



CONSTRAINTS AND SUGGESTIONS EXPRESSED BY GOAT KEEPERS ON COMMERCIAL GOAT FARMING IN NORTHERN REGION OF KERALA

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Abstract

A study was undertaken to identify the constraints and suggestions of goat keepers on commercial goat farming in Malabar region of Kerala. The study was conducted at six centers of the All India Coordinated Research Project for the improvement of Malabari goat viz. Thaliparamba and Thalassery, Thanur and Vadamkara, Kottakkal and Tirur which belongs to Kannur, Kozhikode and Malappuram district of Northern region respectively. A well structured pre-tested interview schedule was developed at the Centre for Advanced Studies in Animal Genetics and Breeding, College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Mannuthy, Kerala. From a total of 360 randomly selected goat keepers 60 each from all the six centres were selected for the study. The result revealed the major constraints to be the scarcity of superior buck for breeding followed by lack of knowledge on commercial goat farming, scarcity of fodder and grazing land, lack of credit facilities, poor market infrastructure for goats and goat products and non-availability of proper treatment and diagnosis of diseases. The suggestion given

to overcome these constraints were provision of superior breeding bucks on low price followed by provision of free training on commercial goat rearing, providing knowledge about improved goat farming through mass media., providing grazing land and good quality feed on subsidy and facilitate loan on low rate of interest from the nationalized banks. Owing to the huge need for training in the area, the study also stress the need for establishing a training and research centre for goat in the region.

Key words: Goat keepers, Suggestions, Constraints, Kerala, Grazing, Training.

Introduction

The people of lower income group rears goat and thereby goat husbandry plays an important role in the upliftment of small, marginal including landless agricultural laborers in the India (Rajkumar and Kavithaa, 2014). Goat rearing is an important enterprise not only for livelihood of weaker section of society but it also helps in meeting nutritional requirement of farm families. Goat is really suited for the poorest of the poor because of short generation period, low risk capital investment and low cost of maintenance (Hegde, 2006). As in any other field, goat husbandry is also having tremendous gap between the technology developed and its utilization. The reason for not adopting the technology is due to the constraints experienced by the goat keepers. The constraints are the problem's or the difficulties faced by the goat keepers in the day to day management of goat husbandry practices. Hence, an attempt was made to identify the constraints experienced by the goat keepers on commercial goat farming. Keeping this in view, the present investigation was carried out among the goat keepers in Northern region of Kerala with specific objectives to identify constraints perceived by goat keepers in adoption of commercial goat farming.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted at six centers in the three districts of Northern Kerala in India viz. Kannur (Thaliparamba and Thalassery), Kozhikode (Thanur and Vadakara) and Malappuram (Kottakkal and Tirur) where the All India Coordinated Research Project for the improvement of Malabari goat was implemented. A total of 360 randomly selected goat farmers 60 each from all the six centres were selected for the study. Information was collected through a well structured pre-tested interview schedule developed at the Centre of Advanced Studies in Animal Genetics and Breeding, College of Veterinary and Animal

Sciences, Mannuthy, Kerala. An attempt has been made to understand the constraints faced by the goat keepers on commercial goat farming in Northern region of Kerala. Constraints faced by the goat keepers were identified using focus group interview and review of literature on related studies and a list of constraints was identified. The respondents were asked to rate the constraints in three point continuum as 'most important constraint', 'important constraint' and 'not a constraint' with a score of 2, 1 and 0 respectively. The mean score for each statement was calculated by using the following formula

$$\text{Mean score} = \frac{\text{Total score obtained for the statement}}{\text{Number of respondents}} \times 100$$

Based on the mean score value the constraints were ranked.

Suggestions are the ideas put forth by the respondents based on their experience. Suggestions of the goat keepers were obtained during investigation. The data were collected through open ended questions and presented in frequency and percentage.

