

The FSP in China – Where does it fit and what can it achieve?

Liu Guodao, Zhuo Jiasuo, Bai Changjun and Wei Jiashao¹

In China the Tropical Pasture Research Centre, Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Science (CATAS), coordinates the Forages for Smallholders Project (FSP). The main activities carried out are forage evaluation on station, farmer training, publications and networking.

Forage Evaluation

Selection of forages for leaf meal production

The main legume used for leaf meal production in southern China is *Stylosanthes guianensis* CIAT 184. Experiments are being conducted to find alternative accessions of *S. guianensis* with broad resistance to the fungal disease *Anthracnose* in case that the resistance of CIAT 184 breaks down.

Twenty-five accessions of *Stylosanthes* spp. were introduced from CSIRO (Australia) and CIAT (Philippines and Colombia). Together with four CATAS-released varieties, these accessions were included in the experiments to evaluate anthracnose disease resistance. The trials commenced at CATAS in August 1996 and results are described in detail in another paper in these proceedings.

Selection of *Arachis*

Five accessions of *Arachis pintoii*, (CIAT 17434, 18744, 18748, 18750, 22160) and two accessions of *A. glabrata* (IRFL 3019, CPI 93483) were introduced from CIAT, Philippines and, together with one accession of *A. glabrata* introduced from Guangxi Province, were evaluated to assess forage yield. This experiment was planted in September 1996 and is ongoing.

Two experiments are being conducted to improve the persistence of *Stylosanthes guianensis* CIAT 184 in leaf meal production. Treatments designed to improve branching include time of first cutting, cutting height and frequency. These experiments are ongoing and results are not yet available.

Selection of *Brachiaria* spp.

Four accessions of *Brachiaria brizantha* introduced from CIAT Philippines, *B. ruziziensis* from Thailand, *Brachiaria decumbens* CIAT 606, and another accession of *B. brizantha* are being evaluated in terms of adaptation and forage yield.

Farmer training

Thirty farmers participated in a one-week training course in Lingshui County. They learned about cultivation and utilization of Stylo for leaf meal production, using a Stylo booklet (see publications) as the main training material.

¹ Tropical Pasture Research Centre, Chinese Academy of Tropical Agriculture Sciences, Hainan, P.R. China.

Publications

CATAS researchers have written and edited a booklet on cultivation, management and utilization of Stylo. 1000 copies were printed in Chinese and more than half of these have already been distributed to farmers and extension agents. A draft of the booklet in English has also been finished.

CATAS also produced a comprehensive handbook on the cultivation and utilization of important varieties of tropical forages released in South China. Publication is expected in 1998.

CATAS also distributed the SEAFRAD newsletter.

Future Activities

- Continue selection trials of forages for leaf meal production. Prepare seed of promising accessions for further evaluation.
- Continue the cutting management experiments of CIAT 184 Stylo.
- Continue selection trial of *Arachis*.
- Continue selection trial of *Brachiaria* spp. for grazing purposes.
- Set up a selection trial of *Panicum* spp.
- Set up a selection trial of *Setaria* spp.
- Publish the handbook on cultivation and utilization of tropical forages.
- Set up two or three FPR sites by using 4-5 promising forage species for cut-and-carry for farmer evaluation of forages.
- Farmer training in forage management in cut-and-carry forage systems.
- Share Farmer Participatory Research techniques learned with other projects at CATAS and the CIAT