

Livestock Based Livelihoods in Tibet, China, and Sustainability Concerns

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Livelihoods and Sustainability



Part Four

Chapter 13 Livestock development in Tibetan highlands

Accepting livestock as the basis of food security and livelihoods

Livestock are the predominant economic sector in Tibet accounting for more than 50% of the total gross production value of agriculture (Table 13.1). Tibet has a total usable rangeland area of 55 million ha, about 45% of the total usable land area. Nearly one million Tibetan farmers live in 14 counties and over 200 townships that are in purely pastoral areas depend entirely on livestock breeding for their livelihood. For the nomads of the Tibetan plateau, livestock are the only way of ensuring food and livelihood security. Even in the lower valleys where cropping and forestry