

Impact of Forage R & D in SE Asia Case 2



By planting forages we were able to fatten our working buffaloes and earn enough money to stop shifting cultivation.

Lack of feed limited options

Each year, Lao Ly purchased a new buffalo to plough his paddy fields. The family then had to spend 3 - 4 hours each day collecting scarce grasses to feed it while it worked. Usually there wasn't enough feed and the buffalo would have lost weight by the end of the season. Lao Ly would sell it, so the family wouldn't waste time feeding it when it wasn't needed.



What changed?

District Extension staff introduced six new forage varieties to Lao Ly in 2001 and he used these to feed his buffalo during the wet season. That year, his buffalo gained weight and he sold it at a profit. Over the next two years he converted all the family's upland fields (5000m²) to forages and fattened buffalo throughout the year.

A new livestock system...

With planted forages, the family saves 2-3 hours of labour each day and has been able to intensify their livestock system. Last year they fattened and sold four buffalo (giving a profit of 1.8 million kip). They have also stopped shifting cultivation and now keep a draft buffalo beside the house all year round. Other farmers in the village have begun to do the same.

