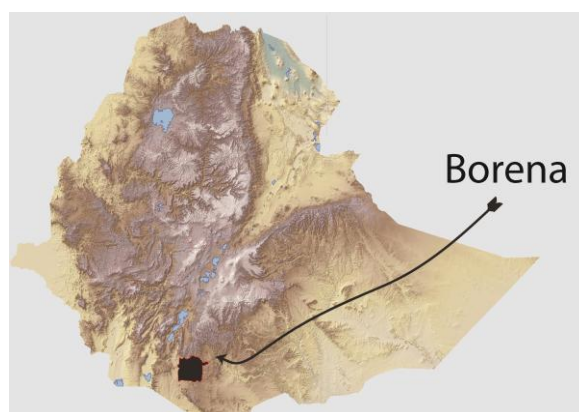


# Food safety and animal health in the Yabello sheep and goat value chain, Ethiopia



## Background

Yabello District is located in Southern Ethiopia. Meat and milk production and sales are mainly influenced by national and religious holidays. In Kebele Borena where a mixture of religious beliefs was observed, goat production is consistent throughout the year. Producers consume more meat and milk during the year than people at the other research sites.



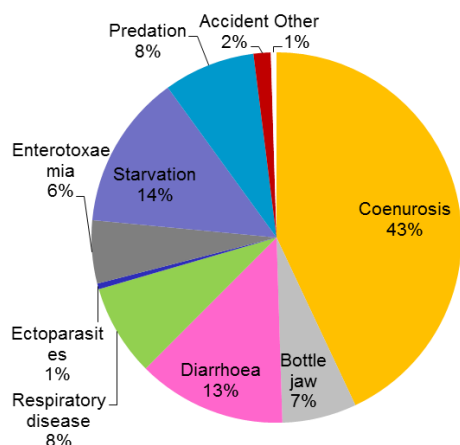
## Value chain challenges

Diseases and starvation (feed scarcity) are the main meat production constraints (Figure 1). Religion plays a role as 70% of the year is dominated by fasts. Meat sale is limited by religious holidays, except in Kebele Borena. During the months preceding the rains, feed shortages are common, leading to less milk production. Milk is mostly consumed by the farmers themselves or local customers. Since only surplus milk is sold, there is not much for urban consumers.

## Livestock mortality

The main reason of livestock deaths in the region are diseases. Veterinary services are said to be mostly absent, faulty or insufficient.

Figure 1: Reasons for livestock mortality



## Food safety

Yabello people care for food safety. They have some knowledge they use to mitigate foodborne zoonoses. Some observations include:

- Diseased animals are not usually consumed. There are some reports of emergency slaughter and consumption of diseased animals.
- Milk is mostly consumed raw. To avoid diseases, containers are smoked and milk is often processed to butter. Milk is also sieved to remove dirt and hair and not consumed when it is discoloured or contains blood or pus. Consumption of milk with sour or abnormal taste or smell sometimes occurs. Children are weaned at a very young age.

- Meat is bought at informal markets, without any controlling instruments. The smell, colour and absence of lesions and pus are used to assess quality and food safety. Suspect meat is trimmed or boiled thoroughly. In town, suspect meat is not purchased. Some reports hint at the occasional consumption of dead animals, even if they are suspected of anthrax.

## Future goals

During the value chain assessment process and subsequent discussions (early 2013), stakeholders from the district identified the following vision for their part of the small ruminant value chain development program in Ethiopia: *By 2020: Yabello pastoralists will have improved their incomes, nutrition and health through sustainable market oriented goat production.*

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