



Dairy feeds quality standards enforcement challenge in Kenya: perception of stakeholders

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This brief is based on a qualitative study involving focus group discussions (FGDs) and interviews with dairy sector stakeholders to elicit their views about enforcements of quality standards associated with dairy feeds and the overall dairy input supply in the Kenyan context.

Background Information

The Kenyan Dairy sector is credited for wide distribution of network and good access to commercial input suppliers and service providers (Rademaker et al, 2016). Commercial dairy feed provides alternative nutrients to cattle exposed to low quality roughages and fodder. Besides this, the animal feed business is a vibrant industry which provides income and employment to various operators as manufacturers (milling and mixing) and ingredient suppliers.

Despite the contributions towards improved cattle productivity, the dairy feed industry's growth and competitiveness are constrained by among other things unsatisfactory service provision and input supply; weak policy and institutional infrastructure for sector governance (Citizen 2017; KMT, 2017). The issue of input supply and in particular feeds quality is a concern to many dairy value chain actors because low quality commercial feeds heavily affect productivity per animal and price of milk (Haan, 2014: 9). Substandard manufactured animal feeds and minerals has been cited as a major quality issue.

The National government is mandated to establish an institutional framework to ensure production of good quality feeds, establish a mechanism for enforcement of the code of practice for feed manufacturers, establish an inspectorate agency and develop a monitoring system to ensure compliance of quality standards. With regards to standards quality compliance, the animal feed operators work in a policy environment regulated by Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS). The industry's efforts towards self-regulation are advanced mainly through the association of Kenya manufacturers (AKEFEMA). However, the capacity of KEBS and AKEFEMA appears to be constrained by the high numbers of operators among other factors. This notwithstanding, there is lack of an integrated approach to Kenya's feed industry operations, policy and regulatory issues including effective legislation and enforcement (KMT, 2016, 2017).

Feed quality policies and regulatory system

Kenya is supporting economic robustness of the dairy sector with several policy and regulatory instruments. The feed quality policy formulation and resultant regulation is under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Irrigation (MoALFI) and KEBS. In addition, the MoALFI, KEBS and county governments have a huge responsibility pertaining to regulation of the dairy industry feed input and advisory services supply chain. The feed manufacturers have an obligation to ensure self-regulation which would largely enhance a level of integrity that safeguards the welfare of the livestock farmer and final consumers of farm products.

Study key findings

- ✓ There is a major challenge in adherence to quality standards along dairy value chain
- ✓ There is inadequate coordination amongst the major stakeholders within the advisory and inputs supply chain in the dairy sector.
- ✓ Proper mechanisms in reporting and dealing with non-compliances in the feed supply chain are inadequate or lacking.
- ✓ There are human and infrastructural capacity challenges at different scales to provide regulatory oversight in the input and advisory service supply chain.

Key recommendations

- ❖ Support stakeholders' coordination and participation in enhancing quality standards.
- ❖ Support public-private participation in ensuring compliance to standards. This would enhance a private sector led quality assurance governance system including industry inspired quality and safety standards.
- ❖ Support a human and infrastructural capacity building for an efficient quality assurance system

1. Findings and implication for the dairy farm input and advisory service system

A qualitative study was carried out to understand the perceived failure in regulatory and enforcement of manufactured animal feed quality standards. This involved desk review of relevant policy instruments and interviews with key informants and focus group discussions (FGDs) in Nandi, Nyandarua, Kiambu, Nakuru and Nairobi counties.

a. Weak policy instruments

Analysis of the key policies and respective Acts of parliament associated with dairy feeds shows that they are generally weak with respect to enforcement of respective standards and quality assurance guidelines. This may encourage unethical practices by service providers considering that there is lack of credible input suppliers and service providers, ineffective sector regulation, availability of policies that are not enforced at the grassroots level (Makoni et al. 2014).

b. There is a disconnect between regulatory policies/guidelines and implementation

Policies and guidelines exist to guide in the regulatory process. The draft livestock policy and the Standards Act are the main policy instruments that mandate a number of government agencies to undertake different regulatory roles. These agencies include the KEBS, MOALF and the Department of Veterinary Services (DVS). At the county level, the county government has got the livestock field officers and the extension officers. There is however an overlap in roles amongst different government agencies.

c. Human and infrastructural capacity is a major factor affecting an efficient quality assurance system

Low or inadequate capacity was noted among key actors in the quality assurance system. Consequently, there is an appeal to empower the livestock feed officers which could be through short courses and provision of resources to undertake monitoring for improved enforcement of regulations. This may imply a collaborative approach to capacity building. For instance, KEBS may be required to work with MOALF in a holistic training for livestock and extension officers.

The extension officers at the grassroots level may be required to train farmers on basic quality skills. For instance, they may train them on how to distinguish between high quality and substandard feed. Further, the extension officers may take up the role of monitoring for compliance with quality standards in the field and endeavor to report cases of non-compliance. This may only be feasible if clear institutional structures for monitoring are developed and enforced. This may include a clear system for punishing cases of non-compliance with quality standards.

d. Adherence to standards for quality feeds is a major challenge in the dairy industry

There was a general consensus amongst all the 7 FGDs and 85% of the key informants that regulations implementation and enforcement mechanism is weak or inadequate in the dairy feeds sub-sector (Figure 1).

