

SWAZILAND

GOVERNMENT

LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT POLICY

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & CO-OPERATIVES
MBABANE**

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Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to present this vital policy document for the livestock sector in Swaziland which has had to be harmonized and standardized.

This Livestock Development Policy aims at achieving self-sufficiency in the livestock sector in the immediate term and at achieving a sustainable livestock industry in the long-term.


Paramount in this policy initiative is the commercialization of livestock development, the application of Intensive and Cost effective measures in livestock production and health including small ruminants and the improvement of range management practices in order to achieve increased and sustainable livestock offtake levels.

The strategies through which these measures would be achieved are identified in this document. The formation of community livestock group schemes inclusive of women and youth will serve as the main vehicle for livestock development, whilst the integration of all participants as partners within the livestock industry chain vis-à-vis, the producers, traders, processors and the government will form the backbone through which the sustainability of the industry would be ensured.

Needless to say that the document will continue to be reviewed from time to time in order to ensure that it remains relevant to the changing times and the local and international environments.

Regarding the preparation of this document, I am highly indebted to the staff of my Ministry who contributed directly in the preparation of this document and sacrificed much of their spare time to ensure its completion.

Finally, to the members of the general public and especially those concerned with the livestock sector, its development and sustenance, it is my sincere hope that this policy document will provide the necessary guidance on the direction and the goals that the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives intends to pursue and achieve in the long-term.


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MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATIVES

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1.0 Introduction

Agriculture in Swaziland continues to be the dominant feature and driving force in the socio-economic development of the Swazi people. Together with the Agro-based industries, it is responsible for keeping about 75% of the Swazi work force in gainful employment. Further, it has direct impact on the government policy of curbing urban migration through optimizing income generating opportunities in the rural areas.

Swaziland has two broad categories of land tenure systems, Title Deed Land (TDL) and Swazi National Land (SNL) which now constitutes about 80% of the total land mass. Of fundamental importance is that in both forms of tenure, there is no act or law enacted to govern the rational utilization and conservation of this important resource. The TDL category mostly engages in commercial agriculture characterized by some form of stewardship exercised although not vigorously. The SNL category where the strong local traditional hierarchical institutions exist, utilization is characterized by the total absence of stewardship. Under this tenure system, utilization of the rangelands is communal; and therefore subjected to uncontrolled high livestock population densities. It is here that the problems of declining range and livestock productivity have been a constant cause for concern over the last fifty years.

Farming, especially livestock and crop production in SNL a historical feature of the Swazi. Food crop production was mainly for subsistence purposes and of less economic significance. On the other hand, livestock production was given more significance for both social and economic reasons. This maybe explained in the following:

- 1) Livestock provided for the family needs such as draught power, manure, transport and food.
- 2) Livestock particularly cattle were considered as a measure of wealth, (A man with cattle could easily feed his family and meet most of his social obligations).
- 3) Cattle were, considered by most Swazis (both employed and unemployed) as a form of security. When financial pressures arose, cattle became the main source of finance.
- 4) Cattle continue to be seen as a better investment alternative to the banking institutions e.g. the returns in two years invested on two cows' in-calf worth E2000 is far much greater than returns from a bank over the same period. At best, the bank investment would earn between 11% and 14% per annum while in cattle the earnings would average about 75% from the sale of the offspring.
- 5) Livestock, particularly cattle enabled the family to meet most of its social obligations such as ceremonial, cultural, religious and customary requirements.

The importance of livestock to the Swazi is equivalent to the significance of the Swazi's culture and custom. The two are inextricably bound together as part of Swazi identity, culture and heritage. It is doubtful whether one would be retained without the other. This makes livestock matters if poorly handled to become very sensitive national issues.

While there could be a diverse number of reasons, the above are enough to assist one to understand why Swazi farmers are mostly interested in increasing livestock numbers, especially cattle while resisting efforts related to destocking. If the government is to succeed in bringing about the necessary changes in alleviating the livestock burden and the intense land degradation and soil erosion problems in SNL with some kind of measurable success it will be essential to bear these factors in mind in order to be able to offer more acceptable alternatives to the farmer .

2.0 Background

Swaziland is endowed with rich natural resources such as good productive soils, flowing rivers and a favourable climate for both livestock and fodder production. Under a well-defined land use policy with supporting legislation to provide for an efficient soil conservation system and for optimal and rational utilization of these resources, Swaziland has the potential to meet its basic food requirements of both crops and livestock and to export surpluses.

However, due to the serious lack of these supporting instruments the opposite has tended to prevail to very serious proportions. Dams and rivers have been filled up with sand and some have even dried up. The signs of land degradation and soil erosion are now glaring. Various areas of palatable grasslands have become barren and some encroached with weeds.

This scenario has been further aggravated by the lack of a well-defined livestock development policy which would guide livestock development in the country. It is unfortunate that no studies have yet been done to determine the extent of the damage of these vital resources due to the absence of these policy instruments.

The glaring signs of land degradation and soil erosion, coupled with the rapid land shrinkage from urban expansion, population growth, the increasing number of rural settlements and the increasing land utilization for cash crops, make the need for a clearly defined national policy on livestock development with set strategies and guidelines more pressing if Swaziland is to move rapidly towards its goal of self-sufficiency in food production.

Table 1 shows the land use pattern for grazing and crops between 1966 and 1991. Table 2 shows the population growth statistics for Swaziland and the urban centres excluding Lusoti and Ngomane.

