

Ground casava and whole grain wheat as alternative binder materials in feed blocking technology

Inadequate feed during dry season is a major cause of low dairy productivity. Forage production is rain fed thus feeds are abundant during the rainy season. Napier grass, sugar cane tops, sunflower and bean husks are important feed resources in small holder livestock production systems. Conservation of the surplus fodder, crop residues and agro industrial by products to improve dairy production has the potential for sustainable milk production. Feed block technology is common in ruminant feed conservation and supplement food sources using cement as an inorganic binder. The adoptability of this technology by smallholder farmers is low partly because of the perception that cement could harm their animals. This study was therefore designed to evaluate cassava and wheat flour as alternative and natural binders of agro-industrial waste using the feed blocking technology. The results showed that ground whole grain wheat and cassava are good binding materials and their fermentative property might increase palatability of feeds based on crops and agroindustrial wastes. The study recommends that more effort needs to be directed to ensure wider adoption of this technology by farmers.

Key word: Potential, Fodder crop preservation, agroindustrial wastes, Feed block technology