



Project Location:
Espiritu Santo, Vanuatu

Project Start Date:
1 July 2009

Funding Source:
Australian Agency for International
Development (AusAID) – 30%
Sarami -70%

Total Grant Funds Approved:
A\$1,375,000

Updated December 2012

Sarami – Small Holder Cattle Improvement Project, Vanuatu

ABOUT SARAMI PLANTATION

Sarami Plantation has been breeding cattle on their property on the island of Espiritu Santo in Vanuatu for over 30 years. Fattened cattle are sold to local abattoirs for export and local meat sales.

THE PROJECT AND HOW IT WORKED

ECF support allowed Sarami to upgrade pastures, introduce silage production, and provides transport for collection of cattle from smallholder suppliers and to improve the associated facilities at its operation.

Sarami worked with small holder groups who are generally unable to achieve top prices for their cattle due to their poor conditioned pastures that are overstocked and limited watering systems. Sarami purchases young cattle from these farm holders they are then conditioned on the Sarami's improved pastures and silage before sale at premium prices. This approach represents benefits for both the rural suppliers and Sarami.

ECF support was also provided for a genetic improvement program – smallholder groups will be provided with a free bull once they sell 40 cattle to Sarami.

Support was provided partly because of its value as a model for pasture improvements, silage production and livestock breeding practices in the Pacific Islands. Replication in other countries would be of interest to other countries and have beneficial rural livelihoods, economic and food security outcomes.

Other impacts from the project were expected to include increased employment at Sarami, but the main beneficiaries would be 200-300 smallholder cattle suppliers on Santo who will earn at least 50 per cent more for the young cattle they sell to Sarami.

THE RESULTS

Since commencement of the ECF project Sarami has purchased over 2,000 cattle from more than 240 smallholders. This represents an increase in small holder incomes of Vatu 42.5 million (\$A0.45 million). Other results include:

- Silage production has been successfully trialed and implemented.
- Different pastures have been trialed and the most suitable varieties confirmed.
- All associated site improvements have been completed.
- An additional 20 workers have been employed by Sarami. Workers have received technical and on the job training in silage production and pasture improvements.
- Small holders receive 50% higher prices for their cattle than prices from other buyers.
- Transport of purchased cattle by Sarami reduces costs for smallholders and further increases their net returns.
- Two shipments of cattle have been negotiated with the Solomon Islands Government as the first stage in rebuilding that country's cattle industry.
- The genetic breeding program will commence in early 2013.

Once the silage and pasture improvement procedures have been fully evaluated, the project will offer important lessons for other parties around the Pacific. Interest has already been shown by government bodies and the private sector in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

HOW ECF FUNDS WERE USED

The ECF grant part funded the silage production equipment, the genetic improvement program and most of the site infrastructure improvements.

Sarami funded the other costs associated with the silage production trials, the pasture trials, purchases of the cattle from small holders, recruitment of additional technical staff and other ongoing project costs.