

PIG HUSBANDRY PRACTICES AT KYRDEM VILLAGE IN RI-BHOI DISTRICT OF MEGHALAYA

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ABSTRACT

The study was carried out at Kyrdem village in Ri-Bhoi district of Meghalaya. The study revealed that, 72% farmers reared the pigs in confinement area with raised platform constructed with woods and bamboos. The farmers in Kyrdem village rear crossbred pigs and all the farmers in the village followed natural breeding. The average litter size at birth was six while the litter size at weaning five. All the farmers followed stall feeding and supplied kitchen waste with some locally available weeds after boiling and 80 percent pigs were offered concentrate. The farmers provided feeds twice daily in morning and evening. The farmers (20%) followed deworming using either traditional or allopathic medicine. However, 72 percent of the farmers vaccinated the pigs against swine fever. Similarly, only 8 percent of the farmers treated their piglets against piglet anaemia with iron injection and 28 percent of them used ectoparasitic drugs in their farms. The farmers followed weaning and castration of their piglets. Only 68 percent of the farmers paid special attention to their pregnant sows and 80 percent of them took special care of sows after farrowing. 64 % of the farmers clean the sty once in two days. Pigs were marketed at the age of one year or above when they attained the body weight of 70-80 kg or more.

Key words: Survey, pigs, litter size, weaning, health care, sty, castration, market.

The state of Meghalaya is dominated by tribal population in which pig rearing is important in eastern states of the country and particularly for the tribal communities ³ in which 100 percent of tribal population in the region is pork eater. Pig farming is one of the important sources of subsidiary income. The pig population in the state is 41893 in which Ri-Bhoi district contributes 37688 ⁵. The total meat production of the state is 10158 MT ⁵. The information of herd dynamics, housing, feeding, breeding and health management practices etc. in respect of pig had not been documented,

therefore a systematic survey was taken to study the existing management practices followed by the farmers for rearing pig under field conditions and the resulting information will be useful for planning of the improvement of pig rearing in Kyrdem village.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was carried out in Kyrdem village in Ri-Bhoi district of Meghalaya. The Kyrdem village consist of 220 household out of which 25 household reared pigs. To record the findings of housing, breeding and management practices followed by these 25 farmers, information were collected through formal interviews using a semi structured questionnaire and self

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observations. The management practices were studied in respect of five aspects namely housing, breeding, feeding, health care and general care and management. The views of the farmers regarding reasons for following certain practices have also been gathered and recorded.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Herd management : The study revealed that 48 percent of the farmers maintained 2 to 4 pig per herd, 44 percent farmers maintained 1 pig and 4 percent farmers maintained 5 to 10 and above pig per herd. An average herd size of 15.7 pigs per farm in Kiambu district of Kenya was reported by earlier worker ⁷.

Housing practices : It was observed that all the pig farmers constructed the sty with half closed along with half open type (88 %) with mostly locally available materials like bamboo and woods with a raised platform above 2 to 3 feet from ground. The floor space (average 10 sq. ft) type are mainly bamboo and wood (52 %), since it is cheap and easily available. 76 % of the farms are raised above the ground level for easy cleaning prevention from dampening of floors during the rainy season. 24 % farmers maintain kutcha and puccaa type of floor. The roof of the sty was mainly covered by G.I sheet (100 %). The farm equipments include mainly iron vessel for cooking feeds, cut piece of wood, broken plastic buckets and cemented feeder attach with the wall as feeding trough. For water supply the farmers mainly depend either on pond or streams. Only 12 % of the farmers had electricity connection in their sty. Similar types of findings were reported ⁴.

Breeding practices : The majority (60%) farmers were rearing cross- breed pigs in their farms and 72% of the farmers breed female pigs at the age of 10-12 months. 100% of the farmers followed natural service using boars. 68% of the farmers practiced two services to the sow at 12 hrs interval during the second day of heat. Majority (52%) of the farmers followed twice farrowing of the sow in a year. 44 % of the farmers keep the

breeding boars. The average litter size at birth and weaning were 6 and 5 respectively. The findings are similar ^{1 & 4}.

Feeding Practices : The farmers (68%) follows stall feeding and which is unlike the scavenging system commonly seen in other parts of the country. 80% farmers fed kitchen waste with small quantity of concentrate (maximum 0.5 kg) in view of high cost and less availability of concentrate feed. The feed supplements like mineral mixture, vitamins, probiotics etc were used by only 8 percent. The concentrates, vitamins and mineral mixtures were mixed with locally available weeds. Other workers ^{1, 2, 4 & 6} reported feed and weeds were boiled before feeding to pigs so as to kill the harmful microorganisms and toxins materials present. Majority of the farmers (68%) offered feed twice daily, in morning and evening.

Health care practices : In the present study it was found that the farmers of Kyrdem village paid little attention towards the health of their pigs. 20 % of the farmers followed the deworming programme. 72 % farmers vaccinated their pigs against swine fever and only 28 % farmers used drugs for skin diseases and ectoparasitic drugs. Only 12 % of the farmers used growth promoters and probiotic for their pigs. Majority of the farmers (92%) did not give iron injection to their piglets which may be the cause of mortality in piglets. A worker ⁴ reported similar findings in Mizoram.

General care and management practices : The general care and management practices followed by the farmers were weaning of piglet at 2 months of age, castration after weaning, special care to the farrowing sow, nursing, lactating sows and cutting of the needle teeth in piglet. Similar studies were reported ^{1 & 4}. The farmer sale their pigs at the age of 1 year or above when they reached the body weight of 70-90 kg or above. The villagers prefer for black coloured pigs in the market and the pricing system is based on body measurement (girth, body length and general appearance of the pigs).

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CONCLUSION

The study showed that pig production was invariably a small-scale backyard activity. Pig rearing is an integral part of the rural farmer, which depends on cheaply available local inputs, particularly feed. Pig production is an profitable

small-scale enterprise by the use of household labour and cheaply available resources. There is a considerable scope for the policy makers to improve the pig husbandry in Kyrdem village of Ri-Bhoi district for maximum productivity and profitability.

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