



Study of feeding and management practices followed by buffalo owners in Patur Tehsil

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ABSTRACT : The present investigation was undertaken to know the various management practices adopted at the farmer's level to estimate the maintenance cost, gross and net income and net profit per litre. Total 72 farmers were classified into three categories viz., small, medium and large, based on the land holdings, consisting 18 each in 4 villages in Patur Tehsil. It was observed that buffalo farmers were well aware regarding health-care practices. The buffalo farmers were more aware about clean milk production and adopting recommended (full hand) method of milking. There was a small feeding gap in respect of green fodder and concentrates in buffalo farmers and the rearing of buffaloes was found profitable.

KEY WORDS : Buffalo, Buffalo owners, Roughages, Concentrates, Breeding, Cost of production

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INTRODUCTION

Buffaloes have unique position in Indian dairying as they are considered as bearer cheque of the rural flock. It contributes 57 per cent in total milk production (Misra *et al.*, 1998). The preference of buffaloes may be on account of higher productivity and higher price realization relative to cow milk owing to higher fat content of milk. Moreover buffaloes are known to better converters of poor quality roughage into milk. In spite of this there is regular genetic drain of the buffaloes with superior germplasm. However, the present status of buffalo rearing does not appear encouraging. The buffaloes owned by small, marginal farmers and landless labours are reared under the backyard system where one to three animals are kept for milk. The animals are fed on crop residues available in the form of wheat, paddy or sorghum straws and supplemented with grazing, crop residues, by-products and concentrates. Very little attention is given to balance feeding. It seems therefore essential to form a package of practices for total management

where full potential of buffalo could be exploited for milk (Mudgal, 1988). Apart from the quantitative shortage of feeds and fodders, there is deficiency of nutrient supply to the animals which may be the major cause of low production. The results of the survey conducted in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra did indicate that the bovine population received 28 to 30 per cent less DCP than requirement (Anonymous, 2001).

Hence, the present investigation was planned to compare the feeding and management practices followed by buffalo owners with recommended practices and to estimate cost and economics of milk production for buffalo.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present investigation entitled was undertaken during the year 2010-2011. The data regarding various feeding and management practices were collected personally by interviewing the buffalo owners with the help of pre-tested questionnaires.

Selection of villages and buffalo owners :

Four villages were selected randomly on the basis of buffalo population in the Patur Tehsil and they were considered for study. The buffalo owners were classified into three different groups *i.e.* small farmers (upto 2.00 ha land holding), medium farmers (upto 2-8 ha land holding) and large farmers (above 8

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