

Livestock Sector

January 9, 2021

In news

The 20th Livestock census has been released recently.

India and Its Livestock

- World's highest livestock owner at about 535.78 million.
- Third in the population of sheep (74.26 million).
- Fifth in the population of ducks and chicken (851.81 million).
- Tenth in camel population in the world – 2.5 lakhs.
- First in the total buffalo population in the world – 109.85 million buffaloes.
- Second in the population of goats – 148.88 million goats
- Second largest poultry market in the world.
- The second-largest producer of fish and also the second-largest aquaculture nation in the world.

Challenges in the Livestock Sector India

- **Improving productivity** of farm animals is one of the major challenges. The average annual milk yield of Indian cattle is 1172 kg which is only about 50% of the global average.
- **The Frequent outbreaks of diseases** like Foot and Mouth Diseases, Black Quarter infection, Influenza etc. continue to affect Livestock health and lowers the productivity.
- India's huge population of ruminants **contributes to greenhouse gases emission** adding to global warming. Reducing greenhouse gases through mitigation and adaptation strategies will be a major challenge.
- **Livestock derives a major part of their energy requirement from agricultural byproducts and residues.** Hardly 5% of the cropped area is utilized to grow

fodder. India is deficit in dry fodder by 11%, green fodder by 35% and concentrated feed by 28%. The common grazing lands too have been deteriorating quantitatively and qualitatively..

- **Limited Artificial Insemination services** owing to a deficiency in quality germplasm, infrastructure and technical manpower coupled with poor conception rate following artificial insemination have been the major impediments.
- Currently, **only 6% of the animal heads (excluding poultry) are provided insurance cover.** Livestock extension has remained grossly neglected in the past. Only about 5% of the farm households in India access information on livestock technology. These indicate an apathetic outreach of the financial and information delivery systems.
- **Access to markets is critical to speed up the commercialization of livestock production.** Lack of access to markets may act as a disincentive to farmers to adopt improved technologies and quality inputs. **Except for poultry products and to some extent for milk,** markets for livestock and livestock products are underdeveloped, irregular, uncertain and lack transparency. Further, these are often dominated by informal market intermediaries who exploit the producers.
- Livestock sector did not receive the policy and financial attention it deserved. The sector received only about 12% of the total public expenditure on agriculture and allied sectors, which is disproportionately lesser than its contribution to agricultural GDP.
- The sector has been **neglected by the financial institutions.** The share of livestock in the total agricultural credit has hardly ever exceeded 4% in the total (short-term, medium-term and long-term). The institutional mechanisms to protect animals against risk

are not strong enough.

- Likewise, slaughtering facilities are too inadequate. About half of the total meat production comes from unregistered, make-shift slaughterhouses. Marketing and transaction costs of livestock products are high taking 15-20% of the sale price.

Future Roadmap for the Livestock Sector in India

Trade and Market mechanism:

- Globalization will create avenues for increased participation in international trade, stringent food safety and quality norms would be required.
- The global market for animal products is expanding fast and is an opportunity for India to improve its participation in the global market.
- Access to markets is critical to speed up the commercialization of livestock production. Except for poultry products and to some extent for milk, markets for livestock and livestock products are underdeveloped, irregular and lack transparency.
- Further, these are often dominated by informal market intermediaries who exploit the producers. Moreover, marketing and transaction costs of livestock products are high, taking 15-20% of the sale price.

Finance:

- The sector received only about 12% of the total public expenditure on agriculture and allied sectors, which is disproportionately lesser than its contribution to agricultural GDP.
- The sector has been neglected by financial institutions.

Institutional Support:

- The institutional mechanisms to protect animals against risk are not strong enough. Currently, only 6% of the

animal heads (excluding poultry) are provided insurance cover.

- Only about 5% of the farm households in India access information on livestock technology. These indicate an apathetic outreach of the information delivery systems.

Supporting Facilities:

- Slaughtering facilities are too inadequate. About half of the total meat production comes from unregistered, make-shift slaughterhouses.
- Develop Forward linkages for wool, fibre, meat and milk such as cold storage, food processing industries and textile industries for the consumption of livestock produced.

Feeding:

- Livestock derives a major part of their energy requirement from agricultural byproducts and residues. Hardly 5% of the cropped area is utilized to grow fodder.
- India has a deficit in dry fodder by 11%, green fodder by 35% and concentrated feed by 28%.
- The common grazing lands too have been deteriorating quantitatively and qualitatively.

Scientific Advancement:

- Improving productivity in a huge population of low-producing animals is one of the major challenges.
- The average annual milk yield of Indian cattle is 1172 kg which is only about 50% of the global average. Likewise, the meat yield of most species is 20-60% lower than the world average.
- Crossbreeding of indigenous species with exotic stocks to enhance the genetic potential of different species has been successful only to a limited extent owing to a deficiency in the quality germplasm, infrastructure and

technical manpower.

Health Services:

- Frequent outbreaks of diseases continue to affect livestock health and productivity.
- India has about 55000 veterinary institutions including polyclinics, hospitals, dispensaries and stockman centres.
- Veterinary and animal health services are largely in the public sector domain and remain poor.