

**A Study of Some Socio-economic and  
Institutional Factors Affecting Beef  
Production in the Middle Belt of  
Nigeria.**

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## **Abstract:**

NIGERIA, like most developing nations of the world, faces acute short-age of animal protein intake. Beef production has been recognized as one of the means by which the level of consumption of animal protein can be increased. The main objective of this research therefore was to conduct an exploratory study into some socio-economic and institutional factors affecting beef production in the central region of Nigeria which offers the greatest potential for ruminant livestock production in the country.

The study covered five States in Nigeria, viz. BAUCHI, BENUE, KWARA, NIGER and PLATEAU states. A pre-tested questionnaire was used for data collection from livestock workers of the various States' Ministries of Agriculture/or Natural Resources. A random sample of 100 respondents was selected and the response rate was eighty-five (85). Interview schedule, inter-personal discussions, and documentary research materials were all used in various combinations for collecting information from the Ministries' Chief Executives.

The sociological factors affecting beef production centred on the belief systems, aesthetic values, attitudes, land use patterns, pastoralist farmer relationship and traditional cattle husbandry systems of the Fulani cattle farmers. Another important sociological factor was the cultural compatibility or otherwise of settling the nomads. The economic factors included the adequacy of livestock financing by the Government, the availability of farm credit, transportation of live and slaughtered animals, cattle feeding and stock water supply, beef distribution and marketing strategies. Some other economic factors studied were the economic importance of disease control and the menace of tsetse flies. The institutional factors of concern in the Study were inter- and intra-departmental/ ministerial co-ordination, availability and relevance of training programme, quantity and quality of staff for livestock development, programme planning procedures being adopted, government direct and indirect production efforts, and research activities into beef production.

The study showed that the supply of beef in Nigeria could only be improved if concerted efforts were made to reduce or remove the identified multi-various constraints. The provision of pasture, grazing reserves, stock water, settlement of the nomads, modern range management practices, education for all farmers and their children, initiation of a dynamic marketing arrangement and the creation of a progressive rural structure for rural transformation are some of the needed requirements to increase the level of beef supply in Nigeria.

The above findings are by no means the panacea to our ailing beef industry. The study and its recommendations however, will doubtlessly generate a lot of thoughts, further inquiry and greater concern for the urgent national need towards increased production and development of the Nigerian beef industry.

**Keywords:** Beef production

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