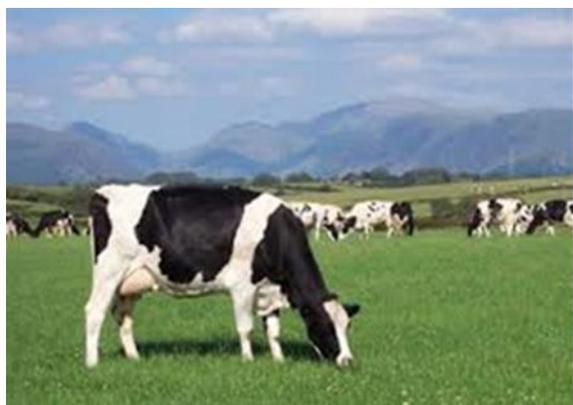


# MONTHLY DIGEST (Livestock Sub-sector)



## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN LIVESTOCK SUB-SECTOR IN THE EAC (March, 2015)



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## 1. NEWS IN THE LIVESTOCK SUB-SECTOR IN THE EAC: MARCH 2015

### 1.1 The Dairy Sub-sector Continues to dominate Investments in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda

It is no doubt that the dairy sub-sector holds a transformative promise to farmers in East Africa given the historical and ongoing donor-driven initiatives in the region. Top on that list is the two-phased East African Dairy Development (EADD) program designed to increase milk yields and incomes and enhance livelihoods of small-scale farmers in East Africa. The second phase which started in 2014 and will end in 2018 will augment the success and experience from Phase I (2008-2013), that saw 179,000 dairy farmers in Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda double their incomes. Funded to the tune of USD 25.5 million by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the program is expected to work with more than 200,000 farmers to improve dairy production and access to markets. Demonstrated change in the lives of smallholders achieved during Phase I of EADD has leveraged more support for Phase II from Elanco Animal Health in form of a USD1.5 million grant to support on-going dairy development work in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda (<http://www.heifer.org/eadd/index.html>; <http://clippings.ilri.org/2015/03/13/tanzania-dairy-sector-gets-usd1-5-million-boost-through-east-africa-dairy-development-project-grant/>).

### 1.2 Irish Aid Supports Efforts of Improving Dairy Value Chain in Tanzania

Strengthening existing informal milk production and marketing systems in Tanzania is at the heart of a project dubbed “Maziwa Zaidi” that is as a result of a four-year research for development (R4D) inception phase to promote pro-poor rural livelihoods through milk implemented by ILRI and Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) with support from Irish Aid. The three-year project that ends in 2016 envisions increased income for the beneficiaries through enhanced access to demand-led dairy market business services and viable organizational options (ILRI, 2013). [http://livestockfish.cgiar.org/2015/05/15/tanzania\\_vcreport/](http://livestockfish.cgiar.org/2015/05/15/tanzania_vcreport/)

### 1.3 Innovative way of reducing mortality of livestock due to Parasitic Infections Discovered

A new study has revealed that co-parasitic infections play a key role in determining patterns of morbidity and mortality of animals due to parasite infections. African indigenous cattle infected with a deadly parasite that kills one million cows per year in Africa are less likely to die when co-infected with the parasite’s milder relative. For example, the study found out that co-infection with a lesser parasite was associated with an 89 per cent reduction in deaths from East Coast fever. Researchers observed that this was a ground-breaking finding as East Coast fever is a major challenge to millions of poor livestock keepers in Africa whose existence depends on healthy cattle and control methods available are unaffordable to many of them. Implicitly thus, seeking a simple vaccine that could protect cows from one disease by inoculating them with a related but far less harmful parasite is a strategy that might work against a range of parasitic diseases in Africa.

This research development is timely as researchers are concerned that East Coast fever is spreading rapidly and currently threatening some 30 million cattle in East and Central Africa. Extrapolating the results, experts say that this could explain why European cattle breeds raised in the same region as the indigenous shorthorn Zebu are more likely to die from T. parva, the parasite that causes East Coast Fever. European cattle are managed in ways that reduce their exposure to all tick-borne infections thus they don’t get the benefit of infection with the less harmful parasite.

The study, dubbed “Co-infections determine patterns of mortality in a population exposed to parasite infections”, was conducted as part of an Infectious Diseases of East African Livestock (IDEAL) project, a multi-stakeholder study that included Nairobi-based ILRI.

<http://news.ilri.org/2015/03/21/fighting-fire-with-fire-new-study-shows-co-parasitic-infections-of-cattle-protect-the-animals-from-lethal-disease/> and <http://www.thecattlesite.com/news/47692/lesser-parasites-could-hold-fever-vaccine-answer/>

#### **1.4 Locally produced Feeds found good enough to increase Productivity of Pigs among Smallholder farmers in Uganda**

Finding that smallholder pig farmers in Uganda can formulate feeds with locally available materials for optimal production is good news to hundreds of thousands of them who hitherto could not afford commercial feeds. These findings are as a result of research conducted by University of Guelph’s Department of Population Medicine, in partnership with ILRI over a period of six months in Masaka district in Uganda with an aim at alleviating constraints of availability of nutritious feeds by smallholder pig producers. The study sought to determine the difference in the average daily gain (ADG) in weight of pigs fed on a silage-based ration, or a ration using local feedstuffs and those fed on off-the shelves feeds. The local diet was based on locally available fresh ingredients (forages, fruit) and purchased feeds (fish, cottonseed, maize bran) developed with nutrient requirements all of which are readily available during the rainy/wet seasons. The second diet made from ensiled sweet potato vines and tubers (ratio 70% vines to 30% tubers).

Initial results revealed that though pigs fed on commercial feeds (off-the shelf and pre-packaged) delivered the best results, there was considerable weight gain among the pigs fed on the locally formulated and affordable diets (local and silage diets). This is an exciting development at the backdrop of pig producers who struggle to find the right quantity and quality of feed for their animals thus compromising on their productivity. <http://livestockfish.cgiar.org/2015/03/10/biogas-kampala/>