

## Use of *Gliricidia sepium* fodder as a supplement for goats

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A study was conducted to examine the beneficial effects of *Gliricidia sepium* leaves as a supplementary feed for milking goats under semi intensive type of rearing.

Two groups each of milking goats (2 - 3 years, 25 - 30 kg live weight) were chosen and tethered in a stall. Two groups were separated after two week adoption period of cut and fed feeding (natural grasses and *G. sepium*) One group of goats fed only with natural grasses while the other group of goats fed with natural grasses and *G. sepium* (50 : 50). The experiment was conducted over a period of 4 months. Feed intake and milk yields were recorded for a period of seven days of each month while body weights were recorded at monthly intervals. T test was used to compare the treatment means.

Average fresh feed intake of milking goats increased from  $8.10 \pm 0.34$  to  $9.00 \pm 0.16$  kg / day when grasses supplemented with *G. sepium*. Similarly, average weight gain of goats increased up to 41.7 g / day for supplementary group as compared with the group (16.7 g / day) which only received grasses. Milk yield increased significantly when goats supplemented with *G. sepium* leaves ( $467.5 \pm 72.99$  ml / day) as compared to the goats fed with only grasses ( $362.5 \pm 65.35$  ml / day).

Feeding of common salt to the supplementary group may have produced beneficial effects on above parameters as well.

The results suggest that *G. sepium* could be used as a supplement especially when goats are reared under semi intensive system. However, farmer awareness on these aspects is necessary.