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An empirical analysis of constraints in production and marketing management of fodder crops in Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

The present study makes an attempt to analyze the constraints in production and marketing management of fodder crops in Karnataka. The primary data on production and marketing constraints in fodder crops were collected through personal interview method with pre-tested schedule from 45 sample fodder growers in three taluks of Dharwad district during the crop year 2001-02.The study revealed that high cost of labour(80%), non-availability of labour during peak season(71%), insufficient availability of water(62%), non-availability of quality seeds(40%), and high cost of chemical fertilizers were the major constraints in production of fodder. The major marketing problems encountered by farmers were high transportation cost (100%) and lack of storage facilities(93%), lack of market facilities(88.9%), limited buyers in the market(84.5%). The other marketing problems were malpractices in weighment (80%), low prices offered by the buyers (73%), non-availability of transport vehicle (64.5%), high commission charges (38%) and high market fee (36%).

Key words : Fodder, Constraints, Problems, Production and marketing management

India is the leading milk producer in the world with a quantity of 84 million tonnes followed by USA. While in Karnataka state, the milk production reached to 4.47 million tonnes during the year 2000-01, which accounts for 5.28 per cent of India's total milk production.

Natural pastures are the major feed resources for livestock rearing in India and these pastures are in the complex ecosystems that are constantly modified by the activities of man and management of domestic animals. The majority of highly productive pastures of the world were created by removing the existing forest vegetation and by sowing improved grasses and sometimes legume species. The Indian natural pastures are monsoon dependent, owing to extremities of climate, poor management and the constraints of grazing, these area have been degraded at an alarming rate and rendered the grassland as a fragile ecosystem. Due to high grazing pressure and low to very low carrying capacity, these pastures have undergone tremendous botanical changes. The edible species have been replaced by noxious weeds and regeneration of plants is very poor, leading to scanty vegetation and thus resulting in tremendous soil and water losses from the grasslands and pose a serious threat to undermine soil productivity and suitable fodder production. Therefore, maximization of fodder production per unit area and time within the existing farming systems and by utilizing marginal, sub-marginal dry lands for developing fodder resources is essential. Owing to simultaneous efforts by genetic upgradation of the livestock as well as fodder resources by several improved cultivation practices like, the introduction of suitable varieties of grasses and legumes and by bringing vast culturable and unculturable wastelands (158 million hectares in India), which are not suitable for crop production. The green fodder crops are known to be cheaper source of nutrients as compared to concentrates and hence useful in bringing down the cost of feeding and reduce the need for purchase of feeds/ concentrates from the market. There is need to promote fodder crop production through improved agronomic practices and use of improved seed. Presently, research has been mainly confined to cultivation of green fodder in irrigated areas but focus has to be given to dry land fodder or partially irrigated fodder crops. Extension to promote balance feed, feeding chaffed feed and proper storage of fodder to avoid losses need also to be emphasized. The wasteland development programmes for fodder production also need to be strengthened. For sustainability, emphasis must be given to develop pastures, forages, and fodder and fodder-crop systems to provide continuous and sustainable feed resources round the year.

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