Table 1: Land Use Pattern for grazing and crops 1966 to 1991 in thousands of hectares.

Year	1966	1976	1988	1991
Grazing Land	1268	1206	1149	1032
Crops	138	165	180	219

Source: Central Statistics Bulletin 1991
Third National Development Plan.

Table 2: National and Urban population growth 1966-1991

Year	1966	1976	1988	1991
National	359, 138	518,217	708,455	795,439
Urban	37,867	75,320	123,045	162,052*

Source: Central Statistics Officer Bulletin 1991

Third National Development Plan.

*These figures were extrapolated.

This requires that our long term goals and, objectives within the livestock sector be clearly defined and these considerations taken into account. It should be appreciated that livestock production and the agro-based industries provide, to a certain extent, an equitable distribution of wealth to the majority of the rural Swazis by providing potential outlets where they are able to sell their produce in the form of cattle, poultry, goats, sheep, pigs, milk and their labour.

Cognizant of this fact, the Government set up appropriate animal health and production extension service structures aimed at improving the productive potential and capacity of the rural homestead and to generate a steady flow of family income whilst increasing the throughput of the agro-processing industries such as the meat and dairy industries which were already in place in the 1960's. To follow on this stream was the poultry and piggery slaughter and process industries.

However, in 1984, in an effort to strengthen the extension service a generalist approach was adopted and streamlined under the Department of Agriculture where all extension service structures within the Veterinary Department were dismantled with a consequent inertia in livestock development activities.

This was followed in 1986 and 1988, by the **AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND**. The main focus of these policy documents was on food crop production, particularly maize. The retrogressive effects of the 1984 decision on livestock development were thus further compounded.

Although cattle and poultry numbers continued to increase, the increase was to a greater extent quite damaging to the rural small holder livestock farmer who found himself with cattle he could not sell because of their poor condition and also greatly disadvantaged by large commercial farms who had established in the country and invaded the rural live chicken market. Many small farmers who had started in small dairy and poultry projects gave them up. The quality of the cattle declined on the range as it became increasingly overgrazed from overstocking. Table 3 shows the livestock statistics between 1966 and 1991 but excludes the equidae (horses, mules, donkeys) and ratites (ostriches).

Table 3: Livestock Statistics 1966 to 1991

Species	1996	1976	1988	1991
Cattle	491,000	634,000	640,000	740,000
Goats	220,000	237,000	280,000	334,000
Sheep	36,000	31,000	20,000	24,000
Poultry	245,000	522,000	679,00	1,088,000
Pigs	8,000	19,000	18,000	28,000

Source: MOAC.

This caused a serious procurement problem for slaughter quality cattle with much frustration to both the small farmer and meat trader as many cattle were rejected at the market because of poor quality.

The Swaziland Meat Corporation (SMC) who were the owners of the beef export abattoir and also buyers of last resort found that they could no longer contain the costs of feedlotting the poor cattle from rural farmers. Meat traders then resorted to importing slaughter cattle from the Republic of South Africa. In the meantime, the SMC export abattoir which constituted the major component of the Beef industry collapsed for the first time in twenty three years in February 1988 in spite of the high numbers of cattle in the country.

Swaziland Meat Industries (SMI) took it over to 1989 but collapsed only three years later in February 1992 due to the same problems. Table 4 compares statistics of cattle slaughtered over a ten year period between 1982 and 1991 against the national herd total during the same period. It should be mentioned that in spite of the increase in the cattle population, the total cattle offtake dropped from 20.1% in 1982 to 14 .06% in 1991, while the commercial offtake dropped from 11.3% to 8.39%. The table also shows cattle slaughter in favour of imported cattle.

Table 4: Slaughtered Cattle Statistics from 1982 to 1991

Year	Slaughtered Cattle			Cattle Population
	Total	Imported	Local	National Herd Size
1982	71,984	7,937	64,047	639,036
1983	76,707	5,190	71,517	642,447
1984	59,253	3,874	55,379	613,529
1985	68,050	13,002	55,048	648,332
1986	62,955	4,349	58,606	653,222
1987	54,522	1,646	52,876	640,901
1988	52,639	766	51,873	639,943
1989	57,872	5,710	52,162	679,188
1990	51,361	16,738	34,623	715,941
1991	61,251	11,770	49,481	740,170

Source: MOAC

These developments would inevitably leave the rural farmer with a weak and highly susceptible herd which cannot withstand additional pressures from draught power, milk production, disease and drought. This would consequently deprive the SNL farmer of his primary source of livelihood and compel most rural people to swamp the ranks of the unemployed in the urban areas in search of a wage income. Such a development if unattended would be enough to trigger national instability and an uncontrolled crime rate that would extend even to the rural areas.

3.0 Present Situation And Recent Trends

The Department of Veterinary Services of the Ministry of agriculture and Cooperatives in Swaziland is responsible for Animal health, livestock development and marketing and meat hygiene.

The department which is headed by a Director is subdivided into the two divisions of Animal Health and Animal Production. The Animal Health division which promotes animal health and welfare while creating conducive conditions for economic animal production is headed by two Senior Veterinary Officers (SVO's) who report to the Director . One is responsible for Administration and the other for Technical issues. The division is composed of a Field Services section which is divided into four regional offices, the Central Veterinary laboratory, Meat hygiene (export abattoir only) and the Veterinary Stork Farmer Training Centre.

