



Farmers perception on backyard rabbitry in Tripura

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ABSTRACT : The study was conducted in Khowai district of Tripura, a landlocked state of NE India to ascertain farmers' perception of backyard rabbitry and also delineates the constraints as perceived by them in large scale adoption of rabbit rearing. The study reveals that the farmers' perception on requirement of labour is 55 per cent with less practice of cross breeding (90 %), less care of pregnant animal (82.4 %), less care of young animal (72 %) and market system is not optimum (81 %). Non - availability of pure breed strain, high cost of concentrate feed and lack of proper market are the main constraints faced by the farmers for large scale adoption of rabbit farming in Khowai district of the state.

KEY WORDS : Perception, Backyard, Rabbitry

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INTRODUCTION

Rapid growth of human population and low protein intake are some of the major problems facing developing country like India. Livestock sector plays an important role in the national economy and in the socio-economic development of the country. Rabbits have been identified to play vital role in the supply of quality protein especially in rural and urban areas. Rabbits have short generation interval with high litter size and can be raised at the backyard which is well fitted to small holder rabbit production that is predominant in India. Apart from meeting nutritional requirements, it is a continuous source of income to the farmers. Since majority of Indians do not have a liking for rabbit meat, rabbits are not commonly raised on commercial scale for meat purpose. An inefficient marketing system for the disposal of farm produce is of utmost importance. It requires specialized training and technical skills to maintain pedigree record of the different lines of parent stocks. The animal is very delicate and susceptible to sudden strain and stress. Therefore, special care must be ensured for successful rabbit farming (Phull and

Phull, 1994). Poultry, pig and rabbit represent the fastest means of correcting protein shortage of animal protein intake because of their high rate of reproduction, these species are characterized by the best efficiency of nutrient transformation into high quality protein (Adeyemi *et al.*, 2010).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was carried out in Khowai district of Tripura state with 120 randomly selected livestock owners. An interview schedule consisting of structured questions was constructed to achieve the objective formulated for the study. Data was collected by using personal interview method from the locality to find out the perception of backyard rabbitry and the perception of the constraints in large scale adoption of rabbit rearing. The collected information was scored as I, II, III and IV based on the percentage (from higher to lower).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data presented in Table 1 reveals that farmers' perception on management aspect like housing and equipments, feeding management, disease incidence and mortality are usual in rabbit rearing, *i.e.*, 60.5 per cent and was ranked I, with less requirement of labour (55 %, Rank I) and less practice of cross breeding (90 %, Rank I). Majority of the farmers perceived that the disease incidence (70.6 %, Rank I) and mortality (63.5 %, Rank I) are usual whereas, majority of the farmers perceived that care of pregnant animal (82.4%) and

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Table 1: Farmers' perception of backyard rabbitry				(n= 120)
Sr. No.	Parameter	Response	Rank	Percentage
1.	Management aspect	Very high	III	14.0
		More than normal	II	25.5
		Usual	I	60.5
2.	Labour requirement	More	III	10.0
		Usual	II	35.0
		Less	I	55.0
3.	Cross breeding	More	III	3.0
		Usual	II	7.0
		Less	I	90.0
4.	Disease incidence	More	III	8.9
		Usual	I	70.6
		Less	II	20.5
5.	Mortality	More	II	22.5
		Usual	I	63.5
		Less	III	14.0
6.	Care of pregnant animal	More	III	2.3
		Usual	II	15.3
		Less	I	82.4
7.	Care of young rabbit	More	III	7.5
		Usual	II	20.5
		Less	I	72.0
8.	Cost of rearing	Costly	III	25.0
		Moderate	II	31.4
		Cheaper	I	43.6
9.	Market system	More	III	6.0
		Usual	II	13.0
		Less	I	81.0
10.	Sale of animal	More	III	11.2
		Usual	I	65.3
		Less	II	23.5
11.	Overall rating of rabbit rearing	Superior	II	24.6
		No difference	I	60.5
		Inferior	III	14.9

Table 2: Farmers' perception of the constraints in large scale adoption of rabbit rearing				(n= 120)
Sr.No.	Parameter	Constraint	Rank	Percentage
1.	Management	Non availability of quality food	II	34.5
		Non availability of pure breed strain	I	45.5
		High cost of concentrate	III	20.0
2.	Marketing	Non remunerative price of outputs	I	57.0
		Low demand of meat	III	19.5
		Lack of market channel	II	23.5

young animal require less attention (72 %) in rabbit rearing which got rank I. It is also concluded from the Table 1 that the perception on cost of rearing is cheaper (43.6%, Rank I), but market system is not optimum, *i.e.*, less (81 %, Rank I). With regards to sale of animal is usual (65.3 %, Rank I), but in overall rating almost 24.6 per cent farmers responded that rabbit rearing is the superior technology (Rank II) where as 60.5 per cent responded that it created no differences (Rank I).

Findings (Table 2) reveals that non-availability of pure breed strain, non - availability of quality food and lack of proper market are the main constraints perceived by the farmers for large scale adoption of rabbit rearing. The more frequently perceived constraints of management is non-availability of pure breed strain (45.5%, Rank I) followed by non - availability of quality food (34.5%, Rank II) and high cost of concentrate (20%, Rank III). Regarding marketing, more frequently perceived constraints are non - remunerative price of outputs (57%) followed by lack of market channel (23.5%) and low demand of meat (19.5%) which got Rank I, II, and III, respectively.

Conclusion:

Rabbit being highly prolific and fast growing found to

be the better option to address the issue related to meat deficiency in NE region. Early maturity, short gestation period, higher litter size per kindling and fewer incidences of diseases were the added advantages. The experience shows that the novel idea of horizontal sharing of kids could be a better approach for rapid and efficient dissemination of technology among the tribal communities in the region and rabbitry can be adopted as successful vocational enterprise in North East Hill Region, but there should be proper marketing channel for the output and the farmers are to be ensured for quality breed for rearing of rabbit as a profitable enterprise. (<http://www.icar.org.in/en/node/2992>).

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