

INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN IN ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

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Women have been working along with men in all agricultural operations since the first furrow of plough was drawn on soil. It is evident from historical, anthropological and archaeological findings that women folk has been a major force in the advancement of human civilization. The importance of working women in the Indian context has been appreciated since prehistoric ages in view of the specific roles attributed to them at home and outside.

The development of a community, society or the nation in any field be it social, economic, political or spiritual depends as much on women as on men. Agriculture and animal husbandry growth is bound to be ineffective without skill upgradation and participation of women. The contribution of women in the field of animal husbandry has been substantial. Farm women as farmers have been a well accepted proposition these days. Their in-

tensity of participation, however varies according to the nature of the work. The soft, easy and feminine character activities like animal husbandry operations have been dominated by farm women for long. Animal husbandry and agriculture are an integral part of a farmers life and it is the women folk who look after these activities.

The women in India, like in many developing countries are silent workers. Although, there are a growing number of available technologies which can enhance women's productivity and income in animal husbandry sector, these technologies have not reached them. One of the main barriers in the transfer of appropriate technology to the farm women, is the lack of knowledge about the specific activities in which the rural women are generally involved.

A number of research studies have been conducted in the past to identify the animal husbandry

activities in which rural women are generally involved. A review of earlier studies was conducted to make an inventory of all the animal husbandry activities in which rural women are involved. Table-1 shows the animal husbandry activities involving farm women as reported by various researchers.

The list clearly shows that women are involved at various levels in almost all animal husbandry operations right from collecting fodder for animals, to marketing of dairy products. Taking animal for grazing, preparing balanced ration, preparation of home-made concentrate mixture, feeding the cattle, management of livestock, taking care of young calves, sick and pregnant animals, preparing livestock products, storage and marketing of dairy products and making cow dung cakes are mostly carried out by rural women.

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Table-I INVENTORY OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY ACTIVITIES MOSTLY CARRIED OUT BY WOMEN

Animal Husbandry Activities	Reported by
Feeding of cattle	Shah(1980), Agrawal(1987) Acharya(1988) Prashad et al (1988) and Patel et al(1988)
Collecting fodder for animals	Prashad et al (1988),Sardana et al(1988)
Taking animals for grazing	Prashad et al (1988),Acharya (1988)
Watering of livestock	Acharya (1988)
Chaffing the fodder	Gupta (1986)
Preparing feed for cattle	Puri S. (1971)
Feeding of young calves	Dubey et al (1982)
Preparation of balanced ration for animals	Agrawal (1987)
Preparation of home-made concentrate mixture	Jamal (1989)
Housing of cattle	Shah (1980)
Management of livestock	Agrawal (1987)
Taking care of various categories of animal	Shah (1980)
Care of sick animals	Prashad et al (1988)
Management of cattle treatment	Sardana et al (1988)
Care of young stock	Acharya (1988)
Looking after the milch cattle	Devedas (1975)
Care of newly born calves	Dubey et al (1982) Agrawal (1987)
Care of pregnant animals	Agrawal (1987)
Attending animals at the time of Parturition	Agrawal (1987)
Disinfecting naval of calves	Agrawal (1987)
Bathing and cleaning of animal	Agrawal (1987), Prashad et al (1988)
Cleaning of cattle shed	Prashad et al (1988) Agrawal (1987), Acharya (1988)
Deticking animals	Prashad et al (1988)
Removing cow dung	Gupta (1986)
De-worming calves	Prashad et al (1988)
Milking of cattle	Shah (1980), Acharya (1988) Prashad et al (1988), Patel et al (1988)
Preparation of various livestock products	Agrawal (1987)
Storage of dairy products	Prashad et al (1988)
Marketing of dairy products	Prashad et al (1988),Sardana et al (1988)
Storage of farm produce	Sardana et al (1988)
Making farm yard manure	Sardana et al (1988)
Making cow dung cakes	Puri. S. (1971), Agrawal (1987)

A comprehensive list of all the animal husbandry activities carried out by farm women will be of utmost importance to the training institution like FTC and KVK in providing training to farm women in animal husbandry. Such a list would also help the research workers in studying the skill of rural women in this sector. The list also verifies the fact that almost half of the animal husbandry activities are carried out by women.

In India the participation of rural women workers in livestock production varies from state to state and region to region. In traditional livestock, production system, women has been considered merely as a supporting worker and has been denied the responsibility and benefits of independent decision making and handling of livestock enterprise.

In order to enhance the participation of women they should be provided equal access to technical information and training. Upgrading their knowledge and skill is imperative, if there has to be an all round development of the animal husbandry sector.

Dairy Guide

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