The functions of the Animal Production division which is headed by the Senior Animal Husbandry Officer (SAHO) have until recently been limited to operations of the government ranches (8% of National herd) and range extension. This has meant that the department is institutionally incapacitated from carrying out any extension and livestock development programmes in the SNL areas (83% of National herd) which has earned it the brunt of criticism from the farmers, parliamentarians and a general public which is not aware of its serious structural bankruptcy.

In addition to this shortcoming, the department lacks meaningful livestock research and marketing facilities and programmes which are the pinnacles of sustainable development for any area as dynamic as animal health and production. In all countries and through all phases of economic development it has been known that the pace of advancement is quickened as the marketing and research activities of the country increase. Thus the importance of developing and improving marketing structures and procedures and research facilities and programmes to expand trade opportunities and provide timely accurate information and relevant technology for the farmer and the industry.

Recent trends indicate a drift from the stated overall national objectives of economic growth, self-reliance and social justice and stability. It also represents a significant drift from the stated government's overall objectives in the agricultural sector.

1. Cattle numbers increased by 23% to 740,170 in the last ten years to 1991 while local cattle slaughtered during the same period decreased by 13% to 49,481 during the same period. A recent survey (November 1991) revealed that this was caused by the poor condition of the animals offered in the markets for slaughter rather than the unavailability of cattle in the market. This means that the uncontrolled increase in cattle numbers particularly on SNL, is a serious threat to the sustainability of the beef industry in Swaziland.

2. The rangelands in many parts of the country are denuded and heavily encroached with weeds and bushes due to overgrazing and the lack of appropriate range management practices. This includes the RADP fenced grazing areas most of which are now either extremely overgrazed than the surrounding areas, or have had their fences stolen.

This prevailing state in our rangelands has now been made worse by the present drought conditions. This simply means that the available grazing areas can no longer support the current stocking levels. If left unattended our range will suffer from desertification and many farmers will lose their livestock.

3. The Department of Veterinary Services which is responsible for animal health and livestock development continues with a weak structure and inadequate staffing. Livestock extension personnel without which it cannot respond adequately to the increasing pressure from farmers are still with the Department of Agriculture and Extension. This means that the Department cannot implement, supervise, monitor and evaluate any of its livestock development programmes targeted at the smallholder livestock producer in SNL who own about 83% of the national herd. It also means that there is no direct, rapid feedback mechanism between the department and this major sector of the livestock industry.

Recent international requirements by the Organization International des Epizooties (O.I.E) for transparency in Risk Assessment, disease control management, drug registration and territorial/inter-territorial harmonization are not being met adequately. This will threaten the potential and the growth of the emerging poultry, ostrich and piggery industries which are also export oriented. Recent resolutions on new approaches to ticks and tick-borne disease control require that certain levels of specialized training be undertaken within the Veterinary Cadre and that an Epidemiology Unit be established within the Department.

4. Smallholder livestock producers continue to be disadvantaged in the provision of services, procurement of input supplies and access to competitive markets due to lack of relevant and timely information, appropriate community structures and services. This has not only deprived rural families of income generating opportunities, but has also encouraged large commercial producers to invade the rural markets particularly with live chicken.
5. Mistrust and lack of collaborative effort persist among and between the Government, the producers and traders in livestock and livestock products (eggs, milk, hides and skins) due to poor communication and the lack of transparency on policy on livestock development and industry matters.
6. The Department of Veterinary Services is unable to keep pace with member states of the region and to take timely advantage of innovations in livestock development, science and technology which may offer more promising solutions to the problems facing the livestock sector in Swaziland due to the lack of Livestock and Veterinary Research back-up to guide it on the suitability, acceptability and sustainability of such innovations. On average, Swaziland has been losing out and the conditions will worsen with time if the livestock sector continues without these essential back-up facilities.

7. The government continues to bear and to be expected to bear the full cost of dipping in Swaziland. This is contrary to the prevailing legislation (Animal Diseases Act, No.7/1965 and Dipping Charges Act No. 46/1950 in Swaziland which make provision for the Minister for Agriculture and Co-operatives to prescribe dipping charges to be paid by stockowners using public dip-tanks.

It is also in contrast to the 1986 African Unity (OAU)/European Economic Community (EEC) Policy Issues Agreement on cost recovery for veterinary interventions and the creation of livestock development funds and their management. These policy measures are fully implemented by all SADC member countries with the exception of Swaziland. Swaziland's present uncommitted stand on these policy measures will cost her international support and her vital livestock resources should the Governments' budgetary constraints fail to sustain such subsidies.

8. Smallholder cattle owners and meat traders continues to voice their frustration at the absence of a National Grading and Pricing policy for live cattle and cold dressed weight carcasses. This has generated mistrust and sometimes withdrawal of cattle from the market by the farmers which worsens the problem of overstocking and land degradation.
9. There are currently ten pieces of legislation dealing with livestock and the livestock industry in Swaziland. These are:

- The Animal Disease Act, 7/1965
- The Cattle Dipping Charges Act, 46/1950
- The Dairy Act 8/1968
- The Cruelty Against Animals Act, 43/19 2
- The Control of Slaughter Houses Act, 10/1962
- The Great Brands Act 64/1937
- The Public Health Act, 5/1969
- The Export and Slaughter Act 32/1968
- The Pounds Act, 24/1966
- Registration of Pedigree Livestock Act 11/1921.

