

## What are Livestock Extension Services?

Livestock extension is a program within the Department of Agriculture that provides technical support to farmers in regards to productivity and profitability of livestock production within the Cayman Islands.

Typical areas livestock extension may provide assistance to a farmer in include:

- ◇ Providing Sound Housing
- ◇ Supplemental Feeding
- ◇ Production Efficiency
- ◇ Breeding Technologies
- ◇ Identification/Record Keeping
- ◇ Pasture Species Selection
- ◇ Animal Nutrition
- ◇ Animal Health

Livestock Extension and veterinary staff are here to assist the local livestock farming community with any livestock farm related issues or concerns. Farm visits, one-on-one support and physical/hands-on demonstrations are one of many available programs offered to local livestock farmers.

## Providing Sound Housing

Deciding on where and how to house your livestock can be a stressful, time-consuming decision process. Building a comfortable, secure, weather tolerable containment area benefits the well-being of the animal; as well as considers the animals welfare under Section 70 of the Animal Law. Elevated/Ventilated chicken coops; secure wired cattle enclosures; and free-roam horse pasture are all examples of ideal livestock containment environments.



## Supplemental Feeding

What a farmer chooses as his/her feeding regime can make or break a farm. The use of conventional feeds is the safe route for a farmer to satisfy their herd. However, equally beneficial, supplemental feeds can be provided to a herd that can be found locally. For example: for cattle/goats - banana suckers (leaves, stems, trunks), which are high in fiber, potassium and other nutrients, are one of many local plants that can be utilized in a herd and subsequently decreases feed expenses.

## Production Efficiency

Like any business, a farm should be assessed in terms of its budget and profitability.

$$\text{PROFIT} = \text{Sales Revenue} - \text{Cost of Goods Sold}$$

Sales revenue refers to animals sold live or carcass cuts sold to market. Cost of Goods Sold refers to running expenses, for example feed, petrol, hired labor, and veterinary care.

This formula can be applied to any farm practice to assure that the farmer is not developing a financially burdened farm regime.

A wise man once said that, "A great farm animal is developed with the least amount of feed necessary for the shortest amount of time required".

## Breeding Technologies

Breeding is an important factor in an efficient livestock development program. However, a successful regime needs to consider all options, calculating risks and trying new things. Examples of breeding methods are:

- ◇ **Superior Sires**
- ◇ **Artificial Insemination**
- ◇ **Embryo Transfer**

# National Livestock Identification Program

The Department of Agriculture is encouraging all owners of livestock to properly **identify their animals** for the benefit of themselves and others.

Identification services are provided through the department in the form of ear-tagging for cattle/goats and ear-notching for pigs. When animals are properly identified it's easier to keep account of records in regards to:

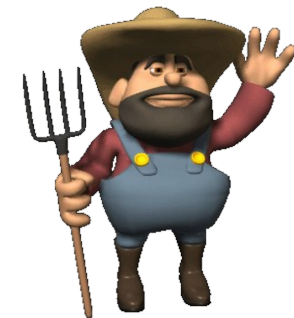
- ◇ Reproduction
- ◇ Animal Health
- ◇ Locating lost/impounded animals
- ◇ Marketing
- ◇ Distinguishing between identical animals

Upon proper identification, all animals should then be recorded in a simple record-keeping manual. This manual can be used when animals are visited by vets, clinically treated, slaughtered, during calving, purchasing, or sales. This manual lets you know exactly what you have in your herd and provides a time frame of what you can accomplish in the future. Record keeping is the key in ideal farm management.

CAYMAN ISLANDS  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# Livestock Extension

## Who are we and how can we help?



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