Result and Discussion

Constraints and suggestions expressed by the goat keepers

It may be observed from Table 1 that non-availability of superior breeding bucks was most important constraint felt by goat keepers which was ranked first (Table 1.). This finding is similar to those reported by Tanwar (2011) and Jana *et al.* (2014). As a solution to this factor, the goat keepers suggested that there should be provision of availability of improved breeding bucks on low price (75.00 per cent) (Table 2.).

Lack of knowledge on commercial goat farming was felt as a constraint in the adoption of commercial goat farming and it was ranked second by the goat keepers (Table 1). This finding is similar to those reported by Tekale *et.al.* (2013). In order to solve this 73.06 percent of the goat farmers suggested provision of scientific training on commercial goat rearing free of cost. Moreover, 65.00 percent also suggested providing knowledge about improved goat farming through mass media, using modern ICTs, seminars etc. As a practical solution, University Goat and Sheep Farm, Mannuthy, Thrissur, under the Directorate of Entrepreneurship, Pookode, Wayanad, Kerala Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Kerala has been organizing a state level training programmes on commercial goat farming for two days for the goat

*Table 1: Constraints expressed by the goat keepers on commercial goat farming
n=360*

Sl. No.	Statement	Mean score	Rank
1	Non-availability of superior buck for breeding	1.95	I
2	Lack of knowledge on commercial goat farming	1.87	II
3	Scarcity of fodder and grazing land	1.85	III
4	Lack of credit facilities	1.77	IV
5	Poor market infrastructure for goats and goat products	1.59	V
6	Non-availability of proper treatment and diagnosis of diseases	1.58	VI

keepers, unemployed youth, school dropouts, farm women and entrepreneurs on the basis of payment. Time to time scientist of KVASU organise the on and off campus training programme on scientific goat farming free of cost for the goat farmers of the study area to make them aware of the latest scientific management practices in goat rearing. The growing demand for training on goat rearing also stress the need of establishing a Regional Goat Training and Research Institute in the study area.

Scarcity of fodder and grazing land was ranked third by the goat keepers on adopting commercial goat farming. As a solution to this factor 58.89 per cent of the goat keepers suggested provision of availability of grazing land and good quality fodder (Table 2). Majority of the goat keepers in the region were marginal who had a land size of less than 50 cents (Ragahavan and Raja, 2012). This shrinking land availability is a serious constraint for goat keepers. So the policy makers and official have to consider distribution of barren, common lands and waste lands available for grazing. Goat keepers may be made aware and trained on the efficient and economic use of available grazing land. Moreover, the practice of grown bag technology on fodder cultivation must be promoted.

Lack of credit was a constraint in the adoption of commercial goat farming which was felt by the goat keepers in the study area and it was ranked fourth by them (Table 1) This finding is similar to those reported by Yadaw and Sharma (2012). Adopting goat farming on a commercial bases required more investment. It is true that the landless, marginal and small goat farmers who had low economic status mentioned lack of money for purchasing of goats, medicines, concentrates, vaccines and

*Table 2: Suggestions given by the goat keepers on commercial goat farming
n=360*

Sl. No.	Statement	F	%
1	Availability of superior breeding bucks on low price	306	75.00
2	Training on commercial goat rearing free of cost	289	73.06
3	Providing knowledge about improved goat farming through mass media, using modern ICTs, seminars etc.	281	65.00
4	Provision of availability of grazing land and good quality feed on subsidy.	275	58.89
5	Facilitate loan on low rate of interest from the nationalized banks	264	54.72
6	Provide assistance for establishing Goat farmers Producer Organisations at regional level	253	50.83
7	Initiate Self help group at village level on goat farming.	250	46.39
8	Remunerative price for goats selling	239	45.00
9	Goat market and transport facility	231	44.17
10	Providing veterinary aid, medicine and vaccination against contagious diseases from government veterinary hospital free of costs	211	43.89

construction of goat shed. Providing loan on low rate of interest from the nationalized banks (54.72 per cent) was suggested as a remedy for these constraints.