However none of these Acts deals with the improvement and marketing of livestock and animal products, veterinary drug registration and veterinary public health which are currently a cause for much frustration in the development of the livestock industry. Some of these existing pieces of legislation are now inadequate and outdated. The fact that they are spread over several Ministries makes it even more difficult to administer and harmonize.

In terms of the **INTERNATIONAL ANIMAL HEALTH CODE** which governs the regulations protecting animal health and providing guarantees for public health, meat hygiene and sanitary requirements to be met by all slaughter houses and abattoirs fall under veterinary public health. In Swaziland this is currently not the case.

There is therefore an urgent need to review and consolidate all the pieces of legislation concerned with livestock and animal products under the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives for ease of harmonization and administration.

4.0 Policy Review

The overall national objectives of the Kingdom of Swaziland to serve as signposts for development were stated in the Third National Development Plan 1978/83 as:

- Economic growth
- Self-reliance
- Social justice and stability.

Within these national objectives, sectoral policy objectives have been developed over the years by respective ministries to guide them in their sectoral strategies. The overall Government policy in the agricultural sector was to enhance the quality of rural wellbeing and to assist Swazi farmers to make a transition from subsistence to semi-commercial and commercial farming. In pursuit of this goal, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC) developed the following broad objectives to guide its development strategy:

- 1) Achievement of basic food self-sufficiency,
- 2) Improvement of nutritional status,
- 3) Increasing employment opportunities through promoting agri-business,
- 4) Boosting rural incomes through promoting income generating projects,
- 5) Expanding agricultural exports
- 6) Conservation and development of soil and water resources.

The Programme (RDAP) was to serve as the primary mechanism towards these goals.

The policy objectives of the livestock sub-sector during RADP and the Fourth National Development Plan 1983/84 1987/88 were primarily to increase the levels of animal fertility and reduce stocking rates, reduce the incidence of disease, promote self - reliance through diversification, and - make animal production more profitable.

Two additional objectives were added in the Fourth N .D .P. These were:

- 1) To establish an appropriate livestock development strategy which will ensure proper rationalization and co- ordination of the livestock industry, and
- 2) To improve the management and utilization of natural pastures and promote forage production and conservation in government ranches.

One third of the RDAP budget was provided for pasture improvement, bush clearing, fencing of grazing areas and associated range management and the establishment of group ranches. The strategy was aimed at fostering a more commercial attitude to livestock and reducing stocking rates in the SNL grazing areas and thus to increase productivity and the incomes of the SNL stockowners. However, in spite of these investments and noble objectives, very little seems to have been achieved with regards to the reduction of stocking rates, protection of the natural range resource and the self-reliance of the livestock producer. Subsequent review missions of the RDAP also concluded that the RDA livestock programme had no significant measurable impact on productivity or reduction of stocking rates. The 1989/90 - 1991/92 Development Plan stated that the broad sectoral policy for Agriculture will follow the goals laid down in

the Agricultural Development Strategy, 1986 (discussed earlier) which consists of the following major objectives:

- 1) The achievement of basic food-self-sufficiency
- 2) Improving nutritional levels
- 3) Increasing agricultural exports and
- 4) Boosting rural income and employment.

The aim of the strategy to be followed was stated as "Concentrating policy on the alleviation of major constraints to agricultural development". Low livestock off-take was recognized as one of the major constraints. However, there are very few activities that appear to have been put on the ground to address this problem.

This state indicates that the policies and strategies that have been attempted in the past have not succeeded in fully addressing the major problems faced by the livestock sector in Swaziland for a varied number of reasons which have been highlighted.

If the prevailing climate in the country's livestock sector is to be redressed, it is essential to take stock and reconsider our long term goals and aspirations, redefine our policy objectives on livestock development and to set up effective and implementable strategies with clearly defined policy guidelines.

5.0 Mandate

The mandate of the Department of Veterinary and Livestock Services (DVLS)* is to prevent the spread of animal diseases and zoonosis, promote animal health and welfare and equip livestock producers with adequate knowledge, skill and technical know-how on the efficient management of all resources that will ensure profitable returns and an efficient and sustainable livestock industry .

6.0 Long Term Goals and Aspirations

Swaziland's long term goal and aspirations in the livestock sector is to achieve an efficient and sustainable livestock industry which is capable of meeting the needs of its local and international markets, while at the same time ensuring a fair and equitable distribution of wealth to the producer, especially the rural Swazi farmer so that he/she is kept in gainful employment through production, supply and participation in the process industries.

In the long term to create a broader support base for national economic growth, employment opportunities, national stability and foreign exchange with a reduction measure in the crime rate.

7.0 General Policy Guidelines for Livestock Development

Swaziland is traditionally a livestock country where cattle, goats, chicken, pigs and milk abound with minimum effort. However, with the rapid population growth and the expansion of urban centres, the demand for animal-based protein is becoming more pressing. The rapid shrinkage of the land resource availability on the other hand is such that the Swazi farmer can no longer be allowed to continue with his traditional methods of livestock production if the country is to make measurable progress in meeting the increasing demand in order to cut down on the import bill of animal based proteins.

The Government's Policy on livestock development addresses these issues with an aim of putting the livestock industry on a more sustainable footing and drawing the country closer to its long term goals and aspirations.

