

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE RURAL DAIRY FARMERS OF KAMRUP DISTRICT OF ASSAM

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Received: 10.12.2013

Accepted: 11.02.2014

### ABSTRACT

An investigation was undertaken to evaluate the socio-economic status of the rural dairy farmers of Kamrup district of Assam with sample size of 200 dairy farmers. Seventy per cent of the respondents belonged to middle age category (36 years to 55 years) followed by young age category (35 years and below) and old age category (56 years and above) with 16.50 and 13.50 per cent respectively. The average age of the farmers was found to be 45 years. The majority (88%) of the respondents had medium sized family with 4-7 members followed by small sized family (3 members and below) and large sized family (8 members and above) with 6.50 and 5.50 per cent respectively. The majority of the farmers (83.50%) had medium level educational qualification from primary to higher secondary level followed by high level (11.00%) had low level (5.50%) educational qualification from graduate and above, and illiterate respectively. The annual family income of the dairy farmers ranged from Rs. 20,000.00 to Rs. 4,00,000.00. Majority of the dairy farmers (75.00%) had medium level annual family income from Rs. 19,467.88 to Rs. 1,21,230.12 followed by high level (25.00%) annual family income ranged from Rs. 1,21,230.13 and above.

**Key words:** Socio-economic status, Age, Family size, Educational status, Annual income.

Average dairying assumes great significance in providing employment to rural people as well as a stable source of income to augment their earnings from main enterprise they follow i.e. crop husbandry. It provides income and employment to the farming community of the country.

The return from small holdings can be

maximized by the proper combination of dairy enterprise with crop production. India ranks first in number of animals and in production of milk in the world. India succeeded in producing 127.30 million tones of milk to become world's largest milk producer with 290 grams per capita availability of milk (BAHS, 2012). The milk production of Assam was recorded as 0.79 million tons (NDDDB, 2010) with per capita availability of 83g (AHVD, 2013) only against 293g at national level. The farmers (>80% educated unemployed youth) are now coming forward to undertake dairy farming as a

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## Socio-economic status of the rural dairy farmers

means of livelihood. But, informations pertaining to socio-economic conditions of dairy farmers are very scanty and unorganized. So, an investigation is planned to study the socio-economic conditions of the rural dairy farmers of Kamrup district.

The investigation was undertaken in Kamrup district of Assam from March, 2009 to April, 2010 in two Development Blocks, viz. Bezera Development Block and Chayani-Barduar Development Block. From each Block, five villages were selected randomly and twenty farmers from each village were selected randomly having at least two milch cows for collection of data. The required information pertaining to socio-economic status of the rural dairy farmers were collected with the help of interview schedule designed for the purpose through personal contact with the dairy unit owners and personal observations.

From Table-1, it was found that 70 per cent of the respondents belonged to middle aged viz. 36 years to 55 years. This was due to the fact that, in the area under study, people take up animal husbandry or farming as source of livelihood only around the marriageable age. Many workers <sup>2</sup> <sup>5</sup> reported similar findings where majority of the respondents fell in middle age group.

The study showed that majority i.e. 88 per cent of the respondents had medium sized family with 4-7 members. The finding could be a good signal to the efforts made by the Government of India to limit the number of children per family and was found to be relevant to the finding of other workers <sup>1,2</sup>.

In respect of the educational status of the dairy farmers, majority of the farmers (83.5%) had medium level educational qualification from primary to higher secondary school level. Similar result was found by worker <sup>6</sup> who reported that majority of the respondents was having medium education level while contradictory results had been observed by other workers <sup>4</sup> where 26.67 per cent of the respondents were having high school level of education.

Majority of the dairy farmers (75.00 %) had medium level annual family income from Rs. 19,467.88 to Rs. 1,21,230.12. This income pattern gave an idea about the fact that the dairy farmers in the area under study were not very affluent. This again might be due to low productive animals and small herd size. The results were more or less similar to the findings of a worker <sup>3</sup> who found that 78.67 per cent of the respondent's family income ranged from Rs. 69,223.00 and Rs. 1,25,350.00.

Table 1: SOCIO - ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE RURAL DAIRY FARMERS OF KAMRUP DISTRICT OF ASSAM

Traits	Block	Low/ Young	Medium/ Middle	High/ Old	Mean	S.D.	Range
Age	A	15 (15) ≤ 35	68(68) 36 - 57	17 (17) ≥ 58	46.25	10.39	22-68
	B	14 (14) ≤ 34	71 (71) 35 - 53	15 (15) ≥ 54	44.16	8.91	20-65
	Pooled	33(16.5) ≤ 35	140 (70) 36 - 55	27(13.5) ≥ 56	45.21	9.71	20-68
Family size	A	9 (9) ≤ 3	83 (83) 4-7	8 (8) ≥8	5.53	1.68	3-12
	B	4 (4) ≤3	93 (93) 4-7	3 (3) ≥8	5.57	1.23	3-11
	Pooled	13 (6.5) ≤3	176 (88) 4-7	11 (5.5) ≥8	5.55	1.47	3-12
Educa- tional status	A	10 (10) ≤1	78 (78) 2-5	12 (12) ≥6	3.66	1.49	1-6
	B	15 (15) ≤2	75 (75) 3-5	10 (10) ≥6	3.81	1.24	1-6
	Pooled	11 (5.5) ≤1	167 (83.5) 2-5	22 (11) ≥6	3.74	1.37	1-6
Annual family income	A	5 (5) ≤26,627.06	80 (80) 26,627.07- 1,37,188.93	15 (15) ≥1,37,188.94	81,908	55,280.93	20,000- 3,00,000
	B	1 (1) ≤15,453.80	92 (92) 15,453.81- 1,02,126.19	7 (7) ≥1,02,126.20	58,790	43,336.19	30,000- 4,00,000
	Pooled	0 (0) ≤19,467.87	75 (75) 19,467.88- 1,21,230.12	25 (25) ≥1,21,230.13	70,349	50,881.12	20,000- 4,00,000

A=Bezera Development Block, B=Chayani-Barduar Development Block

TABLE 2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ON DIFFERENT LEVELS OF FORMAL EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Sl. No.	Educational status	Bezera	Chayani-Barduar	Pooled
1	Illiterate	8 (8)	3 (3)	11 (5.5)
2	Primary school	14(14)	15 (15)	29 (14.5)
3	Pre matriculation	18 (18)	29 (29)	47 (23.5)
4	Matriculation	26(26)	23 (23)	49 (24.5)
5	Higher secondary	19 (19)	22 (22)	41 (20.5)
6	Graduate and above	13 (13)	10 (10)	23 (11.5)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

## Socio-economic status of the rural dairy farmers

From the study, it can be concluded that majority of the dairy farmers belonged to middle aged. Dairy farmers in the study area take up dairy farming as a source of livelihood only around the marriageable age. The majority of the dairy farmers

had medium sized family in the study area. Most of the dairy farmers from the study area had medium level educational qualification from primary to higher secondary level. Moreover, the dairy farmers had medium level annual family income.

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