

Abstract

A survey covering 12 Sublocations in Igambang'ombe Division and involving 72 respondents was conducted to ascertain perceptions on the relevance of natural licks. Household survey, focus group discussions and direct observations were employed. A structured questionnaire which had been subjected to face validity with a reliability coefficient of 0.84 was used to collect data, and analysed using SPSS for percentages, standard deviation and ANOVA. The relationship between demographic characteristics of farmers and their perceptions on the relevance of natural licks was explored. Majority of livestock farmers were male (61.1%), aged 21 to 40 years (41.7%), had Primary education (52.8%), monthly income below Kenya shillings 5000 (75%), earned income from mixed farming(88.9%) and had farming experience of ≥ 10 years (72.2%). Farmers preferred animals licking at the natural sites (62.5%), and obtained information through traditional practices (87.5%). Natural licks are available (63.9%) and are perceived to improve digestion (77.8%), increase milk production (56.9%), provide minerals (81.9%) and medicinal value (48.6%) to the animals. The licks are sold (63.9%) at Kenya shillings 40 per 2 Kilograms(40.1%). There was no statistically significant difference in perceptions between men and women, educated and uneducated farmers. Farmers believed that natural licks are relevant.