*The new name is aimed at embracing the two major disciplines of the department.

The following basic principles provide the broad general policy guidelines of the Livestock development policy.

- * Ecological sustainability, economic viability and an understanding of the socio-economic implications of any policy intervention.
- * Optimal use of scarce manpower, material and financial resources.
- * Cost recovery for all services rendered that are not of territorial/inter-territorial economic significance and primarily benefit individual livestock producers, traders or processors.
- * Promotion of intensive/semi-intensive production systems and small holder livestock enterprises for income generation and surplus production to support industrial development.
- * Generation and promotion of the use of tested reliable information and technology to support advance livestock development.

8.0 Policy Objectives for Livestock Development

8.1 Animal Health and Production Extension

To raise the livestock quality and off-take levels of the Swazi producer, and in particular the rural farmer within sound range and soil conservation management practices aimed at meeting the national demand for animal-based proteins and improving the throughput of the processing plants from local supplies through the introduction of an integrated livestock extension programme with technically sound yet cost effective intensive production methods and animal health and range management extension practices that are implementable, measurable and able to be supervised from the grassroots levels to the top for prompt feedback.

8.2 Livestock Marketing

To facilitate livestock marketing through the establishment of appropriate marketing facilities, the collection, and dissemination of marketing information, the projection of market demands, and the regulation of imports and exports and the establishment of marketing groups and agents.

8.3 Process industries

To promote primary processing industries and participate where and when necessary through minimum shares to ensure their maturation and the eventual participation of producer groups through the purchase of the government shares.

8.4 Cost-recovery and commercialisation of Livestock Development

To commercialize livestock development through the introduction of a cost-recovery policy and the rational use of Government revenue in all matters of animal health and production.

8.5 Veterinary and livestock research

To ensure availability of tested and reliable information and technology to the producer, the Government and the industry and to develop suitable and cost-effective extension packages and methods of livestock production, resource and disease control management through research.

8.6 Promotion of Livestock Enterprises and Entrepreneurship

To promote smallholder livestock enterprises, and a spirit of entrepreneurship through the training of producers, improved access to available lines of credit and the establishment of livestock development funds and revolving funds.

8.7 Meat Hygiene Standards and Sanitary Requirements

To protect the consumer public from zoonotic diseases and ensure the access of Swaziland's animal products into international markets by enforcing internationally acceptable meat hygiene standards and sanitary requirements in all abattoirs, slaughter houses and plants where animal products are processed or manufactured.

8.8 National herd improvement

To improve the national herd through selection and breeding, research, the protection of Swaziland's indigenous gene pool and the application of internationally acceptable quality assurance measures for breeding eggs, semen, ova, embryos or tissues to prevent the spread of diseases.

8.9 Livestock Nutrition

To promote the use of supplement feeding and the harnessing and utilization of all available feed resources and feed combinations based on research, and to protect the animal feed consumer from sub-standard feeds and dumping through the establishment and applications of minimum National Feeds Standards and a Feeds Quality Assurance Service .

8.10 Legislation

To enforce compliance and ensure administrative efficiency and harmonization of established policies and regulations through the enactment of appropriate legislation and the consolidation of all existing legislation on livestock and livestock products under the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

8.11 Communication

To promote effective communication and transparency on policy between the farmers, the traders and the Government and to speed up the development and sustenance of the livestock industry from grassroots levels through the establishment of Communal Producer groups (Livestock Grazing and Feeding Farmers Groups) and traders groups which would create sub-regional and regional producers and traders' groups to form national organizations for more collaborative effort and effective communication within and between the industry and government .

8.12 Disease Prevention and Delivery of Animal Health Care Services

To improve and strengthen disease control, surveillance and diagnostic efficiency and the delivery of animal health care services in order to enhance the quality and reproductive performance of livestock and to ensure risk analysis efficiency and the access of Swaziland's animal products into international markets.

8.13 Range Conservation and Management

To develop and maintain a high level of range, pasture and soil conservation and management practices through technology transfer and the use of livestock group schemes based on community participation.

9.0 Strategies for Achieving The Objectives

9.1 Livestock Extension

To improve and strengthen the impact of livestock extension, and to assure effective communication and a rapid feedback mechanism, close supervision, monitoring and evaluation and the successful planning and implementation of livestock extension programmes through:

- a) Restructuring and integration of all livestock extension activities (animal health and production) at front-line level under the Veterinary Department.
- b) Reduction of the number of dip-tanks per officer at frontline level to allow him/her to attend to livestock production as well.
- c) Upgrading the Veterinary Farmer Training Centre (V.F.T.C) at Mpisi to provide an effective integration of auxiliary training in beef, dairy, poultry, piggery, rabbit and small ruminants production and extension, range animal health and meat hygiene.
- d) Provision of seminars, workshops and field days for staff and farmers to achieve a more integrated team, increase trust and enhance the opportunities for the exchange of first-hand information between and amongst government personnel and the producers.
- e) Providing implementable and cost-effective livestock extension messages and packages with clear targets and objectives for the farmers.

