

YAQARA PASTORAL COMPANY Pte. LIMITED JUNCAO TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATION BASE - Field Visit Site 4

About YPCL

Yaqara Pastoral Company Pte. Limited (YPCL) which was established in 1973 operates on a 12,000-acre farm. Approximately, it has a total of 3000 animals in which 885 are recorded. The last stock count was done in 2015. Currently, YPCL is in the process of improving all the farm structures and records so that the farm can operate in a controlled production system.

Allocation of Stations

YPCL is divided into three station. Previously, it has its own breeding station and two other stations that accommodate the commercial stock. Currently, the farm is awaiting the BOD decision to review and reorganize YPCL. This is done to streamline the operation and use all available resources, repair all the structures and carryout land clearing activities since the farm has a lot of untapped potentials to capitalize on to improve productivity and profitability of the company.

Table 1: Land Area

| Total Land Area | 5,015.3169 | 12,387.83 |
|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Stations | Ha | Acres |
| Caboni | 1,326.9696 | 3,277.61 |
| Korowaiwai & YMS | 3,688.3473 | 9,110.22 |

Initiation of Juncao Production

YPCL always experience prolonged dry weather and from June to August the condition is drier and hotter compared to other months. These conditions impacted pasture growth, availability, affect animals' health and production. To overcome the problem, the company cultivate its own sorghum, corn, provide ready mix feed, collected cane tops from neighboring farms and elephant grass along rivers banks and streams.

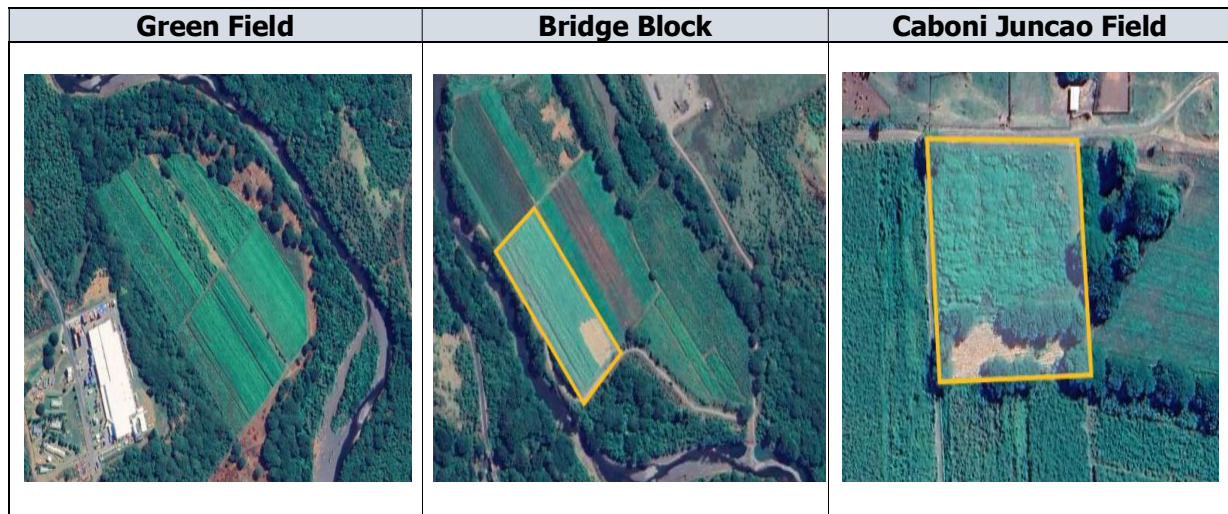
In 2015, YPCL embarked into juncao production and it was realized that it has saved cost in terms of running around searching for fodder crop and feed ingredients. There is a reduction in feed purchase and in the past, the company used to search for fodder crop (elephant grass, sugar cane tops) around the area and neighboring farms to be used during extreme dry weather.

Due to its positive impact, the company continued the cultivation of juncao after its establishment. Unfortunately, the total land area decreased because cattle continue to break fence and grazed on the young shoots resulting to slow regrowth and uneven re-establishment. Presently, YPCL has a total of 55.9 acres of juncao grass.

Table 2: Area Planted

| BLOCK | PLANTED | TOTAL AREA (ACRES) |
|---------------------|---------|--------------------|
| Bridge Block | 2015 | 8.69 |
| Green Field | 2015 | 44.0 |
| Caboni Juncao Field | 2015 | 3.30 |
| Total | | 55.99 |

Figure 1: Yaqara Main Station



Feeding of animals

Juncao is fed on YPCL cattle ready for market and other stock to be taken out to commercial stations. Feeding is done in the morning for cattle in the stockyard, goats and sheep during the day and occasionally horses as well. It is harvested and fed either manually and mechanically. The company used to harvest mature plants for the animals but now we are trying to harvest at 2 months interval. We can see the difference in animal intake but the regrowth rate is usually slow especially during dry weather.

Planting and Maintenance of the fields

The fields are prepared using tractors and cuts are harvested and planted manually. After planting the field is closed and is harvested after three months.

After harvesting, the field is slashed so that the field has uniform regrowth. The rows are ripped mechanically to break soil compaction and then fertilizer is applied. As witnessed, to overcome poor regrowth during the dry season, the company will focus on irrigation of the fields. The field will be closed and harvested after two months.

Way forward

YPCL wants to establish Juncao grass in a **BIG** way as the company intends to continue supplying pasture fed (organic) beef to the market. The company targets to establish juncao paddocks for the cattle to graze and rotated so that each block is ready for next grazing at two months intervals.

Additionally, the company intends to feed juncao silage to its market stock (fattened bulls & steers) for 60 – 90 days before they are taken for slaughter. This is done to gradually replace the current system and be the model farm to produce premier and pasture based fed beef using juncao locally. The same will be done to sheep and goats.