

# Review of Beef Cattle Breeding Research and Achievements in Ethiopia

## **Result and Discussion**

### **Genetics and breeding**

The recent DARGIS [3] data base report indicated that there are about 27 types/breed of cattle are identified in Ethiopia. They are categorized into 7 distinct breed categories, these are: Small East African Zebu (Adwa, Ambo, Bale, Goffa, Guraghe, Hammer, Harer, Jam-Jam, Jijiga, Mursi, Ogaden zebu, Smada), Sanga (Aliab Dinka, Anuak, danakil, Raya-Azebo ), Zenga (Arado, Fogera, Horo), Large East African Zebu (Arsi, Barka, Ethiopian Borana, Murle ), Hampless Long horn (Kuri), West African Zebu ( Red Fulan) and Humpless Shorthorn (Sheko).

The only beef breeding experiment that can be mentioned is the work carried out by Alemaya College of Agriculture from 1961 to 1967. Beef breeding experiment at Alemaya comprised of crossbreeding of Borana cows with bulls of Hereford, Angus, Charolais, Brahman and Santa Gertrudis. The number of animals born in this program was limited. The results up to 1967 were published by Wagner et al. [4] and showed that the crossbred calves were 19.6% higher at birth than Borana Zebu calves ( $p<0.01$ ), crossbred calves were 23.6% higher ( $p<0.01$ ), at weaning time (240 days) than were Borana Zebu calves, while in the feedlot, Borana Zebu cattle grew at the rate of 1.74 lb per day as compared to 2.40 lb per day for crossbred cattle, representing a superiority of 37.9% above the Borana Zebu cattle ( $p<0.01$ ). The Angus crossbred calves were the lightest of the different crossbreds at birth and weaning and Charolais crossbred calves were the heavies. Very recently, there is a plan to evaluate the growth performance, carcass characteristics and other traits of crosses of borana and belgian blue beef cattle with different feeding management at Adami Tulu Agricultural Research Center.

### **Reproductive performance**

The three major traits that contributed to cattle meat production are reproductive performance, viability and growth rate. A high calving rate is essential for profitable calf production and these calves must

Jersey sires. Calves from 1/2B1/2S and 1/2B1/2F dams were heavier at birth than calves from 1/2B1/2J, 1/2K1/2J, Borana and Barka dams,

Future beef cattle breeding activities should consider carcass characteristics, market demand and economic aspects.

There is no much data on post weaning and matured body weight performance of indigenous cattle or their crosses; generating such data should be considered in the future.

In addition to the breed improvement programs; enhancing feed quality and quantity as well as prevention and control of animal disease has to be given due attention.

## References

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