Performance and Marketing of Garut Sheep, West Java

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ABSTRACT

Sheep is concentrated in West Java with the population of approximately 48% of the total sheep population in Indonesia (9.514.184 heads). Garut Regency contributed around 5% and 9% respectively to West Java and Indonesia population (DGLS. 2007). A steady increase with very little fluctuation of sheep population within 3 years (2004-2007) in West Java (10%/year) and Garut (17%/year) indicates its economical contribution and cultural values to the region. However, Garut sheep gained little attention and support for it's development. A study was carried out in two representative villages in Garut, aiming at obtaining information on sheep production characteristics including, ownership, types of management, production capacity and marketing. The results showed that the numbers of animals owned was ranging from 1-5 heads/family. Ratio between males and females of 1 : 1.7, providing enough chances for mating activities. Simple housing, feeding and health management were applied by farmers. Fifty four percent of ewes were kept for breeding purpose, while lamb were raised for sale. The average body weight gain of 100gr/day. Reproductive characteristics was significantly high: 1) sexual maturity for males and females was achieved at 6 m and 10 m respectively; 2) age at first mating around 1 year of age; 3) lambing interval was 9 months and litter size was 2.8 lambs/year, with high percentage of single birth (41%) and twining birth (46%). High mortality rate (75%), mostly occurred at young age. Sheep were sold as live animals to other farmers, consumers or middle-man. The marketing channels by middle men went through several steps before reaching the final consumers.

Key words: *Garut sheep, performance, marketing chain*

INTRODUCTION

Sheep is mainly concentrated in West Java with the population of approximately 48% (4,605,417 heads), of the total sheep population in Indonesia (9.514.184 heads), of which Garut Regency contributed around 5% and 9% respectively to West Java and Indonesia population (Statistik Peternakan, 2007). Garut sheep plays significant roles in farmer daily activities, has good productivity, economical contribution and high cultural values to the region. Sheep has been part of the farmers activity since the Dutch colonialism era. From biological and economical point of view, sheep has high reproductive performance with litter size up to 150% per year, meat production, could achieve 50% of bodyweight, very adaptive to local environment. Based on approach and information from Indonesia Trade Promotion Center (ITPC), importer from Arab Saudi Association is ready for marketing collaboration. The animal has potency for domestic market and also export to Saudi Arabic country, especially during Idhul Adha. Despite its popularity, in fact, the Garut sheep, gained little attention and support for its development toward a sustainable sheep farming. Therefore information on production characteristics is essential. This study was initiated, aiming at obtaining information on sheep production systems and characteristics including, ownership, types of management, production and reproduction capacity, including the marketing system applied by farmers in the region.

The objective of this study was to evaluate sheep production systems in Garut, West Java, to assess production and reproduction characteristics of Garut sheep, and to identify the marketing system applied by farmers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A study was carried out in representative villages in two districts (Wanaraja and Tarogong) of Garut Regency involving sheep owners, groups of farmers in both locations, livestock officers and village representatives