

# Importance Of Livestock Production Systems

T.P.Sethumadhavan

Compared to agricultural sector contribution of animal husbandry to state's GDP is more. But coverage given to this sector is comparatively less. Dairying & Poultry production are gradually attaining the status of sustainability. Moreover these sectors provide lucrative, subsidiary & self-employment opportunities to many unemployed youths. With the recent implementation of GATT agreement livestock production and marketing has to be viewed in a global perspective.

We have opened our economy and government has announced its commitment to further liberalize it. India's programme of reform and economic liberalization opens significant market led opportunities for livestock sector.

Sustained economic growth and rising domestic incomes are driving rapid growth in livestock product demand. This has fostered the rapid expansion of livestock output in recent years. Between 1985 to 1992 the value of livestock output grew by 6 percent a year in real terms, from Rs 196 billion to 306 billion. Dairy and poultry industries contribute the major share of this growth. Revenue from exports of live animals grew at 13 percent a year. More than 630 million people live in rural areas (75%). Of the total households in rural areas, about 73% own livestock. Income from livestock sector accounts for 15-40% of total farm household incomes. Small and marginal farmers account for 3/4th of this household, raising 56% of bovine population.

In India, the practice of balanced feeding was initiated only in early 60's. Though India has now emerged as the largest milk producer in the world : 74 million tonnes per annum (Gill and Garg, 1998), this milk is produced by about 100 million milch animals, whereas USA produces 71 million tonnes of milk from 9.2 million animals. This indicates that average milk production by Indian milch animals is just about 10% of the animals in the West and Europe. One of the main reasons for this is poor quality of feed.

As far as Kerala is concerned the impact of crossbreeding programme for cattle development increased milk production from 2.2 lakh tonnes during 1963-64 to around 26.4 lakh tonnes in 1998-1999. The percent of crossbred females has reached 68 in our state, the highest in the country. Moreover Dairy sector employs eight percent of India's labor force.

Poultry population in India increased four times during the last three decades and it continues to grow steadily on account of modern technology, quick returns to the producer, increased demand and high per capita income. Moreover private firms are considerably investing in this sector. Poultry meat and egg output witnessed a spectacular growth over the last three decades. Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, West Bengal and Karnataka produce more than 60% of total poultry products in the country. Broiler industry is mostly centered around major cities like Hyderabad, Bombay, Bangalore, Calcutta, Chennai and Ludhiana. In Kerala more than 75% of total egg production is from backyard since commercial layer farming is not at all feasible due to high feed cost. Recently the state exhibits marked growth in the broiler sector.

Despite high increase in production, India's annual per capita consumption of egg and meat is only 30 nos and 430gms respectively which is lower when compared to other developing countries. As a source of affordable protein, poultry meat is recently getting more popularity. More than 80% of poultry products consumed in urban and semi urban areas account only 25% of the total population.

For augmenting livestock production systems following parameters have to be considered:

Scientific breeding, feeding, management and disease control aspects.

Reproductive management practices coupled with care of growing stock and management of information systems.

Dr. T.P.Sethumadhavan  
Dept. of Extension  
Veterinary College,  
Mannuthy

*Continued on page 43*