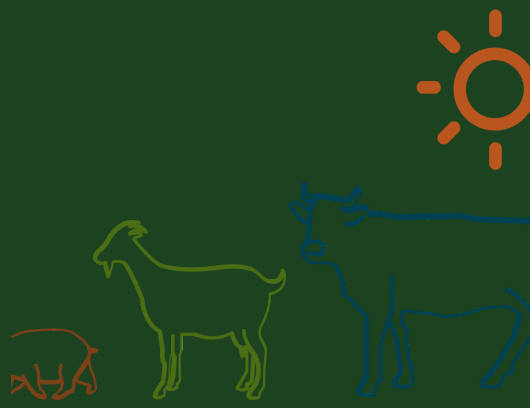
Australian Government
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research

Improving the mineral nutrition of Tibetan livestock



Key details

Location
China

Duration
Start Jan 2011 **End** Dec 2012

Budget AUD 519,542

Partners
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences; Tibet Academy of Agricultural and Animal Sciences; Tibet Livestock Research Institute

Project Leader
Nick Costa - Murdoch University

ACIAR Research Program Manager
Dr Anna Okello

Program Livestock Systems

Project code LPS/2010/028

Overview

Livestock production is the predominant industry in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) of China, with in excess of 20 million animals (yaks, cattle, horses, sheep and goats) raised under various production systems. ACIAR-supported mineral survey work over the last 5 years in TAR has shown that Tibetan yaks, dairy cows and sheep are at risk from a number of mineral deficiencies - including the macro-minerals phosphorus, sodium and calcium, and the trace elements copper, selenium and iodine. These mineral deficiencies can result in severe production losses (up to 30% of meat, milk, wool, fibre, reproduction) as well as poor health and increased mortalities.

This ACIAR project, with co-investment provided by AusAID and TAR, represented a concerted effort to improve animal production through ameliorating these deficiencies. There were flow-on benefits to the consumers, notably a reduction in disorders arising from mineral deficiencies in the human food chain.

ACIAR | Australian Aid