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Assessing Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices of Small-scale Commercial Feed Producers in Uganda

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Abstract

In Uganda, pig production is a major source of livelihood for more than 1.1 million households. Pigs have increased from < 200,000 three decades ago to roughly 3.2 million today. Availability of well formulated and balanced rations for dairy cattle feeding is a major constraint limiting pig production. About 33 % of the dairy farmers use compounded dairy concentrate feed while nearly 56 % use feed ingredients. The commercial feed industry is dominated by small-scale feed compounders. Despite an abundance of energy based and protein-based ingredients, farmers continue to lament about the high prices, poor quality and limited access to compounded feeds. To improve quality of compounded feeds on the market, it is important to understand knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAPs) of small-scale feed producers. A study was conducted to investigate the KAPs of small-scale commercial feed producers in four districts in Uganda. Eighty commercial feed producers were randomly selected and interviewed. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. A Chi-square test was utilised to define the statistical difference between groups. Principal component analysis (PCA) was used to create attitudinal typologies. The results showed that over 50 % of the respondents were small-scale feed producers producing 0.2–2 tons per day. However, feed producers varied by gender, whereby 83 % were males and 24 % were females. Some 50 % of the male and female feed producers knew about protein requirement of piglets. Only 42 % demonstrated awareness about quality and safety standards. Of these, 47 % were knowledgeable about feed standards. Four attitudinal feed producer typologies i.e. quality Laissez-faire, knowledge, profit-oriented, and customer-oriented were identified. The common feed ingredients are maize bran (100 % among males and 92 % among female feed producers). Fishmeal, cottonseed cake, and sunflower cake are the dominant sources of protein. All respondents interviewed did not test for feed quality. Small-scale feed producers are aware of feed ingredients used in feed formulation. However, there are gaps in knowledge, attitudes, and practices about feeding standards, policies, regulation, production, use and marketing of feed. These findings will inform farmers, practitioners, and policy makers about potential interventions to improve feed production, use and marketing in Uganda.

Keywords: Compounded feeds, feed quality, feeding standards, pig feeding, pig production