

Traditional Breeding Management of Yak (*Poephagus grunniens*) in North Eastern Hill Region of India

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Abstract

Yak is an important livestock in the high reaches of Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand states of India on account of its economic benefits to the highlanders under harsh conditions of high altitude. Yaks are reared under free-range system and are found in alpine and sub-alpine regions, usually between 3,000 and 4,500 m above mean sea level with cold, semi-humid climate. Yak herdsmen traditionally follow their indigenous technique for selecting yaks for pure line breeding by selecting replacement sequentially in calves from cows, having good conformation and high milk yield. Interspecies hybridization is one of the breeding methods practiced by the yak herdsmen in the hilly terrains of Arunachal Pradesh to increase their productivity and draft capacity. This paper outlines certain ideas of traditional breeding management practices of yak in some yak rearing pockets of North Eastern Hill Region of India by the yak herdsmen. Emphasis is given on the use of established knowledge of genetics and breeding for the purpose.