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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Availability of feed, fodder and nutritional status of bullocks at farmers level in Akola district

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ABSTRACT : From Akola district of Maharashtra 3 Tahsils namely, Akola, Patur and Barshitakli were selected. From each Tahsil 45 farmers were selected randomly for collecting the data making a total data on 135 farmers. The data were collected through personal interview. The feeding schedule resulted in marginal short supply of DM during winter but there was substantial short supply of proteins in crossbred and local non-descript bullocks being 54.28 and 39.09 per cent than that of recommendation during summer season. The short supply of protein during winter season worked as 52.85 per cent in crossbred and 33.34 per cent in local non-descript bullocks. The deficiencies observed in prevailing practices of feeding were corrected by offering the additional amount of concentrate (12 % DCP) to bullocks in order to fulfill the requirement. For this purpose, the daily intake of feed in crossbred bullocks was 8.0, 3.0 and 3.0 kg of jowar straw, legume straw and concentrate, respectively while local non-descript bullocks were given 5.0 kg jowar straw, 2 kg legumes straw and 1.5 kg concentrate during summer season. The rate of feeding during winter was 4.0 and 3.0, 1.0 and 1.0, 20.0 and 15.0 , 2.7 and 1.3 kg of jowar straw, legumes, green grasses and concentrate in case of crossbred and local non-descript bullocks, respectively.

Key words : Dry matter, Jowar, Green grasses, Concentrates, Digestible crude protein

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INTRODUCTION

In India about 70 per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture and rearing of livestock (mainly cattle and buffaloes). There exists a symbiotic relationship in man-land-livestock ecosystem (Mudgal, 1999). Draught animal power is a classical example of large-scale application of appropriate technology concept to millions of small, marginal and medium farmers for cultivation and small-scale transportation. Among all animals, bullocks occupy the place of pride as important and cheapest source of farm power (Bhoite *et al.* 2005).

The estimated gap between the availability and requirements of concentrates and green fodder worked as 44 and 38 per cent, respectively. As a result, India contributes only 14 per cent of the world milk production even though it possesses 18 per cent of world cattle and 50 per cent of buffalo population(Joseph,2000).

India and many other developing countries, the mixed farming involving crop livestock integration has been a way of life. The livestock therefore depends largely on crop residues and grazing providing a system of land-animal co-existence. The success of livestock farming greatly depends on the continuous supply of good quality of balance feed. The feed is the major cost component accounting more than 45 per cent of total cost. The cultivated area under forage crops is only 4.34 per cent, livestock sustain themselves mainly on the byproduct of cereals and millets as roughages and mostly other human food chain by-product as concentrates.

Depending upon the locally available feed resources and the prevailing animal husbandry practices, appropriate feeding strategies need to be developed (Sampath *et al.*, 2005). On this background Gupta *et al.* (2006) suggested the approach of complete feeding systems over conventional system in terms of nutrient digestibility and utilization. It is noted that the situation for raising the bullocks do not differ much from the above explained facts. Bullocks are mostly maintained on dry roughages obtained from grain crops with little amount of concentrates or mostly without concentrates. This