Non-availability of market infrastructure for marketing goats and goat products was a constraint felt by the goat keepers in the study area and it was ranked fifth by them (Table 1). This finding is similar to those reported by Tanwar (2011). As a solution for this the goat keepers suggested providing goat market and transport facility at near places. Moreover, they also suggested establishment of Goat Keepers Producer Organisations at regional level and Self help group at village level. They also suggested of providing remunerative price of goats on selling. Remunerative price is one of the most important incentives for enhancing the adoption of commercial goat keepers as well as goat production (in terms of meat, milk etc.). Formation of goat keepers organisation, self help groups and goat husbandry innovation systems (Chander and Rathod, 2015) will provide and organised platform for farmers to collectively market their product there by eliminating the middleman's exploitation in this sector and gain more net profit share.

Non-availability of proper treatment and diagnosis of diseases was another constraints felt by the goat keepers and ranked sixth.

This finding is similar to those reported by Mohan *et.al.* (2009). As a solution to this factor goat farmers suggested provision of availability of veterinary doctor in time, medicine from government veterinary hospitals free of costs and vaccinations against contagious diseases (43.89 per cent).

Conclusion

On the basis of findings the following conclusion and implications were drawn from the study. Non-availability of superior breeding buck was the major constraint expressed by goat keepers of study area. As a solution to this factor, the goat keepers suggested that there should be provision of availing improved buck on low price. As a practical solution, AICRP on Improvement of Malabari Goat, under department of Centre for Advanced Studies in Animal Genetics and Breeding which is funded by ICAR are already initiated provision of superior quality breeding buck in the study area. The concerns of goat keepers suggest increasing the number of buck provided under the project.

Lack of knowledge on commercial goat farming was another constraint expressed by goat keepers. In order to solve these goat keepers suggested provision of scientific training on commercial goat rearing free of cost. Other suggestions were to provide knowledge about scientific goat farming through mass media, using modern information and communication technology etc. As a practical solution, University Goat and Sheep Farm, Mannuthy, Thrissur with the assistance from Directorate of Entrepreneurship, Kerala Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Pookode, Wayanad, Kerala has been organizing a two day state level training programmes on commercial goat farming for the goat keepers, unemployed youth, school dropouts, farm women and entrepreneurs on the basis of payment. Time to time, scientists of KVASU organize the on and off campus training programme on scientific goat farming. The growing demand for training on goat farming also indicates the need of establishing a Regional Goat Training and Research Institute in the Northern region of Kerala.

Lack of fodder and grazing land were ranked as the important constraint in the adoption of commercial goat farming. As a solution of this factor, goat keepers suggested provision of good quality fodder and grazing land. Shrinking land holding is a serious constraint for goat rearing in Kerala. So the policy makers and officials have to consider distribution of barren, common lands and waste lands available for grazing. Goat keepers may be made aware and trained on the efficient and economic

use of available grazing land. Moreover, the practice of grow bag technology and vertical fodder cultivation must be promoted.

Lack of credit facilities was a constraint expressed by goat keepers. As a solution to this constraint, the goat keepers suggested provision of loans on low rate of interest from the nationalized banks.

Another constraint expressed was non-availability of market infrastructure for marketing goats. As a solution to this the goat keepers suggested providing goat market and transportation facilities at near places. Moreover, they also suggested establishment of Goat Farmers Producer Organisation at regional level and SHGs at village level. They also suggested of providing remunerative price of goats on selling. Formation of farmers organization and goat farmers Selp Help Groups will provide an organized platform for farmers to collectively market their product thereby eliminating the middleman's exploitation in this sector and gain more net profit share.

Non-availability of proper treatment and diagnosis of disease were the other constraint expressed. In order to solve this problem the goat keepers suggest provision of veterinary doctors in time and distribution of medicines and vaccine free of cost from veterinary hospitals.

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Received on 18.7.2016 and revised accepted on 15.9.2016