

# **LIVESTOCK FARMING AND PROBLEMS**

**By**

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Livestock could be defined as those animals by man so as to improve the number and animals which serve as a good source of income and has embarked on domesticating since time immemorial. Those animals domesticated by man include poultry, cattle, goats, pigs and camels. It is important to note that domestication of animals evolved long ago. Man (*Homo sapiens*) in fact, fossils *Australopithecus* which was regarded to have been found to be closely association with bones of animals.

Associated with livestock farming are pests and diseases. Some of these pests comprise lice, mites and flies whereas the diseases include trypanosomiasis, rhinderpest, blue tongue, Theileriosis, Anaplasmosis, streptothricosis can horse sickness, contagious bovine umoria an haemorrhagic septicaemia.

These arthropod pests are carriers of Theileriosis and Anaplasmosis.

Serving as a good source of protein, domesticated animals such as camels serve as means of transportation and as beasts of burden. When the Fulanis are migrating they use some of these conveying their luggage especially cattle, donkeys, sheep and goats.

Ticks are not insects, they are arachnids belonging to the same Class with spiders and scorpions. Their mouthparts are made up of chelicerae and pedipalps. The adult and nymphal stages possess four pairs of legs while the larvae possess three pairs of legs. Ticks are successful invertebrates in that they feed mainly on blood, tissue fluids and cellular debris. The females show a high fecundity as many as hundred thousand eggs are laid per female and if the tick is infected with parasites such as *Babesia* species, these parasites are further transmitted to the eggs – larvae – nymphs and also the adults. This on ward transmission is referred to as trans-ovarian transmission. It is for this reason that diseases are easily contacted viz from an infected host to an uninfected susceptible animal by parasitism of these ectoparasites (ticks).

*Babesia canis* transmit Babesiosis to dogs while *Babesia bigemina* transmits babesiosis to cattle. Pathology of babesiosis include anaemia accompanied by haemoglobinuria, the mucous membranes may become pale and icteric. Another form of disease is the Theileriosis which is due to *Theileria parva* and *Theileria mutans*. The pathology is similar to that of babesiosis.

Since the pests also cause change of hides and skin, it is therefore pertinent to avoid the problems that they endanger. In doing so pet owners should take cognizance of the following:

- (i) Remove the pests by forcible detachment from the various sites of the animal's body (inner ear, outer ear, trunk, face, head, neck, interdigital clefts, tail, loin, hock, escutcheon, rump, tassels, beards and perineum). Once they are picked they should be killed in petroleum, methanol, ethanol, methylated spirit or formaldehyde.
- (ii) The Fulani cattle rearers do detach and burn these pests. It is really an ideal method but the parasites should not be removed with bare hands because if there is an open wound the haemoparasites in the tick vectors would easily have access to the blood stream of man through this wound. The crude method of deticking tick, attract secondary bacterial infection by *Corynebacterium pyogenes* which causes an Otitis leading to the sloughing of the host's external ear. The presenting secondary infection it becomes necessary actually methylated spirit, methanol or ethanol on the sates where the ticks have been removed.
- (iii) Frequent visits to Veterinary Clinics for doctor's examination or inviting a Veterinary Doctor in instances where the animals cannot be transported to the Clinics. It is important to ensure that the animals are dipped in chemicals with a continuous dipping, it is hoped that parasites burden could be reduced drastically.
- (iv) Ensure that all necessary steps are taken with all seriousness. This will go a long way in curbing the easy transmission of these blood parasites. This is also imperative to control the way some of the animals are grazed so as to minimize tick- borne diseases from infested areas to uninfected areas.
- (v) Finally, the owners should not rest on their oars in reducing these parasites even if they appear in numerous numbers.