

Livestock and Poultry Sector in Chhattisgarh: Present Status and Approach for Future Development

Background:

- The livestock in Chhattisgarh is an integral part of the mixed crop live stock system where crop production meets most of the feed and fodder requirements of livestock and they provide draught power and dung manure for crop production. Such a synergy is considered beneficial for sustainability of crop and live stock production and household food security.
- Small-holder farmers dominate the rural sector of Chhattisgarh. About 73 percent of land holdings are less than 2 ha with an area share of 29 percent. For these households crop production is unlikely to be the sole source of livelihood. They sustain from off-farm and non-farm activities like animal husbandry and mostly maintain animals as a regular source of food and cash income. With the increase in per-capita income, the consumption of livestock products increased much faster than food grains over the last decade which has facilitated market trends for livestock and poultry products. Strategic interventions are required to ensure that the small livestock producers gain from the expanding market.

Livestock and Poultry Status

- Chhattisgarh is rich in livestock wealth with 1.27 crore animals – cattle population is the highest with 64 percent followed by goats [16 percent] buffaloes [14 percent] and sheep and pigs [6 percent]. Animal in general are smaller in size with poor production potentials coupled with inadequate availability of feed and fodder.
- The distribution of livestock population across the zones shows that Chhattisgarh plains have 56 percent cattle and buffaloes and 50 percent poultry. Pigs are largely concentrated in Baster plateau. Northern hills have the highest goat density while poultry and pig density is higher in Baster plateau.
- Livestock sector engaged only about 0.5 percent of rural work force. The reasons being:-
- The animals are usually left for grazing especially in Rabi season when plenty of land remains uncultivated.
- Huge area under forests also offers avenue of labour free grazing.
- Majority of livestock producers are poor and spend less on animal feed.
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- Livestock productivity in the State is poor. The average Yield of nondescript cows that account for 55 percent of total milk output is less than 1.0 k.g / day. This is about one half of the country's average and less than the average yield of goat in Rajasthan. The crossbreed cows yield 3.8 kg. milk per day. Milk yield of buffalo is 2.78kg / day which is far lower than the national average of 4.15 kg. / day.

Policy Initiatives

Following are the policy initiatives undertaken by G.O.I and followed by the states including Chhattisgarh:-

- Operation Flood Programme
- Animal health
- Economic liberalization
- Contract farming
- Support for meat market
- Fodder bank

The following issues or thematic areas were identified for designing pragmatic strategies to reach certain goals as envisioned for the year 2020:-

- Strengthening of education and extension
- Service delivery mechanism and marketing
- Strengthening and upgrading departmental systems
- Human and institutional development
- Utilize livestock as a tool to reduce poverty, economic and social inequalities
- Ensure that process of modernization takes place within the confines of cultural and religious ethos imbedded in the society.

Policy Framework for Chhattisgarh

The proposed livestock policy has a pro poor focus and identifies the following thrust areas for government intervention:-

- Improvement in feed-fodder security.
- Extension of animal health services.
- Enhancing capacity of breeding system.
- Improving livestock producer's access to financial services.
- Linking livestock produce to output market.
- Ensuring ecological and environmental sustainability while promoting modernization of livestock sector through appropriate programmes.
- Special emphases on poor and under privileged sections to ensure income enhancement.
- Strengthening livestock research and its linkage with extension system.
- Promote need based participatory research.
- Integrate traditional and modern approaches to improve livestock productivity.
- Develop – an exhaustive inventory of feed resource available locally.
- Develop thermo stable poultry, pig, sheep and goat viral disease vaccine.
- Development of cost effective polyvalent bluetongue vaccine and anthelementics.
- Encourage multidisciplinary research and collaboration among research institutions.
- Follow a bottom-up approach for technology dissemination.
- Promote new models of information dissemination.

(CARD along with CALPI-SDC-IC had taken up Chhattisgarh Livestock Sector Reform and Policy Development process for preparation of a Pro Poor livestock policy, and as a part of it numerous publications were brought out. 'Livestock and Poultry Sector in Chhattisgarh—Present Status and Approach for Future Development along with the policy document were the main outcome of the three year process)