



Training Need Assessment of Feeding Management for Livestock and Poultry Farmers of Baksa District of Assam

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ABSTRACT

The present study was carried out in five blocks of Baksa district of Assam with the objective to assess the training needs of livestock and poultry farmers of the district emphasizing feeding management thematic area. Specific and relevant training needs topics were incorporated into an interview schedule in local language among 240 farmers selected randomly. The study showed that more male farmers were involved in farming activities indicating need for creating awareness and empowering women to participate in livestock farming. Majority of the farmers (52.08 %) belonged to middle age group (30-39 yr) with high school level education having small farm holding (1-2ha) were engaged in livestock and poultry farming. The training need index (TNI) of the livestock and poultry farmers was highest for preparation of feed with locally available feed material followed by fodder cultivation and toxicity of some toxic plants. The study revealed that there was need to reorient the training programs and also to increase the number of training programmes for reducing the knowledge gap and also the adoption gap among the livestock farmers of the district.

Key Words: Assessment, Farmer, Livestock, Poultry, Training needs.

INTRODUCTION

Baksa district is situated at the North Western part of lower Brahmaputra valley of Assam where agriculture is the prime source of livelihood. The district has immense potential for livestock farming. There is still deficit of meat, milk and egg production might be attributed to the fact that the farmers are rearing the non-descript local type of animals with low productivity and low input sustenance system of rearing with inadequate housing, feeding, health care etc. The livestock farmers of the district need to be enriched with new technologies through training and frontline demonstrations. Training need assessment refers to the process of identifying performance requirements and the gap between what levels of performance is required and what present level of performance is. If there is a variance between the desired and actual levels, a needs assessment explores the causes

responsible for the gap and methods for closing the gap. To make training more effective, the training needs have to be identified prior to commencement of training programmes so that the subject matter of the training could be determined on the basis of the needs of the trainees (Singh and Gill, 1982). Sharma et al (2013) reported that the major problems of the small dairy farmers were cow dung management while for semi commercial and commercial farmers mastitis was the major problem. Training in the area of feed management was the top priority for domestic and semi commercial farmers. Similarly, Sharma (2015) observed that poor knowledge about the nutritive value of feed ingredients (86.5%), high cost of raw feed ingredients (28%), shortage of skilled and committed labour (32.5%) were found to be major bottlenecks regarding adoption of cattle feed formulation technology at the dairy farm. Further, Sharma *et al* (2020) showed that

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Table 1. Profile of the respondent farmers.

Characteristic		Frequency	% of the respondents
Sex			
	Male	198	82.50
	Female	42	17.50
Age (Yr)			
	Below 30	57	23.75
	30-39	125	52.08
	40-49	38	15.83
	Above 50	20	8.33
Education level			
	No formal	43	17.92
	Primary	53	22.08
	High School	131	54.58
	Graduate	13	5.42
Category			
	Landless (No own land)	8	3.33
	Marginal (below 1 ha)	44	18.33
	Small (1-2 ha)	108	45.00
	Semi Medium (2 to 4 ha)	65	27.08
	Medium (4 to 10 ha)	15	6.25
	Large (Above 10 ha)	0	

for making the dairy farming a profitable market, farmers must follow the recommendations of the research institutes and take maximum care so that productivity as well as profitability can be sustained. In this context, the present study was undertaken to assess the training needs of the livestock and poultry farmers in Baksa district.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The thematic areas and specific and relevant training need items were prepared and collected through different review of literature and field experiences. A total of 240 farmers were selected randomly covering five blocks of the district. The collected data were classified according to sex (male and female), age group (below 30 yr, 30-39 yr, 40-49 yr and above 50 yr), education level (no formal, primary, high school and graduate) and category of farmers landless (No land), marginal

(below 1 ha), small (1-2 ha), semi medium (2 to 4 ha), medium (4 to 10 ha) and large (Above 10 ha). Amongst the different groups the highest number farmer representing category will be considered for the study. In this study, the farmer's responses were collected in a 3- point continuum scale as very important (VI), important (I) and not important (NI) by assigning scores 3, 2 and 1, respectively. The training need index (TNI) was computed with the help of following formula (Patil and Kokate, 2011).

$$\text{Training Need Index (TNI)} = \frac{\text{Total obtained score}}{\text{Maximum obtainable score}} \times 100$$

The data were analysed by descriptive statistical method such as percentages, rank order and scoring techniques.

