Improving Beef Cattle Production System for Sustainable Rural Development in Central Java

Publons ID	36329460
Wos ID	WOS:000472799700028
Doi	10.1063/1.5097497
Title	Improving Beef Cattle Production System for Sustainable Rural Development in Central Java
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Publish Date	2019
Journal Name	1ST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MATERIAL SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Citation	
Abstract	This study was designed to identify beef cattle production system, feeding system and also discuss the possibility for improving their system. Data on livestock production and feeding system under 48 farmer group of beef cattle in rural areas of Central Java was recorded. Beef cattle production in rural areas area is mainly conducted in a traditional system with small numbers of animals (ranged 2-8 head) with low in productivity (daily gain 0.6 kg/day, calving interval 20.6 months). Types of feeds offered to beef cattle could be classified into four major groups: legume, grasses other shrubs trees, concentrate, an agricultural by-product. In middle and upland areas, grass and rice straw in fresh is still considered the best feed for cattle. In low-land, farmer provides rice straw in fresh and also practice ammoniation. Low performances for Ongole Cross, Sumba Ongole Cross, Simmental Cross, and Brahman Crosses were found. Findings of this study should be accounted for in strengthening feeding and management, especially in maintaining body weight during mating and pregnancy periods in order to improve their productivity. Proven applied technology in term of breeding, feeding, housing, health and daily practice management aspects as well as empowering farmer and group dynamics is needed for increasing the sustainability of beef cattle production in rural areas.
Publish Type	Book in series
Publish Year	2019
Page Begin	(not set)
Page End	(not set)
Issn	0094-243X
Eissn	
Url	https://www.webofscience.com/wos/woscc/full-record/WOS:000472799700028
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