

# COW-CALF PRODUCTION SYSTEMS IN HOUSEHOLDS IN VIETNAM SOUTH CENTRAL COASTAL REGION

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## Summary

Surveys were conducted from January 2014 and March 2015 to evaluate the current status of smallholder cow-calf system production in two study communes in South Central Coastal Vietnam: Tay Giang commune, Tay Son district, Binh Dinh province, and An Chan commune, Tuy An district, Phu Yen province. A total of 127 households were selected for interview, in which 500 cows were assessed, and 316 calves (0 – 6 months old) were weighed. The cow – calf system in these communes has been moving from extensive to semi-intensive or intensive system. The average number of cattle per household in Tay Giang commune was 4.5, while in An Chan commune it was 5.7 head. Cows accounted for 49.8% of cattle surveyed in Tay Giang and 36.6% in An Chan. The percentage of Zebu crossbred cows in Tay Giang was 89.9% and An Chan 73.4%. Cow feeding systems were mostly grazing and stall feeding or only stall feeding. Farmers paid reasonable attention to cow husbandry, although the percentage of farmers practicing early weaning of their calves was low (only 12.1% in Tay Giang and 3.3% in An Chan). Feed resources and types that were used for cows were diverse. There was no significant difference in terms of amount of feed for cows before and after calving. Body condition score of the cows was reasonable, when seasonal feed supply and quality was good but relatively low in times when feed supply and quality was lacking, especially in Tay Giang. Mean calving interval for cows surveyed in An Chan was 13.2 months while in Tay Giang it was longer (15.9 months). Estimated calf weight at birth, 3 months, and 6 months old was 24, 80, and 136 kg in Tay Giang and 22, 86, and 150 kg respectively in An Chan. The further research should focus on improving calf growth rate, keeping shorter calving interval and cow-calf value chain analysis in South Central Coastal Vietnam.

**Keywords:** *Cow-calf system, reproductive performance, South Central Coastal Vietnam.*