NATIONAL LIVESTOCK POLICY -2026

SRI LANKA

Livestock Development for a Prosperous Nation and a Better Life

LIVESTOCK DIVISION

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, LANDS & IRRIGATION

Introduction

Sri Lanka’s livestock sub-sector plays an important role in food security, nutrition, rural livelihoods, and value addition to the agricultural economy. The National Livestock Development Policy focused on achieving dairy self-sufficiency, improving livestock genetics, strengthening production infrastructure, promoting private sector participation, and reforming livestock extension services. However, over the past two decades, significant structural and contextual changes—including climate change impacts, market volatility, feed shortages, emerging zoonotic diseases, and evolving trade dynamics—have created new challenges that require an updated policy framework.

A review of the 2006 policy identified several critical gaps that must be addressed to ensure the sustainable growth and resilience of Sri Lanka’s livestock sector. These include limited climate resilience in livestock production systems, particularly in relation to feed security, heat stress management, water availability, and disaster preparedness. In addition, there is weak integration of livestock development with One Health approaches and biosecurity frameworks, as well as underdeveloped livestock value chains and inadequate traceability systems.

The sector also faces challenges such as low adoption of modern technologies, limited digitalization and innovation, and inadequate integration of smallholder farmers into formal markets. Constraints related to the availability of insufficient quality animal feed and feed ingredients, genetic and breeding materials, insufficient private sector investment and an enabling business environment further hinder the development of the sector. Moreover, the current policy framework shows limited alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, evolving global trade requirements and sustainability standards.

To address these gaps, the Ministry has developed the drafts of National Dairy Development Policy and the National Poultry Development Policy with the active participation of key stakeholders in the industry in 2023 and 2024 respectively. However, the present National Livestock Development Policy aims to integrate all livestock subsectors into a single, comprehensive policy framework.

This policy outlines the goals, policy objectives and policy strategies to address the existing and emerging sector challenges at national and international levels with the aims of livestock development. Ten pillars of policy priorities align with the policy objectives drive the livestock sector to reach the policy goals.

- **Scope and Applicability of the Policy**

This policy provides a national framework for the sustainable development and management of the livestock sector in Sri Lanka. It applies to all stakeholders involved in livestock production, processing, marketing, research, and service delivery across the country. The policy is applicable to government ministries and agencies, provincial and local authorities, private sector actors, farmer organizations, research and academic institutions, development partners, and individual producers.

The scope of this policy covers all major livestock and other animal related subsectors including cattle, buffalo, poultry, goats, sheep, swine and other domesticated animals contributing to food production and other animal related rural livelihoods. It addresses such as private sector –led development, market oriented and competitive production, sustainable and environmental responsible development, support for small holder and rural livelihood and science and technology based development.

- **Vision:**

Modernized and sustainable livestock sector for national renaissance.

- **Mission:**

Management and optimum usage of all available resources in technically sound, socially-acceptable, economically viable and environmentally sustainable manner to make the livestock industry more competitive to provide safe and nutritious livestock products at affordable prices to all consumer groups while safeguarding the interest of the farming community and to cater to the international demand while contributing to the national economy.

- **Goals:**

01. Increase domestic production of milk, meat, and eggs to ensure continuous national supply through improved productivity, improved animal health, feed resources, and strengthened value chains.

02. Ensure supply of high-quality and safe livestock products by strengthening value chains and certification systems.

03. Maintain affordable prices for consumers while improving farmer profitability through cost-efficient production systems.

04. Conserve, upgrade and sustainable utilization of genetic resources including indigenous traits.

05. Promote environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient livestock systems through a circular economic approach and the sustainable use of resources.

06. Promote public–private partnerships and enhance investment across livestock production, processing, and marketing to drive sector growth and competitiveness.

07. Facilitate export oriented livestock production by improvement incompliance with international standards and certification to reach competitive export market.

- **Policy Objectives:**

1. Increase availability of animal sourced foods at affordable prices by improving productivity and profitable farming.

2. Improve animal health and wellbeing to ensure healthy animal population in the country.

3. Enhance feed and nutrition management by developing sustainable feed resources, improving feed quality and promoting efficient feeding practices.

4. Promote systematic breeding programs for genetic improvement and conservation and sustainable utilization of both indigenous and improved livestock breeds.

5. Enhance value addition through innovative and advanced technologies to ensure a profitable and modern livestock industry.

6. Develop and implement integrated ICT based livestock data management systems to facilitate real-time data collection, analysis, sharing for informed decision making across the livestock sector.

7. Empower women and youth to engage in livestock production to support livelihood development and industry sustainability.

8. Develop robust product branding strategies and improve market access with traceability to enhance consumer trust, product recognition and competitiveness in local and international markets.

9. Optimize the utilization of livestock by-products through circular economic approaches.

10. Facilitate investment for innovative, market driven research and development through public private partnerships and inter institutional collaboration to ensure sustainable and climate resilient livestock production.

11. Strengthen human and infrastructure capacities to address the evolving national and international needs of the livestock sector

12. Improve inter institutional coordination, good governance and regulatory framework for upliftment of livestock sector

- **Policy Strategies**

Objective 1 - Increase availability of animal sourced foods at affordable prices by improving productivity and profitable farming.

