

Important Contribution of Livestock in Indian Economy

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SUMMARY

Livestock plays an important role in Indian economy. About 20.5 million people depend upon livestock for their livelihood. Livestock contributed 16% to the income of small farm households as against an average of 14% for all rural households. Livestock provides livelihood to two-third of rural community. It also provides employment to about 8.8 % of the population in India. India has vast livestock resources. Livestock sector contributes 4.11% GDP and 25.6% of total Agriculture. Livestock is the main source of income of small and marginal farmers in India. The production of meat and egg has increased very fast in our country. Manure and bio gas production is possible through cattle dung. The crop production increased due to use of dung and urine in agriculture sector. The organic compost is a good source of nutrients which is beneficial for agriculture and human health. There is a need of policy at national level for production and marketing of milk, curd, meat, leather etc. It is necessary to work for maintenance, processing and quality control of livestock products

INTRODUCTION

Many farmers in India depend on animal husbandry for their livelihood. In addition to supplying milk, meat, eggs, wool, their castings (dung) and hides, animals, mainly bullocks, are the major source of power for both farmers and drayers. Thus, animal husbandry plays an important role in the rural economy. India is an agricultural country with about 65 to 70% of the full population having agriculture and husbandry if livestock is of various importances in India's economy. Livestock plays a vital role within the Indian economy. About 20.5 million people depend upon livestock for his or her livelihood. Livestock contributed 16% to the income of small rural households, while the typical for all rural households was 14%. Livestock provides livelihood to two-thirds of the agricultural community. It also provides employment to about 8.8% of the population in India. India has vast livestock resources. The livestock plays an important role in the economy of farmers. The farmers in India maintain mixed farming system i.e. a combination of crop and livestock where the output of one enterprise becomes the input of another enterprise thereby realize the resource efficiency. The livestock serve the farmers in different ways.

Income:

Livestock is a source of subsidiary income for many families in India especially the resource poor who maintain few heads of animals. Cows and buffaloes if in milk will provide regular income to the livestock farmers through sale of milk. Animals like sheep and goat serve as sources of income during emergencies to meet exigencies like marriages, treatment of sick persons, children education, repair of houses etc. The animals also serve as moving banks and assets which provide economic security to the owners.

Employment:

A large number of people in India being less literate and unskilled depend upon agriculture for their livelihoods. But agriculture being seasonal in nature could provide employment for a maximum of 180 days in a year. The landless and less land people depend upon livestock for utilizing their labour during lean agricultural season.

Food:

The livestock products such as milk, meat and eggs are an important source of animal protein to the members of the livestock owners. The per capita availability of milk is around 375 g / day; an egg is 74 / annum during 2017-18.

Social security:

The animals offer social security to the owners in terms of their status in the society. The families especially the landless which own animals are better placed than those who do not. Gifting of animals during marriages is a very common phenomenon in different parts of the country. Rearing of animals is a part of the Indian culture. Animals are used for various socio religious functions. Cows for house warming ceremonies; rams, bucks and chicken for sacrifice during festive seasons; Bulls and Cows are worshipped during various religious functions. Many owners develop attachment to their animals.

Draft:

The bullocks are the back bone of Indian agriculture. The farmers especially the marginal and small depend upon bullocks for ploughing, carting and transport of both inputs and outputs.

Dung:

In rural areas dung is used for several purposes which include fuel (dung cakes), fertilizer (farm yard manure), and plastering material (poor man's cement).

Source of Energy and Manure:

India is keen on exploring clean energy production avenues like biogas and thus attention should be paid to the abundance of dung that is produced as a result of having one of the largest cattle populations. Biogas technology provides an excellent opportunity for mitigation of greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions and reducing global warming. The work of transforming cow-dung into economically valued products has not been treated as a matter of significant interest by economists and analysts of the Indian rural scene . Almost 50 percent of the dung produced is converted to dung cakes. But this dried dung cake is a source of environmental pollution and the same dung if used to make methane will become cleaner fuel. Huge amount of waste generated from poultry and livestock farms and their disposal is becoming an issue.

Table: Livestock population (2019 Livestock Census)

Sr. No	Species	Number (in millions)	Ranking in the world population
1	Cattle	192.49	Second
2	Buffaloes	109.85	First
	Total (including Mithun and Yak)	302.79	First
3	Sheep	74.26	Third
4	Goats	148.88	Second
5	Pigs	9.06	-
6	Others	0.91	-
	Total livestock	535.78	
	Total poultry	851.81	Seventh
7	Duck	-	Fifth
8	Chicken	-	
9	Camel	0.25	Tenth

CONCLUSION

Agriculture and animal husbandry have been a part of Indian economy since long. India has one of the largest populations of livestock and stands first in milk production. Livestock sector in India has experienced remarkable growth during the last two decades in terms of production, value of output from livestock and trade. Livestock sector contributes nearly 25 percent to the gross value of agricultural output at the national level. The contribution of livestock to rural employment witnessed declining trends in recent years.

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