

**ASSESSMENT OF “HEIFER CALF REARING
SCHEME” IN BATTICALOA DISTRICT IN THE
YEAR 2014.**

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ABSTRACT

Sri Lanka is an agriculture country and many farmers depend on animal husbandry for their livelihood. Livestock sector contributes considerably for national GDP. So, livestock sector is regarded by the government as a priority area in the development programmes. Government has developed several schemes in order to improve the rural economy of livestock farmers. The present study was conducted to assess such scheme called "Heifer Calf Rearing Scheme". This is a special scheme for heifer calves where those calves are being monitored and reared from the birth to its first calving under special management and feeding system. The scheme has four main objectives on the calves, puberty age 18 months, first calving before 30 months, increase in daily milk yield, and reduce mortality less than 5%.

This study has assessed this scheme in Batticaloa district for the year 2014 to check whether the scheme's objectives were attained or not. By the assessment the scheme's succession rate can be measured and further actions can be forwarded.

The main objective of this study was to check the succession rate of the scheme and specifically to find out the factors influencing on it and to suggest the ways to overcome the constraints. All the farmers (45) were selected for data collection in the population because of the small sample size. Data collection was done by questionnaire method and data analysis was conducted using minitab 16 software.

To identify the succession rate of the scheme one sample t-test was applied. Descriptive analysis was done for 25 different factors to identify the factors which affected the succession rate of the scheme.

The statistical results indicate that none of the objectives of the scheme has been attained and according to the descriptive results 29% calves has attained puberty within target age and 20% calves had their first calf within target age. Succession rate for the objective daily milk yield increase was 11.11% and calf mortality rate among the scheme farmers was 8.88%, which is higher than expected value. According to the results objectives of the scheme are going unsuccessful. So, the scheme should be modified with special needs which are suitable for current environment. If awareness programmes would be done repeatedly in each year for the farmers about the scheme, it will help them to achieve the target.

Key words: Heifer Calf Rearing Scheme, Succession rate,