

Assessment of Feeding and Watering Practices for Raising Goats in Punjab, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT: Household surveys were conducted to assess feeding and watering practices and cost for rearing goats at two sites (Bahawalpur and Faisalabad) in Punjab, Pakistan. Farmers (n=300, 50 from each of six villages) were interviewed regarding various types of feeding and watering management and cost incurred on feeding goats. Common feed stuffs and involvement of gender in rearing goats were found similar at both sites. Feeding on waste lands was the main source of feeding. Ponds and rivers were the main watering source at one site while hand pump was the main water source at the other site. Offering water twice a day was the most common practice. Sites differed for various feeding and watering practices. Training of farmers on better utilization of available resources and improvement of pasture lands along with other necessities would enhance goat productivity, thus leading towards efficient utilization of available genetic resources.

Keywords: Feeding and watering practices, feeding cost, feeding types, household surveys

INTRODUCTION

Goats are important in food security concern as well as supplementary income generation for the rural households. A major segment of the people is inhabitants of rural areas and they keep a large proportion of livestock particularly goats. Goats are usually considered as zero input animals as no special feedings are offered. Common management practices done in rural areas for goat production needed elaboration. Household survey provides a key tool to such exploration. Present study was conducted to investigate the type of feeding stuff, management practices and related cost involved in goat production in rural areas of the Punjab, Pakistan.

METHODOLOGY

Household survey was conducted in two districts of the Punjab viz. Bahawalpur (Site-I) and Faisalabad (Site-II) from Jun 2010 to Dec 2012. Site-I was located south of the Sutlej River and lies in the *Cholistan* region. Site-II was located in Faisalabad district with the river Ravi flowing on the Eastern and the Chenab on the Western boundaries. Three villages were randomly selected from both the sites.

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Household survey

There were two type of households; goat owners and non-owners. The household (HH) survey was conducted for only the goat owners sampled randomly. In each village, from a complete list of households, owners of the goats were identified. The required number ($n=50$ in each village) of goat were included in the survey. Five “additional” households were selected in case a household refuses to participate in the survey. A community leader, or a person of similar category was tasked to inform the selected households in advance of the survey and their consent and the availability for the interview were confirmed.

The following information was collected as per questioner/ proforma regarding management of goat; feeding stuff/type, feeding cost (PKR), amount fed (kg), sources for feed purchase, watering practices in different seasons, watering frequency, feeding and water management *etc.* The data thus collected were analyzed applying Chi square test by using SPSS software (SPSS, 1999).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Household survey revealed important features about rural livestock and livestock production system. The common livestock species found in these sites were cattle, goat, chicken and donkey.

Feeding practices

Farmers offered different materials for feeding their goats. Most of the farmers used commercial concentrates at both experimental sites. Majority of farmers at Site-I grazed their goats whereas, feed were provided to goats at Site-II. The differences for various feed types between two sites were significant ($P<0.01$) for almost all of the feed stuffs except for wheat straw, kitchen waste and concentrates (Table 1).

Purchase of feed

Site-I and II differed significantly ($P<0.05$) for cost of feed. The differences between villages were also significant for feeding cost and amount fed. Similarly there was significant ($P<0.05$) difference between two sites with regards to amount fed (Table 2). The experimental sites have significant differences for sources of feed ($P<0.01$) as shown in Table 3. Most of the farmers at site-II purchased feed from other sources and not from the main markets (Table 3). It seemed that either approach to main market was difficult or they did not find enough time to go to the market.

Table 1. Feed type used by farmers at two sites

Feed type	Farmers at Site-I	Farmers at Site-II	Significance level
Rice straw	11	26	0.001
Wheat straw	8	9	0.643
Kitchen waste	9	9	0.901
Commercial concentrates	32	31	0.650
Grazing on cropland	70	8	0.000
Green fodder	1	18	0.000
Feed ingredients	23	37	0.001

Table 2. Average amount of feed and feeding cost (PKR) per head for 6 months study period

Village	Amount fed (kg)		Feeding cost (PKR)	
	Site-I	Site-II	Site-I	Site-II
I	1.67	1.76*	4504.2±3757.4**	1954.0±2226.3
II	1.57	1.76*	823.9±1502.3**	4892.9±6862.2
III	1.67 ^{NS}	1.60	2080.3±3394.7	2091.3±3356.0
Overall	1.64	1.71*	2439.6±3099.5*	3260.5±5153.3

