

Corn Fodder Production in Southern Mindanao Its Impact to Farmers and Role in Feedlot Operation

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ABSTRACT

Feedlot operations in Southern Mindanao based on corn fodder is well established in Mindanao. Farmers grow fodder corn for the feedlot operations. Production of fodder corn has generated additional employment in the area and generates more income compared to grain production.

INTRODUCTION

Southern Mindanao is composed of the provinces of Compostela Valley, Davao, Davao Sur, Davao Oriental, Sarranggani and South Cotabato with the cities of Davao and General Santos. The region has a total land area of 2.7 M ha with agriculture as the major preoccupation of the people. Rice, corn, and coconut are the main crop, large-scale plantations of banana and pineapple for export are found in the region. Raising of livestock, particularly cattle, carabao and pigs is an important component of farming. Raising of cattle-feedlot is found in General Santos City and South Cotabato.

Raising of cattle in feedlot

There are 25 feedlot operators in Southern Mindanao which are concentrated in General Santos City area. These feedlots solely depend upon importation of cattle from Australia for their feeder stocks and upon fodder corns the principal feed in the ration. Table 1 shows the number of cattle imported from Australia and the estimated actual roughage requirement in terms of fodder corn which are chopped and fed in the feedlots. The chopped corn is generally called "green corn chop" in the area.

Table 1. Cattle importation and utilization of corn fodder, 1996-2000.

ITEM	YEAR					TOTAL
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	
Cattle Importation (No.)	77,036	109,310	76,997	89,158	90,166	442,667
Roughage Requirement ('000)	46.2	65.6	46.2	53.5	54.1	265.6
Actual Consumption ('000 tons)	42.1	48.0	36.4	52.8	55.2	234.6
** Value in Pesos	31.6	36.0	27.3	39.6	41.4	176.0

*20 Kg per day x 30 days fattening period

**P 0.75 per Kg buying price (US \$ 1 = Php 52.1)

Generation of employment

Corn fodder production for feedlot operations in Southern Mindanao has generated employment for farm families and laborers who are involved in harvesting and chopping. In general, harvesters are employed by "truckers" who buy the standing corn fodder crop from the farmers and haul them to the feedlots. Choppers are employed by the feedlot operations. Total manpower employed for the corn fodder production is estimated to be 800 thousand man-days with a value of Php 130 million.

Income of corn farmers

Table 2 shows the comparative cost and return from fodder and grain corn

production of farmers in Southern Mindanao. Annual return per hectare per year of Php 58.4 thousand is obtained by farmers who grow corn for fodder, while those growing for grains get only Php 24 thousand. With corn fodder, farmer can have 4 crops per year compared to only two crops for grain corn.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Feedlot operations in Mindanao has benefited a good number of small farmers and workers. In fact, farmers growing corn for fodder claims that they have assured income compared to grain corn farmers because even if drought occur and there is crop failures or there is infestation, they still harvest some fodder

Table 2. Annual cost and return from corn fodder and grain production.

Item	Fodder Production	Grain Production
Yield/Cropping (tons)	40	3.5
Gross sales ('000 Php)	80	42
	(4 croppings)	(2 croppings)
Production costs ('000 Php) (seeds, fertilizer, weeding)	21.6	18
		(Inclusive of harvesting, shelling and drying.)
Net Income ('000) Php	58.4	24

