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SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK



FROM CRISIS TO ACTION

**Lessons from COVID-19 for Building a Better Future  
through Sustainable Livestock**

# Potential Impact of Covid-19 on Livelihood of Yak Herders in Tibetan Plateau, China

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## The role of yaks in Tibetan Plateau ecosystem

- There are about 15 million of yak population in the world, that distributes in 10 countries and 11 mountain ranges and supports more than 40 ethnic groups' livelihood in the Asian Highlands. China has about 95% of the world total yak population.
- Yak is a multipurpose animal for providing necessities for herdsman (food, shelter, fuel, transport, and social status); its milk & meat provide essential nutrients for maintaining nomads' health.
- Yak is not only a key species to maintain rangeland ecosystem functions, but also a key element in the Tibetan culture.
- During the early time, the human population expanded might heavily rely on the yak domestication in the plateau. Without the yak's capacity to live in the plateau, human civilization might not have established and flourished in this remote area.
- The 10<sup>th</sup> Panchen Lama said that if no yaks would be no Tibetan people.



## Impact of Covid-19 epidemics on Livelihood of Yak Herders

- Although Covid-19 has been effectively controlled in within China, its impacts on plateau pastoral areas still exists.
- The import and export of grain in the international market is restricted.
- Feed cost increased in pastoral areas.
- Due to the recession in the catering industry, beef and mutton consumption decreased.
- Although the import volume of foreign beef and mutton has been greatly reduced, the price of beef and mutton rose slowly because of people are spending less and the weak consumer market of meat.
- Herdsmen's production, livelihood and income are affected negatively.

## Supports from government and enterprises

- The government may give more ecological subsidies to herdsmen to develop production.
- Companies have raised the price of buying live cattle and sheep to benefit herdsmen.
- By adjusting the structure of ration, enterprises can maintain certain profits, such as replacing hay with straw.
- The price of livestock will be increased greatly in the coming months and bring more benefits to herders.
- International cooperation and marketing are much needed.





# Thank you