9.2 Livestock Quality and Offtake

To raise the offtake levels and the quality of livestock of the Swazi producer on SNL and TDL areas to meet the demands of Swaziland's local and international markets through:

- a) The establishment of livestock community group schemes (e.g. Cattle and Small Ruminants Grazing and Feeding Group Schemes, Poultry and Piggery Production Group Schemes) to serve as the main vehicle for livestock development especially in SNL areas.
- b) Promotion of cost-effective intensive and semi-intensive livestock production systems and packages in SNL areas such as backyard and communal low-grade feedlots (i.e. individual homestead operations and communal operations) for cattle and small ruminants, broiler and egg production units, piggery and rabbit units and small dairy units.
- c) Development of cost-effective fodder and feed preparation and storage methods to enhance feed availability.
- d) Promotion of supplement feeding and the utilization of available feed resources including crop and industrial residues.
- e) Promotion and development of small ruminants breeding, production and marketing management schemes for improved quality, performance and availability to the consumer.

- f) Promoting the use of low-grade and conventional commercial feedlots for the conditioning and finishing of cattle for slaughter and especially young stock.
- g) Promotion of the disposal of cattle for sale while they are still young through Cattle Auction Sales at Rural, Private and Government auctioning centres.
- h) the introduction of a grading system for cattle that will make it less worthwhile for the producer to keep animals above three years unless for draught power or breeding purposes while at the same time making it more attractive to sell younger animals.
- i) Improvement of Fattening Ranch management efficiency to achieve a higher throughput of cattle from SNL grazing areas and culls from Sisa Ranches for the meat market.
- j) Improving the management efficiency of Sisa Ranches for higher reproductive performance and turnover of younger stock to be sent to Feedlots for conditioning and finishing for the meat market.
- k) the improvement of the distribution efficiency of better and tested bull from breeding stations and the training of farmers to keep breeding records for improved herd quality and performance.

9.3 Livestock Marketing

To promote and facilitate efficient livestock marketing, the gathering and dissemination of market intelligence and to improve market forecasts and targeting through:

- a) The establishment of a Marketing - Unit within the Department of Veterinary and Livestock Services to deal with all livestock marketing matters including cattle, small ruminants, poultry, piggery, rabbits, ostriches and their products.
- b) The rehabilitation of old cattle sale yards and their expansion to include small ruminants when required and the construction of new ones where justification for the facility exists.
- c) Introduction of a standard Grading and Pricing system for live cattle and cold dressed carcasses that will favour the timely marketing of younger cattle which are demanded in the consumer market.
- d) Regulation of the importation and exportation of livestock and their products in order to assure a safe balance of supply and demand.
- e) Monitoring and harmonization of livestock commodity markets, their availability and efficiency, and their accessibility by livestock producers' products.
- f) Collection, collation, analysis and publication of local and regional livestock marketing information and projection of market demands for improved planning and setting of market targets.

- g) Use of the media to keep the farmer, trader and consumer informed of available and planned markets for livestock and livestock products such as cattle and small ruminants auction sales, piggery, rabbits and hides and skins markets.
- h) The use of Radio educational programmes and Audio-visual aids to promote producers' and consumers' sensitivity on quality requirements, hygiene and sanitary standards in the meat and livestock markets.
- i) Introduction of weighing scales in Auction Sales.
- j) Conducting of Auction Sales and eventual privatization of these.
- k) To establish a Meat Marketing Commission in the long term to take over the livestock marketing responsibilities.

9.4 Cost-Recovery and Commercialisation of Livestock Development

To commercialize livestock development through the introduction of a cost recovery policy on all areas of animal health and production that have no international consequence and to allow for the rational use of the Government revenue on the more demanding livestock development areas through:

- a) Privatisation of Veterinary Clinical Services in such way as to save Government revenue and improve the delivery of veterinary health care services to the farmer. In doing so, to provide the necessary legislation to guard against malpractice and abuse of veterinary drugs and chemicals.
- b) gradual removal of management subsidies in Sisa and Fattening ranches to eventually recover the full costs of rearing cattle in these facilities and to eventually transfer the management of these to viable livestock producer's groups.
- c) Introduction of cattle and small ruminants dipping charges to eventually recover the full costs of dipping.
- d) Encouragement of Livestock Community Grazing Group Schemes to charge grazing fees in order to properly maintain the infrastructure of their grazing areas.
- e) creation and management of Livestock Development Funds and Revolving Funds where levies, and or contributions for the specified commodity could be deposited for the development of the particular industry, such as poultry, beef, dairy and thus• serve Government revenue for the increasingly more critical areas of Sero-surveillance, Epidemiological, breeding and nutrition research.

9.5 Promotion of Livestock Enterprises and Entrepreneurship

To promote smallholder livestock enterprises and a spirit of entrepreneurship among livestock farmers through:

- a) The promotion of intensive, yet cost effective and manageable livestock enterprises in both SNL and TDL that could be run communally, individually or both.
- b) The introduction of appropriate Credit Schemes and packages and the training of farmers on the use of such Schemes within a cost recovery framework which would underscore the understanding of input costs, turnover, rates of return and profit margins.
- c) Facilitating access to all available lines of credit by qualifying producers or entrepreneurs and the use of Livestock Development Funds and Revolving Funds on a cost recovery basis.
- d) Provision of basic and practical training on intensive and semi-intensive production technologies and management systems at the Veterinary and Farmer Training Centre (VFTC) at Mpisi to enable livestock farmers to successfully run their enterprises.
- e) Use of intensive outreach livestock educational programmes through the radio, television and print media aimed at transforming the producer and consumer attitude from being traditionally subsistent to being more commercial and market oriented.
- f) Encouragement of the expansion of existing small holder livestock enterprises and community livestock group enterprises and their growth to sub-regional and regional production and trading groups and eventual participation in the process industries.

