INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Kenya is an agricultural based economy with major of the citizens relying on small holder agriculture production. Dairy farming been part of the agriculture sector contributes greatly to the economy. *I*t involves rearing of dairy cattle whose main purpose is to produce milk, reproduce to provide replacement cows for the future and most of all provide a means of living for the farmers in dairy business. It is dominated by small scale farmers. For farmers to effectively and efficiently manage the dairy cattle they need to keep records. These records involve identification, breeding, feeding, production, vaccination, health and financial records.

According to Brannstorm(2008) dairy farming is a complex business that demand accurate records and careful financial management. Farmers see dairy record keeping as a mundane task. Muhammad et al (2004) proved that farm record keeping is a key practice to successful farmers and vice versa. A farm record provides timely and consistent information to assist in the management process, in that keeping track of how many cows you have, what their health is and what are you feeding them. In addition, obtaining grants and loans from financial institutions for small scale dairy farmers require that you have financial records to show what you have earned and what your expenses are, financial statement to prove that the farm is financially viable.

Most of the small scale dairy farmers don't keep comprehensive records of their cattle and they normally use paper records. Use of paper records has short comings as there may be duplication of data thus difficult to keep track. In addition, the paper records may be lost meaning the data is lost completely. Analysing handwritten records is tedious, cumbersome and time consuming. Also these records are not easily accessible as opposed to online records. Many farmers don't know details for good dairy records thus predefined forms will assist farmers and at the same time know. Records are to provide the farmer with data, information and Knowledge.

Arise in the record keeping problems using the manual process leading to an online storage of dairy cattle information and data.

Dairy cattle farming in Kenya have become a popular agribusiness practised both in lowlands and highlands. It been a business, record keeping is important to know how the business is performing and

provide the farmers with information for decision making. Farmers normally use manual records to store their information. Manual records have disadvantages in that, the records can be lost and thus lose important information. In addition, when analyzing the records it is time consuming and tiresome activity. However, most farmers also don't keep manual records because they don't know the details that are required for a good record.

Online platform providing management for the dairy cattle records can assist this farmers in efficient record storage and thus this records can help the farmer in decision making, keep memory, assess profitability or lossess and helps the farmer in improving the efficiency of the operations. Sms based

platform to update the records online using a GSM mobile can be easier for the farmers who cannot access the online platform.

This project can be reasonably thought as an management information system as it provides the updating and manipulation of records.

PROBLEM DEFINITION

Currently, the use of manual recording is prone to errors in analysis and storage bulkiness. Also analysis is time consuming and and the information is inconsitent. In addition, the manual records may be lost or misplaced and the records are not easily accessible. Firstly, there is low production in the dairy cattle farming due poor recording keeping which leads to mismanagement. Secondly, manual recording keeping is not easily accessible to the farmers wherever they are and for a long period of time. Thirdly, updating and analysis of the manual records is time consuming and tiresome process. In addition, most farmers don't know details for good record and the importance of keeping records.

This project will provide and online platform that supports sms system to make the recording, analysis and access to records easy and any where. Also the records details will be predefined thus capture the necessary information.

GOALS

To come up with an online platform that will provide recording of dairy cattle information and storage and updates through an sms platform.

OBJECTIVES

inorder to achieve the above goal, the objectives to be met include:

1 to create an interactive platform both online and sms based.

2to provide analysis of the records and reports on the records.

3to create an sms platform for users can interact with the system online.

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