

PERCEPTION OF CATTLE AND BUFFALO FARMERS TOWARDS DAIRY FARMING GOALS

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Abstract: This study was conducted to know the farmers perceptions of benefits received from dairy farming. For this study 240 cattle and buffalo owners, who did not possess less than two dairy animals, were selected from Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh. Most of the farmers doing dairying as business because they considered that dairy provides certain and stable income whereas other goals of dairying were produce high quality food, inherited business, maximize profit, time for family living, concerns for children etc. Understanding goal structure helps the policy makers, government and other agencies to explain the resource allocation to dairy farmers.

Keywords: Dairy farmers, goals, perception, dairying, cattle and buffalo.

Introduction

The most significant role played by livestock sector particularly dairying is to improve the economic lot of million of rural families, as it provides insurance against crop failure, besides generating a regular source of income and employment (Rajput *et al.*, 2012). Dairy farmers face different challenges to achieve their primary goal. Low milk yield, high feed prices and shortages of feed, insufficient veterinary and breeding services, access to credit, access to markets, strong informal sector are the main concern of the dairy farmers to affect their business in future. Farmers doing dairy business not only maximizing profit but also for some other goals such as obtaining sufficient food, avoiding low profits/losses, reducing farm debt, conserve land for future generations and/or have their families involved in agriculture and animal husbandry. Dairy farmers differ in their goal orientation and they first satisfy the most important goals (Basarir and Gillespie, 2003). Keeping the above facts this study is an attempt to know the dairy farmers' goal hierarchy structures.

Materials and methods

Data for the study were originated from a survey of a sample of 240 randomly selected dairy farmers in Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh (UP) which was one of the highest milk-producing districts in the state with high concentration of cattle and buffaloes. Furthermore, only those dairy farmers who owned at least two milch animals were selected for this study. To know the dairy farmers' goals, simple ranking method was used in which a questionnaire contained a list of 12 often expressed goals among dairy farmers were used. Farmers were asked to select the most important goals from the list. The schedule was pre-tested in two sessions with 5-10 dairy farmers in each session. The schedule was finally administered for collection of data from the selected respondents through personally interviewing them in the local language i.e. Hindi.

Results and discussion

Most of the dairy farmers (70%) belonged to middle age group whereas 17.5% and 12% dairy farmers belonged to old age and young age group respectively. Out of 240 dairy farmers, 69% respondents were male, whereas, only 31% were female. Majority of the dairy farmers belonged to backward class followed by general category. 77% dairy farmers reported that they had three to five dependents, whereas, 16% respondents had more than 5 dependents and only 7% had less than 3 dependents. The main occupation of majority of the respondents was agriculture. Only 13% and 5% respondents were engaged in private jobs and government jobs, respectively. Agriculture remains primary source of income for most of the dairy farmers and they enhance the competitiveness by engaged in other jobs (Ouma *et al.*, 2003). All the respondents were in contact with the bank, whereas, 80% and 55% cattle and buffalo owners were in contact with the animal husbandry department and agriculture department respectively.

Table shows %age of responses recorded for each goal. Most of the dairy animal farmers' ranked certain and stable income, inherited business, produce high quality food, to maximize profit and time for family living and concern for children among their top five goals. Smith and Capstick (1976) also found that "Stay in business" and "increase farm size" as the most and least important of farmer goals, respectively.

Table: Distribution of respondents according to their dairy farming goals (N=240)

Sl. No.	Farmers goal	Frequency	%	Rank
1.	Certain and stable income	180	75.0	I
2.	Produce high quality food	137	57.1	III
3.	Inherited business	157	65.4	II
4.	Time for family living, concerns for children	104	43.3	V
5.	Improve the farm for next generation	55	22.9	VIII
6.	Have possibility to some leisure	23	09.6	XI
7.	Reduce debt, become free of debt	25	10.4	X
8.	Continue to be a dairy farmer	71	29.6	VII
9.	Maximize profit	12	50.4	IV
10.	Work with animals/crops	13	05.4	XII
11.	Social contacts	42	17.5	IX
12.	Higher private Consumption	85	35.5	VI

The other high ranked goals of dairy farmers were higher private consumption, continue to be a dairy farmer, improve the farm for next generation, social contacts and reduce debt or become free of debt. Van Kooten *et al.*, (1986) reported that avoiding low profits/losses, reducing farm debt and making more profit were the most important three goals of the farmers. A very less number of dairy farmers doing dairy farming because they love work with animals/crops and have possibility to some leisure. As often found in studies of farmers' goal, work with animals ranked lowest among all the group of dairy farmers. These results were supported by earlier studies (e.g. Gasson *et al.*, 1988) which revealed that farmers had several goals – not only one.

Conclusions

The result of farmers' goals confirms the previous findings that dairy farmers have several goals not one. Besides certain and stable income other goals were also important. Dairy farmer satisfy as many goals as possible, first satisfying the most important goal or goals, then pursuing the less important ones. The goals of the farmers' were not fulfilled, so number of farmers quitting agricultural and allied activities in different states of India due to many reasons.

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