Using local knowledge as a basis for planning ruminant diets in the mid hills of Nepal

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The problem

Requirement to deliver information tailored to farmers' individual needs are not well catered for by conventional extension methodologies.

The solution

Tools that can generate extension material (Fig. 3) customised to specific sets of local circumstances (Fig. 2).

The mechanism

Software running on interpreted local knowledge of nutritive value, integrated with a biological model of animal nutrition (Fig. 1).

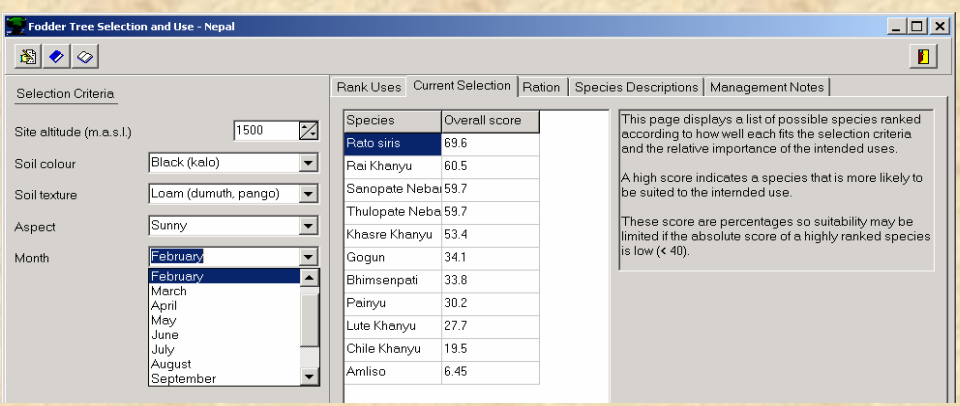

Figure 1. Selecting fodder trees for local circumstances

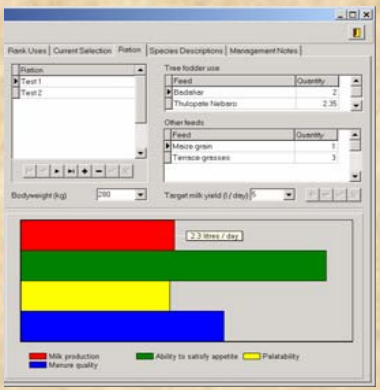

Figure 2. Incorporating fodder from different species in a ration

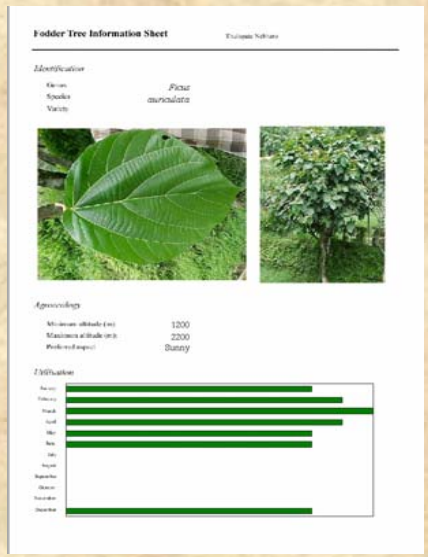

Figure 3. Tailored extension output (also available in *Nepali*)

The benefits of using local knowledge

- overcomes problems of data availability because farmer's knowledge accounts for variability,
- avoids bias arising from assumptions inherent in perspectives of conventional animal scientists,
- generates greater impact because farmers objectives, which are implicit in their evaluation of fodder, are addressed directly.

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