'Teach artificial insemination practically'

KIRUHURA

By Abdulkarim Ssengendo

Universities and agricultural colleges have been asked to strengthen the practical teaching of artificial insemination. Dr Johnson Nkuuhe, the board chairman of National Animal Genetic Resources Centre and Data Bank (NAGRC&DB), has said.

The practice, he said, will help to support government efforts to increase the use of artificial insemination in the country.

Dr Nkuuhe said practicals will enable farmers have better breeds and increase milk and beef yields.

He said currently most institutions and colleges with veterinary courses have concentrated on teaching theory.

"Universities and veterinary schools must move away from teaching of theory the artificial insemination and start teaching it at practically. This will enable the veterinary or animal production graduates to carry out artificial insemination in a practical manner and achieve acceptable results," Nkuuhe said.

He said currently, there is a negative attitude towards artificial insemination because the inseminators are not well trained, and this has led to poor inseminations consumption and success rate.

"We want as many people to be trained either as technicians or veterinarians. We also want to encourage big farmers to send their sons, workers so that they are trained, instead of them using government vet they can use their own staff on their farms," he said.

Nkuhe made the remarks while addressing over 30 students who attended a 10-day artificial insemination training at Ruhengyere government ranch in Kikatsi sub-county, Kiruhura district.



Dr Nkuuhe (right) and Dr Lagu (left) addressing veterinary students at Ruhengyere Government Ranch on Friday. Photo by A. Ssengendo

The students came from the districts of Yumbe, Adjumani, Moyo, Kitgum, Pakwach, Pader, Kamuli, Bulambuli, Kiruhura and Isingiro.

Speaking during the opening ceremony of the training, Dr. Charles Lagu, the executive director of NAGRC&DB, pointed out that countries such as the US, Israel, Denmark and Kenya, which have effectively used artificial insemination are enjoying enormous benefits and have better breeds.

He said if all farmers adopted artificial insemination, it will help increase animal production from current the 14 million head of cattle to meet the high demand of Ugandan animals in Arab, Middle East and other countries' markets. Lagu said soon we might not have enough to feed our own Uganda population. He said Uganda is currently doing 100,000 inseminations a year.

Dr. Lagu said they are going to step up partnerships with training colleges and universities so that students adopted diplomas, degree and certificate courses in animal production acquire skills in artificial insemination. He said they have started strategies of helping farmers to fight animal diseases and pasture improvement.

Dr Lagu added that their strategy is also train as many technicians as possible with ultimate goal of having at least an artificial insemination technician per sub-county. He said they are also going to equip the districts and support them with adequate supply of liquid nitrogen, high quality semen so that they can deliver at the sub-county level.

Brenda Nasimbwa, a student from Bukalasa Agriculture College and Brighton Agaba from Ankole Western University asked the Government to subsidise the cost of artificial insemination.

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