



Prevailing management practices and perceived causes of mortality in pregnant does under free ranging farming systems in the Central Eastern Cape Province of South Africa

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1 SUMMARY

The aim of the study was to assess the prevailing management practices for pregnant does in some selected villages well known for goat farming in the Central Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 153 farmers using the snowball sampling technique. Collected data were analysed using PROC FREQ and Chi Square tests of the SAS (version 1.9 of 2003) software packages. The result showed that 98.7% of the interviewed farmers depended solely on natural graze land for their pregnant does to feed on. The majority of the farmers (59.9%) did not vaccinate their does against diseases before using them for breeding purposes. An average of 77.8% farmers allowed their does to mate freely on the veld. The majority of the farmers (75.2%) kept their pregnant goats together with other flocks in kraals fenced with branches and with no roof. About 66.7% farmers perceived that quality diet is a factor that would boost the performance of pregnant goats. The present results showed that pregnant goats are raised under deprived conditions with poor management facilities such as uncondusive housing environment, lack of vaccination programme and poor supplementary feeding scheme. Factors such as poor quality feed and disease among others were indicated by farmers to cause mortality of pregnant does.
