

# PROCEEDINGS

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**Editors**  
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## EVALUATION OF TIKIYA (*Eleocharis dulcis*) GROWN IN WATER LOGGED SALINE LANDS IN MATARA DISTRICT AS A RUMINANT FEED

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### INTRODUCTION

The livestock industry in Sri Lanka is facing a major problem with the scarcity of land for cultivating forage/pasture especially in western and southern coastal areas, because of high soil salinity and water logging conditions. Tikiya (*Eleocharis dulcis*) is a plant which is distributed in water logged saline lands of this area. Identification and evaluation of native forages/sedges such as Tikiya is very important before recommending as an animal feed. The main objective of the present study was to find out the effect of feeding of Tikiya on intake and milk production of buffaloes.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

A feeding trial with buffaloes was conducted at Harischandra farm in Matara district. Nine lactating buffalo (Nili-ravi, Murrah, and their crosses) cows were selected and divided into 3 blocks based on the body weight. Treatments were Tikiya, Co-3 (Hybrid of *Pennisetum purpureum* and *Pennisetum americanum*) and whole vegetation cover (grass + legume + sedges + other shrubs). Stall feeding (*Ad libitum*) was practiced and each animal was fed with 3 kg of rice (*Oryza sativa*) bran and 50 g of mineral mixture. There was an adaptation period of 04 days followed by 2 day preliminary period. Feeding trial was conducted for 9 days. Feed offered, refusals and milk production were measured daily whereas live weight of animals was measured before and after the trial. Samples of feed and refusals were taken from each animal every day for proximate analysis. Botanical composition of whole vegetation was also determined daily. Data were statistically analyzed using the GLM of SAS (Cary, 1999) and means were separated using LSD.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to table 1, dry matter content of Tikiya was much higher compared to CO-3 and whole vegetation however, crude protein content of Tikiya was much lower compared to other two feeds.