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Table 2. Training needs index of farmers for feeding management in Baksa district.

Parameters	Feeding management					
	Type of feeding	Preparation of concentrate feed	Preparation of feed with locally available feed material	Storage of feed	Feeding during adverse condition	Fodder cultivation and toxicity of some toxic plants
Total score	396	475	564	418	460	541
Mean	1.65	1.98	2.35	1.78	1.92	2.25
TNI	55.00	65.97	78.33	58.06	63.89	75.14
Rank	6 th	3 rd	1 st	5 th	4 th	2 nd
Sex						
Male	55.97	66.12	79.05	58.87	64.15	75.55
Female	50.43	65.26	74.94	54.24	62.66	73.21
Age group (years)						
Below 30	54.65	65.22	76.35	56.94	63.73	74.18
30-39	55.65	66.80	79.4	58.85	64.55	75.82
40-49	54.15	65.95	78.12	57.55	62.87	74.96
Above 50	53.55	62.96	77.68	57.27	62.15	73.96
Education level						
No formal	54.15	64.15	76.92	55.04	62.88	73.06
Primary	54.75	65.22	77.72	57.15	63.08	74.26
High School	55.25	66.65	78.87	59.13	64.17	75.83
Graduate	56.31	68.2	80.04	60.98	67.71	78.65
Category						
Landless	50.43	61.29	73.24	52.54	60.52	72.34
Marginal	55.1	65.32	76.68	57.75	62.57	73.59
Small	57.44	67.31	80.23	59.26	66.71	76.85
Semi medium	52.15	65.4	78.11	57.41	61.61	74.22
Medium	51.95	63.17	73.19	56.11	59.11	72.87
Large	0	0	0	0	0	0

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study showed that majority of the respondents were male (82.50 %) and very less numbers female farmers (17.5%) among livestock and poultry farmers in the study area (Table 1). Similar findings were reported by Rahman *et al* (2018) among the crop producing farmers of Bangladesh. The highest number of respondent farmer belonged to 30-39 yr age group (52.08%),

high school education level (54.58%) and small farmers (45.00%).

Training Needs in Feeding Management

The data (Table 2) revealed that according to need hierarchy in feeding management, the livestock and poultry owners' assigned first rank to Preparation of feed with locally available materials by both male and female category of farmers

followed by fodder cultivation and toxicity of some toxic plants. Similarly, the respondents preferred the topic like Preparation of concentrate feed (TNI 65.97), Feeding during adverse condition (63.89), Storage of feed (58.06) and Type of feeding (55.00) of feeding management. Rani and Subhadra (2009) had assessed the training needs of dairy farmers of Trissur taluk and reported that 64.72 per cent of the respondents had needs on feeding and management of milch animal. Singh *et al* (2018) reported that the livestock owners of Banda district of Uttar Pradesh perceived the most important area for training in feeding practices of livestock was preparation of balanced ration using locally available feed items. This might be due to increased concentrated feed cost compared to locally available materials as the feed cost is one of the major factors of total expenditure. But by inclusion of locally available conventional and unconventional feed items in the ration, the feed cost can be minimised. So, this is an important topic for any training programme of livestock and poultry production.

CONCLUSION

The study showed that majority of small farmers particularly male farmers of middle age group (30-39) having high school level education were engaged in livestock and poultry farming. There is an urgent need to design regular training programs in identified thematic areas to minimise

the knowledge gap and adoption gap among the farmers. Training on feeding management should be prioritized across all sectors. Construction of house with locally available materials was the most preferred subtopic among the farmers.

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