

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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USDA's Food for Progress Program Strengthens Livestock Sector

Report Categories:

Dairy and Products

Livestock and Products

Market Development Reports

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Report Highlights:

Under USDA's Food for Progress Program, USDA and ACDI/VOCA are working together to support the development of Ethiopia's livestock feed sector through the Feed for Enhancement of Ethiopian Development project (FEED). This report highlights one of many FEED success stories. Specifically, because of the technical and in-kind support provided by the FEED project, the Bokra Farmer's Cooperative Union established a commercial feed enterprise. Bokra's members who use the improved feed report significant increases in milk and meat yields. These higher yields translate into extra income that can be used to improve individual farmers' standard of living.

Cooperative Union in Tigray Improves Returns on Livestock Businesses through Manufacture and Sale of Feed Concentrates

Bokra Farmer's Cooperative Union (FCU) has proven itself to be one of the most business savvy, motivated, creative and hard-working FCUs engaged in feed manufacturing that has been assisted by the USDA-funded Feed Enhancement for Ethiopian Development (FEED) project. Located in Maychew, the capital of the southern zone of Tigray, Bokra FCU was established in 1997 with a membership of 11 multipurpose primary cooperatives, composed of 11,270 individual members (6,810 men and 4,460 women). Its total capital upon establishment in 1997 was 380,000 ETB (\$19,000). The FEED project targeted it in 2012 for establishment of a commercial feed manufacturing enterprise.

FEED provided an in-kind grant of feed manufacturing equipment valued at ETB 528,428.09 (\$26,400) with corresponding training and technical support, after which the union established its commercial feed enterprise and started production. The union has thus far produced commercial feed concentrates for dairy and fattening that are purchased largely by dairy and fattening cooperatives and smallholder livestock businesses.



Dairy and fattening concentrate feed

Bokra's commitment to livestock feed manufacture and other related activities has gone well beyond just establishment as the management has widely promoted its commercial feed products and expanded its market outlets through astute strategies. It uses various relevant local gatherings (farmers and experts trainings, workshops, seminars, etc.) to demonstrate and promote its products, and has sold 337.22 tons of commercial feed since it began production. In April 2015, Bokra also began production of poultry feed concentrate, manufacturing 1.7 tons to this point.

Ato Amare Mehari has been a regular customer of Bokra's feed unit since its establishment. Ato Amare says "I started my dairy business with two crossbred cows in 2008. I was feeding them mainly on crop residues and wheat bran and collecting only 9 liters/cow/day, but after I began using the dairy feed concentrate from Bokra union, my milk collection increased to 16 liters/cow/day." Ato Amare further indicated that "the cows' body condition and reproductive performance have also improved since I began feeding them concentrated feed." Currently, Ato Amare owns 8 dairy cows, and he has used his increased income from milk sales to begin constructing a house in Mekele town.



Ato Amare's dairy cows

Hashenge and Lemlem FCUs in Ofla and Raya Azebo woredas, respectively, are also major customers of the Bokra's feed mill unit. Hashenge increased its milk production from 7 to 17 liters/day/cow due to the concentrated feed and is planning to expand its dairy and fattening businesses. Lemlem also started sheep and goat fattening through regular purchases of concentrated feed from Bokra. Recently it sold 101 and 80 well fattened goats and sheep, respectively.

Bokra union has continued working hard to diversify its businesses and services and started dairy production and livestock fattening of its own. The union began their dairy business in 2013 with 4

crossbred dairy cows and started fattening operations in 2014. Currently, they have 16 dairy cows, including calves and heifers. The relevant, diverse and extraordinary services provided to its members has resulted in an increase in membership to 23 primary cooperatives, of 20,845 individual members (9,927 men and 10,918 women) and total capital of ETB 3,227,276.55 (\$163,364). Bokra is also significant in that over 52% of its members are women, while the average in other FEED II assisted FCUs as a whole is only about 14%.



Ato Amare at his farm



Bokra Union's Feed Operation



Bokra Union's Feed Operation