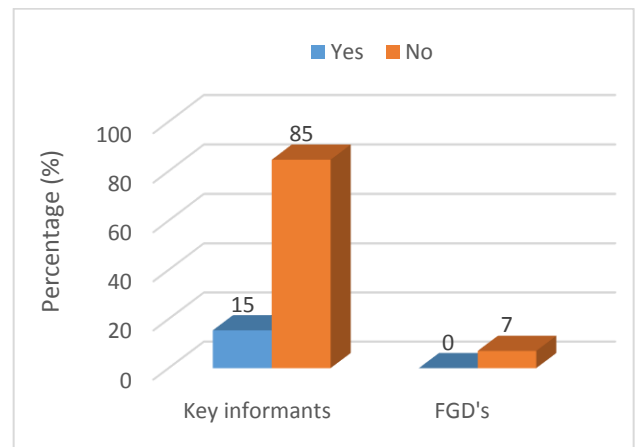


Figure 1: Perception about implementation and enforcement of regulations ensuring quality dairy feeds.

Standards enforcement is important at the entire dairy input value chain (formulation of rations, packaging, transportation, sale, use and application at the farm level).

This implies that monitoring is a critical aspect of an efficient quality assurance system. Multiple actors are involved in monitoring and include policy makers, government agents, farmers, commercial feeds manufacturers, homemade feeds manufacturers, and researchers. Weak enforcement of standards is directly linked to poor quality feeds which confound the problem of low productivity in the dairy sector (milk and other dairy products).

Majority of the respondents from the study in each category (68% of the key informants and consensus of 6 out of the 7 FGD'S) were in agreement that mechanisms are lacking for accountability with regards dairy inputs quality standards compliance (Figure 2).

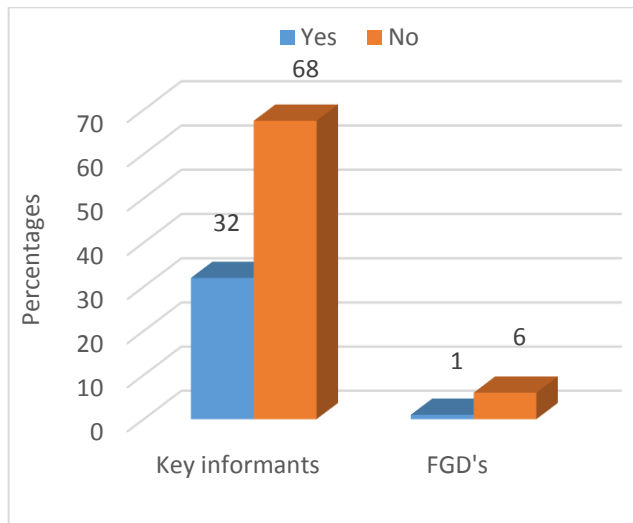


Figure 2: Perception on mechanisms for quality standards compliance

2. Key messages

i) Roles and responsibilities execution

Government agencies seem to understand their responsibilities as mandated by relevant laws and policies. The major challenges affecting execution of roles and responsibilities are poor coordination among stakeholders; inadequate capacities and inadequate resources (for instance fuel, training and reduced number of extensionists).

ii) Build requisite capacity for standards and regulation enforcement/ implementation at both the national and the grassroots levels.

- Technical capacity and relevant skills building. This entails training technicians and possible streamlining of educational curriculum to ensure a holistic training of livestock officers.
- Infrastructural capacity. This entails mobile testing tools and localized laboratories for inclusive and accessible services.
- Create awareness about quality standards at the level of policy makers (national and county levels) and grassroots farmers

- Support and strengthen existing institutions like AKEFEMA towards self-regulation of animal feed manufacturers. This should be supported by a nationwide campaign to register feed manufacturers under AKEFEMA.

iii) Create a conducive ecosystem for public private partnerships in dairy inputs/feeds quality assurance

- Private institutions and government to join hands in protecting farmers and consumers against unscrupulous traders engaging in substandard inputs and products.

iv) Accountability for compliance or non-compliance to quality standards

- Support structures for reporting of unethical practices in the feeds value chain.
- Unscrupulous manufacturers or stockists/traders to be reported through the county directors and livestock officers. Action should be taken like temporary withdrawal of licenses.

3. Policy recommendations

- Review existing policies or enact draft policies/strategies through a collaborative process involving all stakeholders. Harmonize national and county policies and guidelines for an efficient and coordinated implementation of quality standards.
- Embark on a national wide campaign to sensitize the stakeholders about standards and requisite implementation. Counties should lead in this endeavor. Farmers to be trained on basic monitoring skills. There is also the need to identify and report cases of non-compliance to feeds quality standards.
- Motivation for quality standards adherence: A system of incentivizing local feeds production and certification as well as branding of quality feeds should be put in place.

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