1.1. Promote demand sufficient livestock production through climate smart farming.

1.2. Encourage export oriented local production
1.3. Create and enabling business environment for healthy competitiveness , fair trade through favorable fiscal policy
1.4. Encourage Public Private Partnership
1.5. Facilitate equitable access to finance, technology, extension and infrastructure to support sustainable growth of livestock enterprises
1.6. Promote the development and adoption of livestock insurance scheme

Objective 2 - Improve animal health and wellbeing to ensure healthy animal population in the country.

2.1. Strengthen disease surveillance, prevention and control measures to reduce the prevalence of contagious and zoonotic diseases
2.2. Improve infrastructure facilities including laboratory, diagnosis, treatments and human resources at national and regional level to ensure animal health.
2.3. Establish real time disease reporting system linking with public and private setup
2.4. Improve the facilities for boarder control
2.5. Ensure wellbeing of animals.
2.6. Implementation of effective veterinary public health service under one health approach.
2.7. Introduce farm assessment mechanisms to promote good animal husbandry practices
2.8. Ensure prudent use of veterinary pharmaceuticals including antimicrobials

Objective 3 - Enhance feed and nutrition management by developing sustainable feed resources, improving feed quality and promoting efficient feeding practices.

3.1. Ensure year-round availability of quality and nutritious animal feed and feed ingredients for the livestock production
3.2. Improve infrastructure facilities for local cultivation of improved varieties of pasture and fodder and other feed ingredients of consecrated feed.
3.3. Facilitate with relevant policies and regulations in favorable to animal feed production

3.4. Improve infrastructure facilities including Laboratory facilities and human resources to ensure quality of animal feed certification.
3.5. Enhance infrastructure facilities and advanced technologies for animal feed production and conservation.

Objective 4- Promote systematic breeding programs for genetic improvement and conservation and sustainable utilization of both indigenous and improved livestock breeds.

4.1. Strengthen animal breeding policy favorable to the country
4.2. Increase livestock productivity through advancement of genetics
4.3. Strengthen the infrastructure facilities including human resources including human resources for effective national livestock breeding programs
4.4. Ex-situ and In-situ conservation of upgraded indigenous animal breeds.
4.5. Strengthen the facilities to address reproductive disorders

Objective 5- Enhance value addition through innovative and advanced technologies to ensure a profitable and modern livestock industry.

5.1. Promote value added production by introducing modern technologies
5.2. Ensure safe and quality value added production for national and international demand
5.3. Strengthen legislations to ensure quality and safety of value added products.
5.4. Facilitate private sector engagement in value addition.

Objective 6- Develop and implement integrated digitalized livestock data management systems to facilitate real-time data collection, analysis, sharing for informed decision making across the livestock sector.

6.1. Establish IT based livestock data management system

Objective 7- Livestock production to support livelihood development and national GDP.

7.1. Livelihood development Program for poverty alleviation and economic growth
7.2. Government assist program towards women and youth empowerment.

Objective 8. Develop robust product branding strategies and improve market access with traceability to enhance consumer trust, product recognition and competitiveness in local and international trade

8.1. Establish inter institutional mechanism to asses and publish market trends
8.2. Introduce mechanism for livestock product branding
8.3. Encourage small scale producers to form farmer societies and cooperatives to achieve market access.
8.4. Promote strategic trade linkages and bilateral or multilateral collaborations for export market opportunities.
8.5. Facilitate access to tax concessions and tailored financial instrument
8.6. Introduce product traceability system.

Objective 9. Optimize the utilization of animal by-products through a circular economy approach.

9.1. Promote utilization of livestock biproducts
9.2. Create market access for regenerated new products
9.3. Introduce quality assurance system for by-products

Objective 10. Promote innovative, market driven research and development through public private partnerships and inter institutional collaboration to ensure sustainable and climate resilient livestock production.

10.1. Establish a national advisory committee to drive and monitor livestock research
10.2. Strengthen public-private inter institutional collaborations for Research and development.

10.3. Establish a national platform to disseminate research findings or deliverables to the users/consumers or investors

10.4. Promote applicable industry-based research to fulfill the country need

10.5. Enhance international collaborations

10.6. Encourage investment for industrialization of research outputs

Objective 11. Strengthen human and infrastructure capacities to address the evolving national needs of the livestock sector.

11.1. Facilitate financial support from the government and external donors to develop the infrastructure for livestock production

11.2. Enhance the professional and skilled workforce in all strata of the livestock sector

11.3. Strengthen the livestock extension service.

Objective 12. Improve inter institutional coordination to ensure a governance and regulatory framework that maintains a continuous supply of safe, high-quality livestock products.

12.1. Update and harmonize the policies and enforcements among relevant sectors

12.2. Ensure livestock as a priority sector in the government manifesto

12.3. Upgrade existing regulatory framework to ensure the quality and safe livestock production and products

12.4. Promote stakeholder engagement and periodic impact assessment

Ten Policy Priorities have been identified in aligning with the policy objectives.