9.6 Maintenance of Good Range and Pasture Management Practices

To develop and maintain a high level of range and pasture management in the country with sound soil and water conservation practices through:

- a) The establishment of farmers groups and the expansion and use of Grazing Management Demonstration Areas (GMDAs) Group Ranches throughout the country.
- b) Development of range arid pasture rehabilitation packages for farmers groups and livestock extension workers to include; range resting and rotation, range terracing and planting of suitable dual purpose trees and plants for soil conservation and fodder purposes.
- c) Introduction of communal grazing areas and fencing schemes by respective communities through their Livestock Grazing and Feeding Group Schemes or GDMAs.
- d) To establish "stocking rates" for communal grazing areas and to enforce these through the Livestock Grazing and Feeding groups.
- e) Range and pasture development research programmes according to ecological zones.

- f) monitoring and control of range and grazing areas shrinkage from urban expansion, unplanned rural settlements, unplanned land cultivation and encroachment of any kind on the livestock zones.
- g) Development of joint Government and community soil and water conservation efforts to preserve undulating and sloppy grazing areas - and reclamation of heavily eroded areas by terracing, fencing off, earth-filling and establishment of appropriate water catchment points to be built based on sound soil and topographical survey plans.
- h) Development of range and pasture extension education programmes for livestock extension workers and farmers groups.

9.7 Livestock and Veterinary Research

To ensure the availability of tested and reliable information and suitability adapted technology to support and guide Livestock Development and Disease management programmes through research by:

- a) Establishing a Livestock and Veterinary Research Centre at Mpisi Farm that will serve as a catalyst, a resource and information centre and provide the livestock sector with accurate and tested back-up information.
- b) Development of suitable livestock production packages and systems that will be cost effective and profitable for the farmer.
- c) Investigating and determining the distribution and prevalence of diseases of economic importance in Swaziland.
- d) Development of more efficient and cost effective animal disease control, prevention and surveillance measures that will maintain an acceptable standard of animal health within the country.
- e) Development of suitable range and pasture rehabilitation methods and improve range and soil conservation and management practices.
- f) Determination of pasture and fodder productivity and suitability according to ecological zones.
- g) Determination of nutritional values of the various pastures, fodders and feed combinations
- h) Development of feeds and fodder combinations and their nutritional values for suitable feeding packages for farmers.
- i) Development of minimum operational requirements for establishing and running small livestock enterprises by species efficiency and profitability.

- j) Determination of suitable breeds and crosses for beef, small ruminants, poultry, pigs and dairy for Swaziland's conditions in terms of productivity, resistance and tolerance and to advise on suitable gene pools to be protected and preserved.
- k) Conducting appropriate trials and tests where necessary on new technology and advice on its suitability or acceptability to conditions in Swaziland.
- l) Collaborate and cooperate with regional and international institutions and exchange any information that might be of advantage to Swaziland's' development.

9.8 National Herd Improvement

To improve the national herd and ensure the maintenance of internationally acceptable standards of livestock production and breeding through:

- a) Establishment and maintenance of minimum Livestock Breeding Standards for cattle, (Beef and Dairy) small ruminants, swine and poultry.
- b) Registration of Breeders, and Breeders Associations and the monitoring of livestock breeding activities in the country.
- c) Establishment of clear breeding objectives and programmes with the Director of Veterinary Services.
- d) Protection of the national herds and flocks from contamination from imported breeding material through the control and registration of such imported material with the Director of Veterinary Services.
- e) Research and breeding for improved performance and disease resistance.
- f) Protection and conservation of animal genetic resources and indigenous breeds and gene pools.

9.9 Livestock Nutrition

To develop and use internationally acceptable standards of livestock nutrition and feed quality and to protect the consumer from substandard feeds and their dumping through:

- a) The establishment of a National Animal Feeds Standards to be met by feeds manufacturers and importers and to protect animal feeds consumers from the use of costly but very low quality feeds in the market.
- b) The provision of a Feeds quality Assurance Service to farmers, fees manufacturers and distributors.

- c) Promotion of the use of supplement feeding, crop and industrial residues and other feed combinations based on research information.
- d) Establishment of nutritive values of local pastures and feed ingredients and to investigate feed combinations of local feed ingredients in order to provide valuable cost-effective feed packages suitable for various livestock production requirements.
- e) Harnessing, preservation and utilization of all available feed resources.

9.10 Competent Manpower Resource Development

To develop a highly competent and motivated Manpower Resource base within the DVLS that will meet the increasing demands of a growing modern livestock industry through:

- a) The restructuring of the Department, streamlining of duties and capacity building to ensure efficiency and responsiveness in the execution of the Departments' mandate.
- b) The development of suitable recruitment and training plans for post and undergraduate candidates to meet the short, medium and long term requirements of the department.
- c) The Development of Regional Exchange programmes with relevant livestock training and research institutions for staff participation.
- d) Participation and presentation of livestock development and research papers in local, regional and international Symposia, seminars and workshops.
- e) Participation in regional and international livestock development and research projects and programmes.

