

## Long The Perceptions of Farmers Concerning Strategies to Supplement Bali Cattle (*Bos Sondaicus*) Calves Prior to Weaning in West Timor Villages, Indonesia

J.A. Jermias<sup>A</sup>, I.G.N. Jelantik<sup>B</sup>, M.L. Mullik<sup>B</sup>, C.L. Leo-Penu<sup>A</sup>, I. Benu<sup>B</sup> and R.S. Copland<sup>C</sup>

<sup>A</sup>Kupang State Agricultural Polytechnic, NTT, Indonesia

<sup>B</sup>Centre for Bali Cattle Research and Development, Nusa Cendana University, Kupang, NTT, Indonesia

<sup>C</sup>School of Animal Studies, The University of Queensland, Gatton, Qld 4343, Australia

Beef production in the East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) province of Indonesia is limited by by a high calf mortality (17.9% to 50%) and slow calf growth (Fattah 1998, Jelantik *et al* 2008). Jelantik *et al* (2008b) have developed a supplementation technology to alleviate these 2 problems. This technique involved confining and supplementing calves during the day while their dams were released to graze normally (being reunited at night). The supplement consisted of hay and dry concentrate with a crude protein content of 18.6%, and was fed at 1%, 2% or 3% of the calves' body weight from 1 to 6 months of age. This technology has been proven technically, but implementation depends on farmer acceptance and adoption.

The aim of this study was to assess farmer perception and acceptance of the technology. This research was conducted in December 2007 with 40 farmers, and in November 2008 with 20 respondents selected from among the original 40. All respondents had supplemented their calves on a trial basis. Data was collected using a survey and structured interviews, and was analyzed by the Kruskal-Wallis Test (SPSS 17.0). The results are presented in Table 1.

**Tabel 1. Respondents perception of calf supplementation**

Farmers perception	Agree (%)	Doubtful (%)	Do Not Agree (%)
The supplement was beneficial to calves	82.5	-	17.5
Farmers were prepared to pay for the supplement themselves	69.7	-	30.3
Information should be disseminated to other farmers	100	-	-
Supplementation involves a significant sacrifice of time	42.4	6.1	51.5
The supply and form of the supplement was appropriate	92.5	-	7.5
Supplementation needs to be repeated to confirm benefits	42.5	-	57.5

Initially, farmers were reluctant to accept the technology because they felt young calves could not eat solid feed. However, after trial adoption, 82.5% were satisfied with the benefits to the calves, and 69% would be prepared to pay for the supplement themselves (it had been supplied free initially). The majority of farmers who had actually adopted the supplementation on a trial basis for a year would like to continue. However, a significant minority of farmers were concerned about the time involved in supplementing their calves, and would not be able or willing to buy the supplement themselves. Some of these farmers withdrew from the project. Farmer feedback is being used to fine tune the technology and improve farmer acceptance and adoption.

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Email: jermiasjohanis@yahoo.com