*=P<0.05; **=P<0.01; NS=Non-significant; 1PKR=0.01USD

Feeding and watering management

The variations of watering sources in different seasons are shown in Table 4. Ponds were the main watering sources in different villages at Bahawalpur. Number of farmers providing water from river, pond, hand pump and other sources differed significantly between two sites for all seasons. For watering frequency, two sites differed significantly except for 'throughout the day' and 'other' watering practices (Table 5). The two sites showed differences with regard to the household member who involved in watering activities for goats (Table 6). Cost of watering (in PKR) was significantly ($P<0.01$) higher at Site-II (90.5 ± 240.6) than at Site-I (52.9 ± 117.4). The differences between sites for 'who waters', who prepares feed' and 'who feeds goats' are given in Table 8, most of these attributes were significant. The feeding stuffs those are normally used for feeding goats were almost similar at both sites. Feeding practices depended upon the availability of pastures, household labour and time. Usually no other labourers were hired for feeding or watering goats. Some keeper offered commercial feeds in order to optimize growth to get maximum profits. Panin (2000) reported that farmers showed interest in keeping small ruminants for reasons such as lesser investment, less expenditure and easiness in keeping and potential source of income. Ayalew *et al.* (2003) reported that the net benefit from goat farming decides the interest of farmers in crossbred goats. Study of Ellis (2003) showed that poverty was strongly associated with lack of livestock and agricultural land. These observations justify that livestock/goats would provide additional income thus supporting the family. Our results also were in line with that of Finan (2011)

who highlighted the participation of women in goat keeping. It suggests that livestock plays a major role in poverty reduction by channelling poor farmers through proper marketing facilities to receive a good price for their product and produce.

Table 3. Sources of feed purchase

Source of Feed	Site-I	Site-II	Significance level
Market	1	6	0.002
Local shop	4	26	0.000
Other places	5	34	0.000

¹No. of farmers

Table 4. Watering practices at both sites in different seasons

Source [#]	Spring		Summer		Rainy season		Winter	
	Site-I	Site-II	Site-I	Site-II	Site-I	Site-II	Site-I	Site-II
River	26*	9	26*	9	26*	9	26*	10
Well	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	2
Pond	52**	3	52**	5	52**	4	52**	3
Pipe water	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0
Hand pump	7	96**	7	96**	7	96**	7	95**
Others	34*	12	34*	12	34*	12	34*	12

*=P<0.05; **=P<0.01; [#]No. of farmers

Table 5. Watering frequency at two sites

Watering frequency	[#] Site-I	[#] Site-II	Significance level
Once a day	4	27	0.004
Twice a day	87	71	0.048
Thrice a day	28	17	0.001
Through the day	0	2	0.509
Other	1	5	0.643

[#]No. of farmers who responded to questionnaire

Table 6. Household member participation in watering

Household member	Farmers at Site-I	Farmers at Site-II	Significance Level
Household (HH) head	26	9	0.001
Spouse	35	34	0.901
All members	19	20	0.564
Head's father	1	0	0.800
Head's mother	1	0	0.800
Son/daughter	19	23	0.520
Hired labour	2	1	0.553
All or any HH member	11	8	0.049
Others	2	2	0.850

Table 7. Feeding and watering management of goats at two experimental sites

Household member ^s	Who waters		Who prepares feed		Who feeds goats	
	Site-I	Site-II	Site-I	Site-II	Site-I	Site-II
Men	53	49	64	59	60	60
Women	42*	28	26*	19	31	27
Children	2	8*	1	8*	1	7*
All or any adult	17*	7	14*	6	15*	6
All or any HH member	7	14*	6	13*	6	13*

*=P<0.05; ^sNo of farmers

CONCLUSIONS

Rural farmers offered cheaper and easily available feed stuffs for goats. Supply of pure and fresh water was costly and drew considerable expenses in keeping goats. Feeding and watering practices differs from place to place. Farmers training to better utilize available resources and improvement of pasture lands and other necessities would enhance goat productivity and lead towards efficient utilization of available genetic resources. It is foreseen that increase in flock size, development of grazing lands and pastures and enough watering facilities would improve goat production in the rural Punjab in Pakistan, and would lead towards poverty alleviation.

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