



## CONSOLATION

Herbal treatment of bloat in cattle

Debeswar Rabha  
Goalpara, Assam

An unskilled labourer, Debeswar Rabha (65), knows and practices a herbal medication for treating bloat in cattle.

Goalpara and Kamrup are the two districts where most members of his tribal community reside in Assam, typically engaging in agriculture or forest related activities mostly. Debeswar was the eldest among six brothers and two sisters and hence did not have the opportunity to go to school at all. His father was a daily wage labourer hence life was not easy for him and his family. He had to start working early to support his family. His father also had very good knowledge of local plants and herbs and their use in medication. He was well known for his herbal knowledge in his village and surrounding areas. Many a times Debeswar used to accompany his father in plant collection expeditions in nearby forest area or treatment sessions. It is during such sessions, his interest in herbs and their uses arose and started learning from his father's knowledge and experience.

Debeswar is married with two sons and a daughter. His wife, Tipeswari Rabha has been a constant source of support for him in all his endeavours. After the demise of his father, he started administering herbal medicines on his own whenever such a need arose. He has now been giving such medicines for the last thirty five years without any financial return and just for the benefit of the people. His herbal practice for bloat was found to be novel after prior art search and subsequently was taken up for validation, whose results appear to be promising. The accumulation of extra gases in the stomach of the cattle leads to a condition called bloat, which may sometime lead to the death of the animal if not handled properly. The symptoms of bloat include stomach swelling, loss of appetite, frequent release of saliva etc. Debeswar takes required quantity of rhizome, leaves and fruits of three local plants (name withheld due to Intellectual Property reasons), grinds them together and adds a pinch of salt. The medicine is given to affected cattle orally once or a maximum of twice a day.