

## Research Application Summary

### **Assessment of goat production systems and social-economic factors affecting demand of goats and goat meat in Malawi**

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#### **Abstract**

Little information exists of demand parameters for goats and goat meat despite seasonality of the demand. Demand for goat meat in Malawi is high during religious festivals, cultural celebrations and when households are food insecure. Food insecure households sell goats to purchase food and for livelihood. The study will document intermediaries and their roles in the goat and goat meat marketing chain. In addition, the study will evaluate goat meat production systems and provide knowledge and skills for quality slaughter and handling of goat meat.

**Key words:** Goat meat demand, Malawi, marketing, production

#### **Résumé**

Peu d'informations existent sur les paramètres de la demande de chèvres et de viande de chèvre, malgré la saisonnalité de la demande. La demande de viande de chèvre au Malawi est élevé lors des fêtes religieuses, les fêtes culturelles et lorsque les ménages sont en insécurité alimentaire. Les ménages en insécurité alimentaire vendent leurs chèvres pour acheter de la nourriture et d'autres moyens de subsistance. L'étude permettra de documenter les intermédiaires et leurs rôles dans la chaîne de commercialisation de chèvre et de la viande de chèvre. En outre, l'étude évaluera les systèmes de production de viande de chèvre et fournir des connaissances et des compétences pour l'abattage et la manipulation de la qualité de la viande de chèvre.

**Mots clés:** La demande en viande de chèvre, Malawi, le marketing, la production

#### **Background**

Livestock statistics show that among the 14 million Malawians, there are 3 people per goat as compared to 12 per cattle and 50 per sheep in Malawi (DALHD, 2011). Estimated total per capita domestic supply of all meat in 2007 was 9.45kg per year and beef went down from 45% in 1997 to 22% in 2007. However, goat meat has increased from 10% in 1997 to 16% (Banda,

2008). Sixty percent of households keeping goats in the southern and central part of Malawi cultivate less than 1ha (Banda and Sichinga, 2001). Climate change effects like low rainfall which results in low crop yields, makes such farm families to survive by selling goats for food security and livelihood. Goat meat demand is also increasing in urban and rural areas with 30 goats slaughtered and sold on market days.

Goat marketing is dominated by smallholder producers and not commercial companies. Among other constraints for Commercial Company's involvement is low quality, uneven supply and lack of uniform carcasses. The National livestock policy is silent on specific goat marketing policy. As such, quality of goats and goat meat supply, goat meat consumption patterns and profitability is unregulated. Therefore, this study will evaluate goat productions systems for meat production and determine major economic and socio-demographic factors affecting the demand of goat and goat meat in various regional locations of Malawi. The study will serve as an entry point towards developing a market oriented production and demand for goat and goat meat in Malawi. The findings will provide evidence to develop and regulate environment for small scale goat producers and sellers to produce goats and goat meat in sufficient supply and of high and uniform quality as demanded by consumer markets. The accrued benefits will include improved food security and livelihood.

## Literature Summary

Goat meat has become increasingly important in diets of rural, urban and peri-urban Malawians (Banda, 2008). Previous studies on supply and demand of goat meat concentrated on seasonality of supply and preferences of Malawians (Banda *et al.*, 2000; Banda 2008). Goat meat marketing involves several entrepreneurs and a number of middlemen in processing of goat and goat meat. Different types of intermediaries existed in the chain of marketing of live goats (Bashin and Devendra, 1988) but this has not been determined for Malawi. One of the major constraints to engaging the commercial companies in goat processing is quality and quantity of goat meat. Challenges related to low quality and quantity of goat meat is partly due to limited efforts to provide knowledge and skills in adequate hygienic slaughtering and meat handling under rural conditions which affects meat preservation.

## Study Description

Animal science research will evaluate goat meat production systems on-farm and on-station along with assessment of

acceptability of products of different goat production systems. Different feeding systems and goat breeds will be evaluated for their effect on productivity and profitability. Some animals raised by different systems will be processed by Kapani Processing Company and meat characteristics, consumer preferences evaluated by organoleptic methods. Major socio-economic factors affecting demand for goat and goat meat will also be studied. The study will identify key players and their roles in the goat marketing chain, how consumption relates to income and socio-demographic factors and any substitution between goat meat and beef due differences in availability and prices. The study will use value chain approach which is defined as a sequence of target-oriented combination of production factors that create a marketable product or service from its conception to the final consumption (ILO, 2006). The study will be done in 4 phases; (i) development and pre-testing of questionnaires; (ii), collection of secondary data; (iii) detailed market surveys, and (iv) data collection from various market channels.

### **Research Application**

The research is expected to establish market-oriented goat and goat meat production; it will also identify weaknesses in the goat value chain. Moreover, major economic and socio-demographic factors affecting demand of goat and goat meat will be assessed. The study will thus provide evidence and guidelines for improved marketing of goat and goat meat to ensure win-win situation for farmers and other stakeholders, while providing quality and right quantities of product for the market and the consumer.

### **Acknowledgement**

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