AFRICAN UNION
INTERAFRICAN BUREAU
FOR ANIMAL RESOURCES

FACT SHEET

CAMEROON

A snapshot of Cameroon's feed and fodder sector

Driving Import Substitution and Regional Agro-Industrial Leadership

Overview

The Core Economic Reality

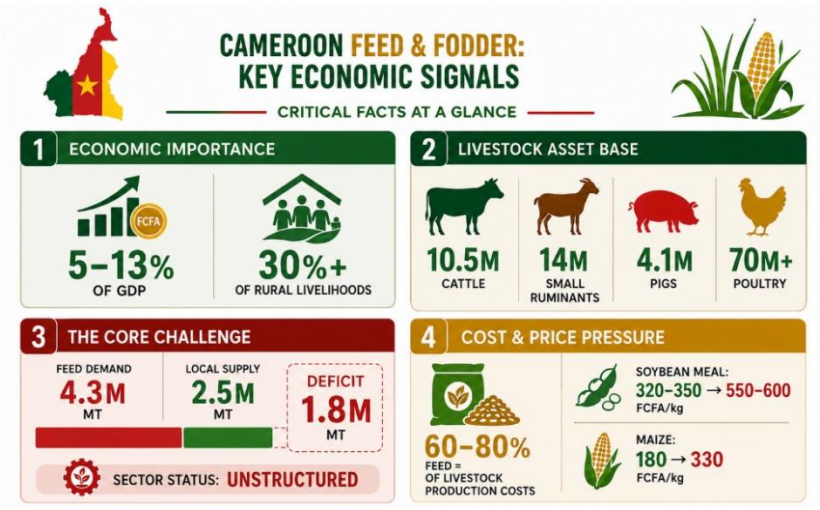
Cameroon's livestock sector is a foundational pillar of the national economy, contributing between **5% and 13% to the national GDP** and sustaining the livelihoods of **over 30% of the rural population**. The country commands a massive, diverse asset base comprising approximately **10.5 million cattle, 14 million small ruminants, 4.1 million pigs, and over 70 million poultry**.

Despite this immense wealth and Cameroon's strategic position at the crossroads of West and Central Africa, the foundational input—feed and fodder, which accounts for **60% to 80%** of total livestock production costs—remains severely under-resourced, unmechanised, and highly vulnerable to climate shocks. Transforming this input base is the ultimate key to achieving the nation's National Development Strategy 2020-2030 (SND30) import-substitution goals and establishing regional agro-industrial dominance across the ECCAS and ECOWAS zones.

The Problem

The Deficit, Price Volatility, and the Climate Trap Cameroon faces a glaring supply-demand gap that actively destabilises its agricultural economy. Annually, the nation has an estimated feed demand of **4.3 million metric tonnes (MT)**, but local production yields only **2.5 million MT**, leaving a critical **1.8 million MT structural deficit**.

Because of this underdevelopment, the sector remains officially classified as strictly **"Unstructured"**. Heavy reliance on natural, rain-fed pastures—especially in the primary production zones of Adamaoua, the North, and the Far North—and on imported raw materials for concentrate feeds leaves the industry exposed to severe price volatility. Following recent global supply chain disruptions, the cost of vital ingredients surged: soybean meal skyrocketed from **320-350 FCFA/kg to 550-600 FCFA/kg**, while maize prices fluctuated from **180 to 330 FCFA/kg**. This actively undermines the competitiveness of domestic poultry, dairy, and beef value chains.



By The Numbers: Quantifying the Commercialisation Opportunity

Findings from recent targeted national assessments—initiated to diagnose and build resilient African feed and fodder systems—have accurately quantified the massive deficits and market failures of Cameroon's sub-sector, exposing a highly lucrative landscape for mechanised investment:

i) **The Structural Deficit:** A massive **1.8 million MT gap** in feed and fodder availability that must urgently be filled through commercial production and mechanisation.
ii) **The Post-Harvest Losses:** Significant feed losses occur at the field level due to an acute lack of mechanisation (harvesters and balers) and poor storage infrastructure. This prevents the conservation of wet-season biomass for the arduous 6-to-8-month dry season, driving transhumance and resource conflicts.
iii) **The Women-Led Commercialisation:** AWARFA-N Cameroon is pioneering the continent's first women-led **Centre of Excellence for Fodder Mechanisation**. This transformative facility will serve as a commercial hub for mechanised harvesting, baling, and feed processing, aggressively targeting a **50% reduction in the dry-season fodder demand gap**.
iv) **The Data Transformation:** Shifting from fragmented paper-based estimates to real-time intelligence, Cameroon is collaborating with MINEPIA and the National Institute of Statistics to build a unified digital feed-and-fodder database, integrating 66 critical indicators to drive investment profiling.

The Investment Pathway: Mechanisation and Import Substitution

Cameroon's fodder commercialisation requires an urgent transition to "2nd Generation Agriculture"—focusing heavily on green technologies, solar-powered irrigation, and modern mechanised feed mixers. Investing in large-scale mechanised fodder aggregation hubs and modern fodder markets in high-production zones will seamlessly convert wasted biomass into profitable, tradable commodities that stabilise the domestic market year-round and buffer against climate anomalies.

Urgent Policy Recommendations

To drive agro-industrialisation and reduce dependency on expensive imports, policymakers (MINEPIA, MINADER), commercial banks, and private equity investors must execute the following actionable directives:

i) **Enact a National Animal Feed Strategy:** Expedite the formalisation of a comprehensive national strategy for feed and fodder development, complete with an actively budgeted action plan and a dedicated regulatory authority to enforce quality standards (granulometry, nutritional, and microbiological value) across the nation's 250+ active feed mills.
ii) **Incentivise Agro-Industrial Mechanisation:** Provide targeted tax exemptions and import duty waivers on critical fodder processing equipment (balers, harvesters, pelletisers) and raw material concentrates. This will lower the barrier to entry for private investors and modernise production.
iii) **Finance Women-Led Infrastructure:** Commercial banks and development funds must direct capital toward women-led aggregation centres (such as the AWARFA-N Centre of Excellence). Funding must prioritise solar-powered storage and large-scale preservation infrastructure to transition women from informal labour into structured agribusiness leadership.
iv) **Establish Strategic Fodder Markets:** Collaborate with local governments to build modern, structured fodder markets in primary production zones. This will facilitate formalised trade and long-term contracting between rural producers and urban off-takers, effectively ending the reliance on volatile open-market trading.

Expected Impact

Cameroon will eradicate its **1.8 million MT deficit**, dramatically reduce resource-based conflicts, and successfully substitute costly agricultural imports **through the formal structuring and mechanization of its feed and fodder market**. Ultimately, this transformation will secure millions of structured jobs for women and youth, permanently positioning Cameroon as the agro-industrial and food security anchor of the ECCAS region.