Breeding activities and adoption of artificial insemination amongst dairy herds in the dry zone of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

A study was conducted to evaluate dairy cow breeding activities in five selected districts of the dry zone of Sri Lanka. Overall, the percentage of farmers adopting 'natural service', 'artificial insemination and natural service' and 'artificial insemination' were 63%, 27% and 10%, respectively. The major reasons for farmers not adopting AI were identified as "no knowledge about AI" and "no persuasion and advice". The major signs used for heat detection were mucous discharge, bellowing, restlessness and 'mount other animals or mounted by other animals'. Only 35% of the farmers in Jaffna and less than 3% of the farmers in all other districts used pregnancy diagnosis by a veterinarian to confirm conception. Among the sire breeds used, except in Jaffna, more than 75% of the animals used were from indigenous breeds. Most of the farmers accessed the veterinary office by push bike and bus, but in Jaffna around 57% of the farmers walked to access the veterinary office. The farmer's own bulls and neighbour's bulls were the major sources of sires in natural service. The number of inseminations per conception ranged from 1 to 3. The main occupation of the family, land holding size, distance of veterinary office from the farm, level of education, source of bull and number of inseminations per conception all had a significant impact on the adoption of AI.