

AN ASSESSMENT OF BODY PARAMETERS AND REPRODUCTIVE PERFORMANCES OF BUFFALOES IN HAU GIANG PROVINCE

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In recent years, because of the grass lands and plowing demand decreased, the buffalo population in the country has not increased. There were 2,916 in 2000 and 2,922 buffalo head in 2005 in the whole country. The buffalo population in the Mekong River Delta was 38,830 head in 2005 occupying only 1.33% of the total country. Meanwhile, the buffalo meat consumption demand in the Southern provinces is still increasing. Consequently, a large numbers of live buffaloes have been transported from the North to the South as a domestic source and importing buffalo meat from outside countries as the other source. Therefore, it is necessary to develop buffalo herd in the Mekong River Delta.

The study was carried out in 2010 at Long My and Vi Thuy districts, Hau Giang Province in order to assess the body parameters and reproductive performances of buffaloes for breeding improvement. This assessment was carried out at the same farms where another survey on buffalo production was also being conducted.

- Fifty reproductive buffaloes, 12 buffalo bulls, 14 females and 12 male heifers were selected for assessment.
- Specialized meters and directly interviewing householders were used for this evaluation.

Table 1. Body parameters and reproductive performances of buffalo herd

No	Criteria	Reproductive female	Breeding male	Female heifers	Male heifers
1	No. of buffaloes (head)	50	12	12	14
2	Average age (year)	6.4±2.9	5.6±2.9	21.0±3.8	18.1±4.5
3	Average weight (kg)	474.9±70.7	552.0±49.7	328.5±43.6	307.1±34.1
4	Body condition score (1-10)	6.4±0.6	8.6±0.3	7.8±0.5	7.4±0.5
5	Body parameters:				
	§ height at shoulder (cm)	131.7±5.4	135.9±5.0	121.8±6.0	121.3±6.4
	§ body cross length (cm)	136.5±5.8	139.9±9.6	120.2±10.0	114.3±9.5
	§ chest perimeter (cm)	189.3±8.7	196.2±7.6	169.4±14.0	166.9±8.3
	§ height at tail (cm)	132.5±4.7	137.2±5.3	123.6±7.0	125.6±6.6
6	Body condition indices (%)				
	§ Length	103.6	102.9	98.7	94.2
	§ Round	138.7	140.2	140.9	146.0
7	Average calving	3.6±2.3	-	-	-
8	Calving interval	15.7±2.4	-	-	-
9	Plowing:				
	§ ratio	28.0	100.0	-	-
	§ working days/year	45.8±12.1	65.0±17.2	-	-

The evaluation results showed that:

- The buffaloes weight in survey areas was higher than that of buffaloes in some other areas in the MeKong River Delta as well as Southeast and Central Coastal regions.
- The configuration of buffaloes tends to meat production.
- The reproductive ability of buffaloes through calving interval was quite good.

These are the advantages for conversion from plowing to reproduction and meat production purposes.

Buffalo male heifer

Reproductive buffalo