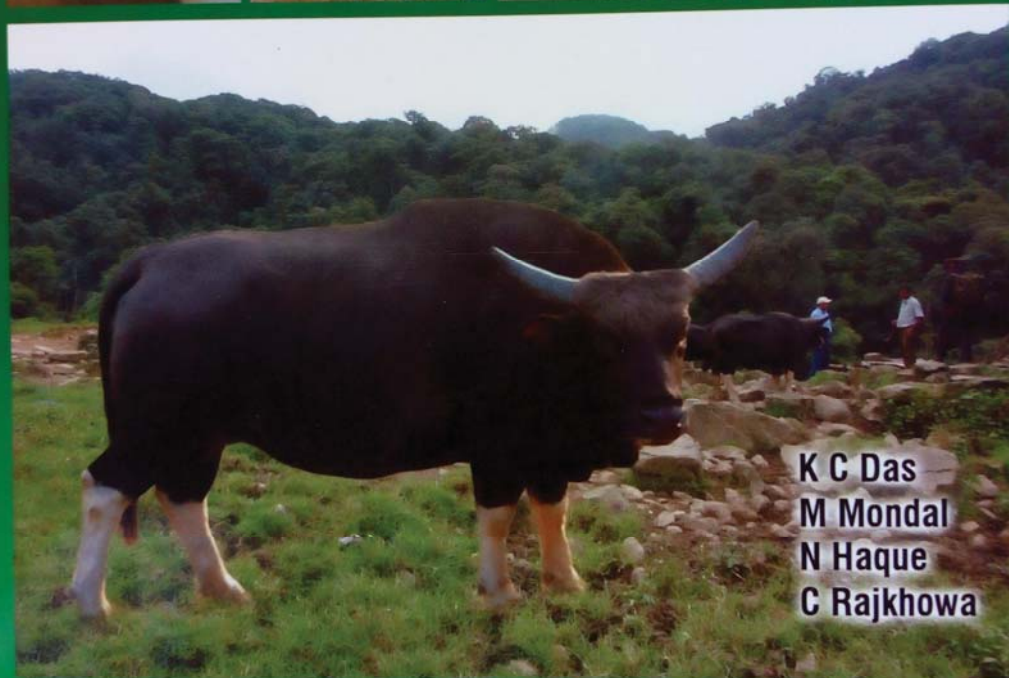


Mithun: Nutrition & Strategies for Improvement



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Mithun: Nutrition & Strategies for Improvement

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Preface

Mithun (Bos frontalis), an important massive ruminant of the North-eastern hilly region (NEHR) of India, is considered to be the domesticated form of wild gaur (*Bos gaurus*). This unique bovine species is mainly confined in the north-eastern hilly states of India. At present, this magnificent animal is reared exclusively under free grazing condition. It thrives browsing on the jungle forages, tree fodders, shrubs, herbs and other natural vegetations in natural condition. Farmers, in general, do not provide any additional feed except common salt, especially at the time of restraining for different purposes. The owner of the animals produces a sound out of the musical instrument made of mithun horn and hearing it, mithun comes from jungle in search of common salt.

Recent gradual shift towards urbanization, shifting cultivation and jungle fire, the grazing vegetation is reducing day by day. It is therefore essential to find out alternate feed resources for feeding of mithun in remote part of India. Our research findings indicated that mithun may also be reared in captive condition with concentrate mixture and cultivated fodder like that of cattle and buffaloes. In this context, nutrition and feeding of mithun and framing out the strategies for better performance of mithun in terms of growth and production has a great role to play. Keeping in view the above fact in mind, the authors concentrated to emphasize the potential of this prized animal of India for different produces like meat, milk and leather and also elaborated the importance of locally available resources for economic mithun rearing. Research findings indicated that, there is scope of increasing the production of mithun through rumen manipulation. In addition, enhancement of growth of mithun using hormonal means has also been described in details. The scope of using mithun as meat animal has been explained through transcriptome analysis. The authors have also expressed their views for mitigation of methane and related gases involved in global warming under climate change scenario. We feel the information contained in this book will be valuable for scientists, researchers, and extension workers for bringing this animal in prestigious place in remote part of NEH region of India.

We acknowledge the Department of Biotechnology, Govt of India for providing financial support for preparation of this manuscript. We have the pleasure to dedicate this book on this auspicious day of 25th December, 2011 to the Almighty and wish you all Happy Christmas.

KC Das
M Mondal
N Haque
C Rajkhowa

Dated: 25th December, 2011

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