

THE IMPORTANCE OF GRASS IN THE TROPICS

"Grass, properly used ensures soil fertility, grass marries the soil to the animal; and the solid foundation of agriculture is the marriage of animal and soil."

.....Sir R.G. Stapledon

Davies (1952), a world grassland authority, writes: "In the quest for better systems of farming it has become increasingly apparent that the grass crop plays a more fundamental role than any other:"

Millions of acres of underfarmed savannas and prairie lands in the world today produce but a fraction of their potential output. A large portion of these lands lie within the tropics and subtropics. There are also, in the lower latitudes, millions of acres of both good arable and farmed-out arable land that would benefit if farmed under an alternate husbandry system using grass leys.

Importance of Grassland in the Tropics

The value of grass in the Tropics rests on five major precepts:-

- (a) It is a means of building soil fertility, of value to following crops.
- (b) It is a soil stabiliser and means of erosion control.
- (c) A grass sward in many areas is a means of water conservation and protects water supplies.
- (d) Grass is the most economical feed for producing livestock products.
- (e) Grass is important as a way of utilising land that for economic and other reasons cannot be used to grow other crops.

/Grass as a builder....