

Pig raising frontiers in Tropical Africa: Changing small and medium sized piggeries and their regional system in Kenya

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Although Eastern and Southern African regions have experienced dramatic growth in the pig raising industry since the early 1990s, its enterprise reality has not yet been well researched. This study takes Nyeri County, Central Province and Homa Bay County, Nyanza Province, both in Kenya, as examples of "pig raising frontiers" in Tropical Africa where pigs are introduced as new livestock. It examines changing entrepreneurial activities that small- and medium-sized pig raisers have performed since their beginning, particularly between 2009 and 2012. Zero-grazing is affected by increasing feed prices, and free ranging/scavenging in urban and peri-urban areas causes crop damages and hygienic problems. These are pointed out as the main reasons which stimulate shift among breeding, fattening and integrated production in an enterprise, and which even trigger withdrawal from pig husbandry. The study also illuminates locational conditions and the regional system of rural and urban pig raising, all of which influence the change in the economic sector. Since the frontier experiences constitute a variety of trial and error, and changes, in achieving a success, their cases suggest potential factors that may promote distribution and sustainability of pig husbandry in Tropical Africa as a quick means to supply food and alleviate poverty.

Keywords: pig husbandry, small and medium sized producers, Kenya, Tropical Africa