

DEFINING PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALLHOLDER PIG PRODUCTION IN THE PHILIPPINES

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In the Philippines, the pig is one of the most important livestock species raised by smallholder families to supplement disposable household income. In these situations, pig herds are usually very small and managed using family labor, and animals are fed locally available, non-commercial feedstuffs. Furthermore, there is little baseline information on the level of health and productivity being achieved by smallholder pigs, in contrast to pigs raised commercially. There is also little understanding of the problems facing and opportunities available to smallholder pig raisers to improve current levels of productivity. There is no doubt that the productivity of these animals is generally low due to a wide range of nutritional, management, disease and reproductive constraints.

A cross-sectional study on smallholder pig productivity was therefore carried out at two sites in the Philippines (northern Benguet -northern site- and western Leyte -southern site-) with the following objectives :

- 1/ to obtain baseline information on the health and productivity of pigs raised by Filipino smallholders,
- 2/ to identify important constraints to smallholder pig production,
- 3/ to identify opportunities for smallholder pig production by recognizing factors most closely associated with the most productive animals.

Personal interviews were held with 397 pig raisers with data collected for 272 sows and 456 growers under their care. There were considerable differences in the levels of productivity achieved by sows and growers, with the animals in western Leyte generally being more productive than the animals in northern Benguet. As expected, the productivity of these smallholders animals is substantially lower than those reported for animals on commercial farms. Local innovations and practices that were most effective in assisting smallholders in maximizing sow and grower productivity have been identified using a combination of univariate and multivariate statistical methods appropriate for the different data types. The results have provided valuable insights about these innovations and practices, and recommendations regarding the emphasis on the adoption of these local innovations and practices have been made.

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