

B-04: Some factors affecting kid mortality in local goats under smallholder management systems in Matara District

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In Matara district, goats are traditionally kept in small numbers by low-income groups. The productivity of these units is very low due to high kid mortality. The causes for the high mortality rates should be understood to eliminate this problem. However, the factors affecting kid mortality under such conditions have not been investigated. This study reveals some factors affecting kid mortality in local goats reared in smallholdings.

The mortality rate at different age groups and seasons were compared on the basis of total deaths. The factors affecting kid mortality such as age, sex, litter size, birth weight, season and the climate were studied using simple statistical methods. The possible causes of deaths were recorded.

The overall mortality rate was 47.55%. The highest mortality rate was 34.17% in the age group of 1 - 30 days, and in the fourth quarter of the year 77.35%. The mortality rate during 3 - 6 months and 6 - 12 months of age were 22.56% and 16.27% respectively. A higher percentage of deaths were recorded among the female kids (51.23%) but difference due to sex was not statistically significant. Mortality rates are 38.38%, 53.45% and 77% for kids born as singles, twins and triplets respectively. The types of birth demonstrate a significant difference for the mortality rates ($p < 0.05$). The birth weight of kids has a significant effect on kid mortality. The mortality rate was significantly correlated with rainfall and humidity. Among the diseases, Pneumonia and Gastroenteritis accounted for most of the deaths in goat kids.