

Background Information on Livestock in Uganda

Livestock accounts for 53% of the agriculture capital stock and contributes 30% to agricultural GDP and contributing about 18% to overall agricultural GDP. The subsector provides opportunities for income generation, employment creation and improved food and nutrition security to households across the different production systems and along different value chains (such as meat, eggs, dairy, live animals and hides). It is projected that the demand for livestock products will increase substantially over the next 25 years, however the demand will supersede supply. About 5 million households in Uganda own livestock. The major livestock species in Uganda are; cattle (15 million), sheep (4 million), goats (12.5million), pigs (3.6 million), and poultry (42 million). According to the ASSP 2016/2020, the sector is prioritizing the following livestock products over the medium term: Dairy/milk, Beef, Pork, Mutton, Goat, Poultry, Honey, Silk and Hides and Skins. Beef, dairy cattle, and poultry have been identified as strategic agricultural commodities for the country that are to receive increased investment for accelerated production. The sector targets to produce 3.35 billion liters of milk annually and its products worth approximately USD 49.673 million by 2020. Thirty three percent (33%) of the marketed milk in Uganda is processed whereas sixty seven percent (67%) is marketed raw, providing opportunities for further investment in dairy processing.

In Uganda, there are predominantly two livestock production systems; the traditional system and the improved systems¹. The traditional system, characterized by minimal inputs and correspondingly small outputs, depends on natural grazing and local breeds. Improved systems, on the other hand, involve some investment such as fencing, pasture and grassland improvement, provision of water and breed upgrading. Livestock production systems and management practices are dictated by the degree of dependence of the household on livestock products for income,

¹ Within these general types the five grazing methods have been documented namely i) Communal /pastoral system ii) Tethering iii) Enclosed ranching iv) Fenced dairy farms and v) Zero grazing See, for example, Country pasture/forage resources profile-Uganda (Mwebaze, 1999).

cultural values, food supply, and crop agriculture practiced in association with livestock under traditional and non-traditional practices. development of forage resources in the country is continually being done by the national livestock research organisations however, adoption of improved forage varieties by small holder dairy farmers is still very low which has partly contributed to the persistent low milk yields. However, there are opportunities to improve; livestock production continues to grow at a rate of 4% per annum according to statistics in response to increasing demand for milk and meat in the local market². A higher rate of growth is envisaged as the government continues to pursue its policies of modernizing and commercializing agriculture. The targeting of high-potential areas as a basis for resource allocation, by both government and private investors, has led to the rapid increase in output and the integration of the livestock sub-sector into the cash economy, especially for dairy and beef related enterprises.

² The demand for milk in Uganda comes from households, schools, hospitals, catering institutions, food and dairy processing plants. By 2001 the dairy sector in Uganda was reported to contribute about 20% to the food processing industry, which itself contributed about 4.3% to the national GDP (<http://www.ugandainvest.com/livestock.pdf>).