

Soyabean production has increased gradually due to the government's efforts to promote it. In 1988/89 the area of production was 0.4 million ha. Total production in 1988/89 is estimated to be 0.49 million tons. The current situation of soyabean production is one of under-supply due to the increasing domestic demand, especially for the livestock industry. In 1987/88, Thailand imported 232,180 tons of soyabean meal. The estimated total consumption for 1988/89 is 771,440 tons, so approximately 221,440 tonnes will have to be imported. The livestock industry will consume 659,160 tons in 1989/90. The demand for soyabean meal will increase approximately 40,000 to 50,000 tons each year.

Forage Crops

In 1986, there were approximately 0.15 million ha. of natural grazing land. The natural grasslands that exist cannot support a greater number of ruminants.

The quality of grasses in Thailand is lower than grasses from temperate zones which has resulted in the introduction of grass species from western countries. These imported grasses require proper management and should be grown as permanent pasture. However, because agriculture in Thailand has been crop oriented and characterized by small holdings, most small farmer are not capable of proper management, except for the pastures used for intensive dairy farms.

Crop Residues

As crop-livestock integration is introduced to farmers, crop residues are becoming major feed sources for ruminants. In addition to rice straw as an important feed source, other by-products are being utilized from sugarcane, corns (baby corn and maize production), pineapple, cassava, soybean and rubber.

Conclusions

The demand for feed is directly related to livestock and poultry production, which is on the increase.

Recommendations

1. Opportunities exist for a joint venture to produce high quality feed and pre-mixes (vitamins, minerals and medication) and feed supplements
2. Promote Canada's technological advantages in nutrition research, animal health, veterinary medicine and biotechnology (pharmaceuticals, growth hormones, drug implants).
3. Introduce genetic engineering to produce superior types of feed.
4. Canada has some of the best forage in the world in Dehy Alfalfa and Canola meal. Thailand has recently allowed the importation of animal feed raw materials to prevent expected shortages next year.