9.11 Meat Hygiene Standards and Sanitary Requirements

To guarantee consumer safety and protection against zoonosis and the entry of Swaziland's animal products in international markets through the:

- a) Establishment of internationally acceptable National Meat Hygiene Standards and Sanitary Requirements to be met by all slaughter houses, slabs and abattoirs.
- b) Creation of a Veterinary Public Health Section in the DVLS to provide inspection and supervision in all slaughter facilities in the country.
- c) Enforcement of international hygiene standards abattoirs and manufacturing plants of animal products for the export market.
- d) Development of minimum meat preservation requirements for a longer meat and meat products shelf life through research.

- e) Monitoring of veterinary drugs and hormone residues in meat and food of animal origin in keeping with international requirements.

9.12 Disease Prevention and Delivery of Animal Health Care Services

To improve and strengthen disease control, surveillance and diagnostic efficiency and the efficient delivery of animal health care services through:

- a) building and strengthening the capacity and capability of the veterinary services to meet recent international requirements, to implement the Risk Analysis Process which may be legitimately used by countries to formulate policies with regards to animal health and veterinary public health controls in animals, animal -derived products, animal genetic material and animal feedstuffs which are critical in international trade, and to enable effective controls consistent with internationally recognised standards over veterinary medicines , biologicals, diagnostic reagents and veterinary drugs registration .
- b) Establishing a national epidemiological surveillance unit with regional and international collaboration to clearly define local disease dynamics and allow for a more effective evaluation of the national disease status and the effectiveness of national disease programmes.
- c) Developing the sera-surveillance capabilities of the Central Veterinary Laboratory as a major surveillance tool with international recognition.
- d) Decentralizing simple laboratory diagnostic techniques to the regional clinics and only refer major tests to the Central Laboratory.
- e) Improve the delivery of animal health care services by privatizing/commercialising clinical services in a manner that would allow veterinarians to respond spontaneously to calls without compromising national disease control efficiency and being constrained by national budget limitations.
- f) Investigation and development of effective and more sustainable ticks and tick-borne disease control strategies for the producers and extending such investigations to other economically important diseases as well.

9.13 Legislation

To enforce compliance and ensure administrative efficiency and harmonisation of established policies and regulations on animal health, production and trade through:

- a) The review of all existing legislation concerned with animals and their products and the manufacture of animal derived products for animal and human consumption.

- b) the enactment of legislation that will support and enforce compliance with established policies and regulations for the development of a sustainable livestock industry, and the protection of the consumers of veterinary and livestock supplies and services.
- c) Consolidation of all such legislation under the Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives in order to ensure administrative efficiency and harmonisation.
- d) enactment of legislation to cover all matters concerned with livestock and livestock products development such as: breeding standards, grading and pricing systems, import and export controls and requirements, hygiene and sanitary standards, abattoirs and slaughter houses, levies and livestock development funds, stabilization funds, feed standards , range management practices, soil conservation and water source protection and such as the Minister for Agriculture and Co-operatives may determine from time to time.

9.14 Cattle Branding

To strengthen livestock disease control and anti-theft measures particularly of cattle through the introduction of;

- a) A brand of origin on all cattle born in Swaziland.
- b) A cattle importation brand on all cattle imported into Swaziland other than cattle for immediate slaughter.
- c) An owner's brand for all cattle owners whether on SNL or TDL farms.

10.0 Mission

"TO ACHIEVE AN EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY"

Through:

10.1 Modernization of Livestock Management practices especially among Indigenous Swazi Farmers both in SNL and TDL areas i.e.

- For good record keeping.
- Proper breeding practices.
- Good feeding practices.
- Good pasture and range management practices.
- Efficient disease control and prevention measures.
- Fodder and supplement feed availability.
- Timely marketing.

10.2 Development of Livestock Development Extension Packages with a sound commercial and economic objectives.

10.3 Development of Intensive and Cost Effective Livestock Production packages that will assure maximum and productive utilisation of the available Land Resource base.

10.4 Introduction of Grading Systems that will offer better prices to younger stock plus premium bonuses for finishing and make it less worthwhile to keep older stock which destroy the range and consume large quantities for less benefits.

10.5 Introduction of backyard and communal feedlots and establishment of community grazing and Feeding Group Schemes.

11.0 Benefits to Be Expected

- 1) Good range, pasture , soil and water management and conservation
- 2) Well-conditioned and healthy herds
- 3) Good returns on investment
- 4) Reduced food import bills and increase in exports with a stabilizing effect to the economy
- 5) Fat bank accounts for livestock producers and traders in SNL and TDL
- 6) Increased employment opportunities in both production and manufacturing sectors
- 7) Good nutrition and a healthy nation
- 8) Overall growth of the national economy.

Acronyms

- MOAC - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATIVES
- TDL - TITLE DEED LAND
- SNL - SWAZI NATION LAND
- RDA - RURAL DEVELOPMENT AREA
- RDAP - RURAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS PROGRAMME
- OIE - ORGANIZATION INTERNATIONALE DES EPIZOOTIES
- OAU - ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY
- EEC - EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY
- EU - EUROPEAN UNION
- NDP - NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
- DVLS - DEPARTMENT OF VETERINARY AND LIVESTOCK (AS THE NEW EMBRACING NAME OF THE DEPARTMENT)
- VFTC - VETERINARY AND FARMER TRAINING CENTRE
- GDMA's - GRAZING DEMONSTRATION MANAGEMENT AREA

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