1. Market Systems, Value Chains, Processing and Circular Economy
2. Genetics, Breeding and Herd Productivity
3. Feed Security, Fodder, Land and Nutrition
4. Animal Health and Wellbeing
5. Digitalization of Livestock and Poultry and Data Infrastructure
6. Livestock Finance, Insurance and Bankability

7. Entrepreneurship, Capacity Development, Extension, and Inclusive Commercialization
8. Standards, Food Safety and Certification
9. Investment, PPPs, Research, and Innovation Partnerships
10. Sector Performance Management, M&E and Strategic Targets

Pillar 1: Market Systems, Value Chains, Processing and Circular Economy

Focus on enhancing market systems across the livestock value chain, including value addition, cold chain, processing infrastructure, storage, slaughterhouse modernization, and circular use of livestock by-products. This should include a review of legislation and rules to enable market participation, formal processing, by-product utilization and private investment.

Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 12.

Pillar 2: Genetics, Breeding and Herd Productivity

Drive improvements to genetic improvement and herd productivity through expanded and better-regulated AI, improved breeding services, selected bulls, and heifers. Embryo transfer and other reproductive technologies including genomic selection technologies, while also supporting national herd planning, indigenous breed conservation, and breeding data systems**.**

Objectives 1, 3,4 6, and 11.

Pillar 3: Feed Security, Fodder, Land and Nutrition

Improve feed security, quality, affordability, and nutrition management by expanding domestic fodder and feed resources, unlocking land for feed production, improving feed storage and conservation, supporting feed formulation and feed technologies, strengthening feed safety standards, and reducing dependence on imported feed ingredients. Review the land needs of the livestock sector both for domestically growing of feed and for animal housing, particularly where there is underutilized land.

Objectives 1, 3, 5, 10, and 12.

Pillar 4 : Animal Health & Wellbeing

Strengthen Sri Lanka's animal health management systems to maintain a healthy national herd and flock, reduce losses from disease, protect public health, and support safe, high-quality livestock products for domestic and export markets. This will include improved disease surveillance, prevention, and control; stronger national and regional diagnostic laboratory capacity; real-time disease reporting; biosecurity guidelines for livestock and poultry farms; strengthened quarantine and border control; and implementation of veterinary public health services through a One Health approach. Good animal husbandry practices to ensure Physical and Mental wellbeing of the animals

This pillar should be closely linked to the digitization agenda.

Objectives 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 11, and 12.

Pillar 5: Digitalization of Livestock & Poultry and Data Infrastructure

- Digitalization of the value chain.
- Animal Identification and Traceability System (AITS) as the core infrastructure layer, linking animals, owners, farms, health records, breeding, productivity, movement, milk collection, slaughterhouse data, certification, market information, and traceability, etc. Each species should have modules appropriate to its production system, while sharing a common identification and interoperability framework.
- Development of an artificial intelligence supported extension service.

Objectives 6 and 1, 2, 4, 8, and 12

Pillar 6: Livestock Finance, Insurance and Bankability

Unlock lower-cost credit, insurance, and investment by using livestock data, AITS and productivity records to make animals, farms, and value-chain enterprises more bankable. This should include concessional credit for SMEs and entrepreneurs, insurance products, working capital for feed and inputs, and larger-scale financing for commercial farms, processing, and cold-chain infrastructure.

Objectives 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, and 12.

Pillar 7: Entrepreneurship, Capacity Development, Extension, and Inclusive Commercialization

Encourage women, youth, and smallholders to move from subsistence livestock activity toward commercially viable livestock enterprises through capacity development of professionals and technical staff, training, extension, business development support, financial literacy, demonstration farms, digital advisory services, market linkages and access to land, feed, and finance**.**

Objectives 1, 5, 6, 7, 10, and 11.

Pillar 8: Standards, Food Safety, and Certification

Establish and enforce national and international standards, food safety systems, certification mechanisms and animal health safeguards across the livestock value chain. This should include milk, meat, and egg standards, value-added products and animal by-products. In addition, chilling center regulation, quality testing, AMR/residue testing, egg hygiene, slaughterhouse standards, biosecurity, disease surveillance, and traceability-backed certification need to be focused

Objectives 1, 2 , 5, 8, and 12

Pillar 9: Investment, PPPs, Research, and Innovation Partnerships

Increase investment through public investment, private investment, PPPs and innovation partnerships, including links with universities, research institutes, technology firms, donors, MDBs and international experts. PPPs should be used not only to mobilize capital, but also to introduce technology, research, service delivery models, and management expertise across the value chain.

Objectives 1, 5, 10, 11, and 12.

Pillar 10: Sector Performance Management, M&E and Strategic Targets

Establish a national sector performance management system with centralized data, dashboards, M&E, market intelligence and strategic targets to track progress, identify bottlenecks and support course correction through inter-institutional coordination and collaborations. This should include production targets, herd-size targets, productivity indicators, feed indicators, animal health indicators, finance uptake, market prices, quality compliance and investment flows.

Objectives 1, 6, 10 and 12

References

1. Livestock Policy – 2006
2. Drafted dairy Policy- 2023
3. Drafted Poultry policy- 2024