

CONSTRAINTS IN THE ADOPTION OF MODERN LIVESTOCK PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

The data collected from 150 respondents revealed that majority (84%) of the farmers were not familiar with the modern livestock practices. Concentrate mixtures, mineral mixtures, anthelmintics and vaccines are not utilized by the farmers due to lack of capital, non-availability and high prices. Lack of diagnostic laboratory facilities in the field, adulteration in the mineral and concentrate mixtures, anthelmintics and vaccines were also among the constraints in improving livestock production.

INTRODUCTION

Livestock production in Pakistan is an integral part of the rural economy contributing about 38 per cent of agricultural GDP amounting to 8 per cent of the national GDP. In Pakistan, there are 20.7 million buffaloes, 17.9 million cattle, 47.6 million goats and 30.5 million sheep (Anonymous, 1996-97). The growth rate in human population in the country is too high to be fed by this much number and productive performance of our livestock. Therefore, the gap between the demand and supply of animal products is widening day by day. The utilization of the modern practices by the farmers to enhance the performance of their animals is, therefore, the significant importance. The productivity and reproductivity of the animals in Pakistan is almost at the same level as many years back. This statement is substantiated by the fact that even the best indigenous breeds of cattle (Sahiwal) and buffaloes (Nili-Ravi and Kundi) are diminishing in contrast to their better multiplication in other countries. This is indicative of insufficient and ineffective extension working and/or discouraging level of adoption of modern techniques by the farmers. This paper presents the major constraints in the adoption of modern livestock practices by the farmers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Investigations were carried out in the Livestock Production Extension Nuclei, Jhang Sadar, Punjab. Fifteen villages, three each from the five union councils (UC) located in the surroundings of district Jhang were randomly selected.

The prescribed questionnaire was developed to collect necessary information to carry out this investigation. From each selected village, 10 farmers

were individually interviewed to complete these specified questionnaires.

RESULTS

Table 1 indicates that more than three fourth (81.3%) of the respondents were not aware of the concentrate mixtures. Lack of capital and high prices of concentrate mixtures were reported by 8.6 percent of the respondents. According to 8.0 percent farmers that recommended concentrate mixtures were not available locally, while only 2.0 per cent pointed out the chances of adulteration with low nutritive stuffs.

The main constrains in the utilization of anthelmintics in animals were that out of the respondents, 68.0 per cent were not aware of the application of anthelmintics. More than one tenth (12.0%) reported that anthelmintics are costly and they cannot afford their utilization due to lack of capital. Chances of adulteration in the single dose purchase of anthelmintic was pointed out by 18.0 per cent farmers. Lack of diagnostic laboratories in the diagnosis of parasitic diseases and ultimately their blind treatment was reported by 20.0 per cent respondents.

Unawareness, lack of capital, high prices of mineral mixtures, adulteration and lack of technical skill in mineral feeding was reported by 84.0, 9.3, 9.3, 5.3 and 1.3 per cent farmers, respectively (Table 1).

A huge majority (83.0%) of the respondents embarrassed about the high cost of the Foot and Mouth Disease vaccine (Table 1) and other affordable. Fifty four percent respondents pointed out that after vaccination against Food and Mouth Disease, the animals showed stress and stopped feeding. Only 13.3 per cent farmers were not aware of vaccination and 13.3 per cent reported that they are unable to restrain the animals during vaccination due to their furious behavior.

Table 1: Distribution of 150 respondents regarding constraints in adoption of concentrate mixtures, anthelmintics, mineral mixture and vaccination programmes.

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Concentrate mixture		
Unawareness	122	81.3
Lack of capital	13	8.6
High prices of concentrate mixtures	13	8.6
Non-availability	12	8.0
Adulteration	3	2.0
Anthelmintics		
Unawareness	102	68.0
Lack of capital	18	12.0
High prices of anthelmintics	18	12.0
Adulteration in purchasing single dose	27	18.0
Absence of diagnostic laboratories	3	2.0
Mineral mixture		
Unawareness	125	84.0
Lack of capital	14	9.3
High prices of anthelmintics	14	9.3
Adulteration in purchasing single dose	8	5.3
Absence of diagnostic laboratories	2	1.3
Vaccination		
Unawareness	20	13.3
Lack of capital	Nil	0
High prices of anthelmintics	124	83.6
Adulteration in purchasing single dose	81	54.3
Absence of diagnostic laboratories	20	13.3

DISCUSSION

Livestock is of major social and financial importance in many developing countries like Pakistan. The development of livestock sector in this country has, however, generally been neglected, or at least it has not received attention to explore its potentials. Priority has given to the production of food crops. Several considerations, however, highlight the need for greater priority to be given to livestock development in coming years. Per capita income

earnings in our country have reached/are reaching levels where the income elasticity of demand for livestock products is/will be higher compared with that for cereals, thus calling for accelerated livestock production program to satisfy the growing demand for primary livestock products such as milk, meat and eggs. This situation can only be handled by initiating extension activities regularly to educate the farmers about the modern livestock techniques to improve the production of the animals.

Figures indicated in the Table 1 depict that majority (above 80.0%) of the farmers are unaware about the modern livestock practices. The developed countries achieved a high producers status by good extension services to the farmers. This is evident by the fact that the period following World War II has been development of governments of a recognition of the need for agricultural, including livestock sector, extension or advisory services (Uotila, 1996). Previously, such services existed in more developed countries. These developed countries established a variety of rural services and institutions, including agricultural (livestock) extension services. Similar extension activities should be arranged with the collaboration of different components of Livestock and Dairy Development Department. The extension activities must comprise of the basic knowledge/benefits of animal rearing using modern electronic media like films, projector presentation and practically demonstration at the spot. These extension activities should be of permanent nature, not in the form of a project of short duration, because continuous inflow of latest/improved techniques is necessary to meet the emerging challenges. This practice will tend to create awareness among the farmers with the modern livestock practices.

The other factor which seems to be responsible for creating this situation is the lack of capital. This situation is pointed out by more than 8.0% of the farmers. Solution can be made by the provision of financial support to the farmers in terms of acceptable mark up. At present, although the small loans are provided by the government to the farmers, but the mark up is above the approach of the most of the small landholder farmers. Moreover, the procedure is not easy and of multichannel, resulted in unnecessary delay in the release of the loans. Initially, small loans are provided free of interest or with negligible mark up. The procedure should be simple and involve only one step channel. This will be of great helpful in improving the existing productive status of the animals.

In time provision of the quality livestock products like concentrate mixtures and mineral mixtures in the market is also important and should be affordable and sealed. A strict policy to check the adulteration in the available livestock products may help to reduce the frequency of this practice. As the farmers pointed out that there is a chance of adulteration in purchasing a single dose of anthelmintics, it reflects that the farmers need a small packing of the anthelmintics. Large sized packing be replaced by small packing, so that the whole packing is used once. The pharmaceutical manufacturers can solve this problem by marketing small packing of the products.

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