodriguez[2], Nelson José Vivas Quila[1], Noé Albán Lopez[1], Sandra Morales Velasco[1], Michael Peters[2]

[1] *University of Cauca, Dept. of Agricultural Sciences, Colombia*
[2] *International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Colombia*
[3] *University of Hohenheim, Institute for Farm Management, Germany*

Abstract

In Colombia, cattle farming is the economic activity of greatest relevance in the rural environment, contributing to 53 % of the agricultural GDP and 1.3 % of the overall GDP. However, extensive management prevails, based on the use of native and / or naturalized pastures on soils of low to medium fertility, which limits the forage supply for prolonged periods of drought, leading to low productivity and increased production costs due to the additional use of concentrates and supplements.

Considering this problem, researchers from the University of Cauca and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) have been working for ¿ 10 years in the Colombian Cauca Department on investigating processes of adoption, diffusion and transfer of improved forage technologies among small and medium scale livestock producers, which allow maintaining the feed supply in terms of quantity and quality throughout the whole year and contributing to the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions, while also promoting socio-economic and environmental sustainability of the livestock production system. The results of these studies demonstrate the acceptability of improved forages among livestock producers, however adoption levels are still low.

For this reason and in order to identify strategies for adoption by small and medium scale livestock producers, between October and November 2015, a semi-quantitative study was conducted with 310 producers in the Colombian Cauca Department (Patía and Mercaderes Municipalities). In June 2016, participatory diagnostic workshops will be organised for gathering the perception of the participants related to improved grasses and legumes. The obtained information will be analysed and the hypothesis that the level of knowledge about the management and establishment of improved forages, as well as the access to resources (positively or negatively) influence the adoption level will be tested. Based on these results, factors that inhibit adoption will be identified and recommendations for both producers and regional authorities will be formulated to support the design of strategies for a wider adoption of improved forages, contributing to sustainable intensification of livestock systems, productivity increase and climate change mitigation.

Keywords: Adoption, cattle, climate change, improved forages

Contact Address: Stefan Burkart, International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Tropical Forages Program, Km 17 Recta Cali-Palmira, Cali, Colombia, e-mail: s.burkart@cgiar.org