

CONSTRAINTS FACED BY SHGS AND JLGs IN DAIRYING IN BARPETA AND KAMRUP DISTRICTS OF ASSAM

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Received : 09.05.2014

Accepted : 05.09.2014

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to identify the constraints faced by the members of SHGs and JLGs in dairying in Barpeta and Kamrup districts of Assam. A total of 100 respondents selected and information on their dairy characteristics and problems faced by them in dairy farming were elicited through a structured, reliable and valid interview schedule. The result shows about that high cost of feeds and fodder (83%), lack of quality breed (60%); inadequate veterinary facilities (56%), marketing (47%) etc were the major challenges of dairying to mitigate.

Keywords: Dairy, Constraints, Joint Liability Groups (JLGs), Self Help Groups (SHGs)

The traditional dairy activities have been transformed to small and medium scale commercial dairy activities over a period of time. Looking into such impressive changes, the National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and other commercial banks have come forward to extend financial support to those youths and farmers through Self Help Group (SHG) and Joint Liability Group (JLG). Through these new set of entities, they got access to the capital, veterinary services, marketing facilities, fodder cultivation etc. are needed for a suitable and productive dairy farming. Again the survival of dairy sector and its health are dependent on eradication of the problems faced by the dairy farmers in their area. Thus the present study was undertaken to assess the problems faced by the of members of SHGs and JLGs engaged in dairying in Barpeta and Kamrup districts of Assam.

In this study, 100 nos of respondents who are member of SHG and JLG rearing improved breed of cattle were considered as dairy farmers. A pre-tested structured, reliable and valid interview schedule was used to collect data personally by the researcher. Data was coded and entered in a spreadsheet and analysis was carried out using the Statistical Procedure for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.

SHGs and JLGs members were asked to indicate the most important constraints to dairying and to prioritize them. Eighty-three (83%) percent respondents highlighted high cost of concentrate feeds and lack of quality fodder as the major factors limiting dairy enterprise in the study areas (Table 1). Cost of production can be reduced by introduction of better quality grasses and legumes. Cultivation of good quality fodder would be a good alternative to reduce the feed cost in the study areas but the problem of land size would limit its success. However, appropriate intercropping techniques can be used. Lack of improved breed of dairy cattle was also cited as a constraint to

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Constraints faced by SHGs and JLGs

production by sixty percent (60%) of farmers. Again 56% of the SHG and JLG members realized that poor veterinary service in their areas limiting their dairy business. In addition to unfavorable conditions realized by group members of SHGs and JLGs, transport problem compounded by lack of storage facilities were not conducive for highly perishable dairy products and, the milk should be transported soon after milking. Electrification and construction of milk storage facilities and roads and on farm training on value addition of milk can reduced the need for transport.

On the basis of the result, it could be concluded that the cost of feed and fodder, lack of quality breed, poor veterinary service, marketing problem, disease including repeat breeding, low

price of milk, lack of storage facilities of milk, high capital investment, poor transportation were the major problems in dairying realized by the SHG and JLG members. These disincentives were matters of big concern due to the fact that all problems in isolation could affect the dairy sector to a great extent. In other words the survival of dairy sector and its health in the area under investigation were dependent on eradication of these problems. This definitely needed proper address from the competent authorities. Further looking into their problem and the modes in which the dairy farmers realized them, dairy would be in dilemma if not now at least in near future. Therefore, measures were to be adopted to either eliminate or minimize the problem if dairying had to survive and continue to provide livelihood to

Table 1: Constraints in Dairying

Constraints	SHG	JLG	Pooled
Cost of cattle feed and fodder	62(82.67)	21(84.00)	83
Quality breed	43(57.33)	17(68.00)	60
Veterinary service	42(56.00)	14(56.00)	56
Marketing	34(45.33)	13(52.00)	47
Price of milk	13(17.33)	3(12.00)	16
Storage of milk	10(13.33)	2(8.00)	12
High investment	6(8.00)	1(4.00)	7
Transportation	2(2.67)	0	2

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