

Research Note :

ROLE OF FARM WOMEN IN POULTRY FARMING

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Farm women play a major role in home, as a mother and house wife. They play a vital role in different farm activities too. Farm women seem to monopolise in almost all the activities of poultry farming. This may be mainly due to the additional employment of 140 days per year for the farm families which have poultry farming alone and 70 days per year to the farm families which have poultry along with other farming occupations like Agriculture, dairy, sericulture and cultivation of fruits and vegetables etc. Farm women's role in poultry farming involves, selection of poultry strains, care and management of poultry birds, feeding, collection of eggs, culling the unwanted or old birds and selling eggs in the market etc. Keeping this in view, a study was conducted with the following objectives:

- (i) To study the extent of participation of farm women in poultry farming.
- (iii) To analyse the constraints faced by the farm women in poultry farming.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Palladam block of Coimbatore district in Tamil Nadu. The respondents were selected based on their flock size i. e. f. Farm women having poultry farms with a minimum of 250 poultry birds were considered for selection. Thus, 50 farm women were selected for the present study.

Personal interview method was used for data collection with the help of, a pre-tested and well-structured interview schedule. Percentage analysis was done for the meaningful interpretation of results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Totally, 20 poultry operations were selected to

study the extent of participation of the farmwomen in poultry farming. The results are presented in the following table.

Table 1. Extent of participation of farm women in poultry farming

Sr. No.	Poultry Operations	Frequency (N=50)	Percentage
1.	Starting the poultry farm	41	82.0
2.	Planning the poultry farming operations	37	74.0
3.	Designing the poultry farm	35	70.0
4.	Selecting the strains of poultry birds	37	74.0
5.	Care and management of poultry birds at different stages	50	100
6.	Maintaining the health standard of poultry birds	50	100
7.	Feeding the poultry birds with recommended and balanced feeds	50	100
8.	Culling of unwanted and old birds	50	100
9.	Feeding the birds with recommended quantity of commercial concentrates	48	96.0
10.	Collection of eggs	50	100
11.	Removal of poultry wastes	40	80.0
12.	Contact with Animal Husbandry personnel	49	98.0
13.	Selling the eggs in the market	36	72.0
14.	Repayment of credit to the Bank	50	100
15.	Maintenance of proper Farm Records	46	92.0
16.	Vaccination for the birds	50	100
17.	Watering the birds at regular intervals	50	100
18.	Application of recommended medicines with correct dosage	50	100
19.	Transporting eggs to the market	19	38.0
20.	Maintaining hygiene and proper temperature control in the poultry sheds	50	100

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The data presented in the Table No. 1 reveal that, out of 20 poultry operations, the extent of participation was cent percent in 10 poultry operations they are; care and management of poultry birds at different stages, maintaining normal health standard of the poultry birds, feeding the birds with recommended and balanced feeds, culling of unwanted and old birds, collection of eggs, repayments of credit on regular instalment basis to the Bank, vaccination of birds, watering the birds at regular intervals, application of recommended medicines with correct dosage and maintaining proper hygiene and temperature control in the poultry sheds. It was followed by contact with Animal Husbandry personnel (98.0 percent), feeding of birds with the recommended quantity of commercial concentrates (96.0 percent) and maintenance of proper farm records regarding the schedule of application of medicines/vaccines, expenditures, feeding schedule and other farm related information.

Majority of the farm women, made their active participation in the following poultry operations; starting the poultry farm (82.0 percent), removal of poultry wastes (80.0 percent), planning different poultry farming operations (74.0 percent), designing the poultry farm (70.0 percent), selecting the strains of poultry birds (74.0 percent) and selling the eggs to the market (72.0 percent).

Constraints Faced by the Farm Women in Poultry Farming :

The farm women were asked to express the constraints faced by them while managing various poultry operations. Their response is presented in the following table 2.

The major constraints faced by the farm women in poultry farming were; low price for eggs (100 percent) and poor price for culled birds (100 percent), risk and uncertainty in poultry farming (96.0 percent) this was mainly due to sudden outbreak of contagious viral diseases. In comparison to other farm occupations like Agriculture, dairy farming and sericulture etc., the risk and uncertainty is more as perceived by the farm women. It was followed by high cost of commercial concentrates (90.0 percent). More than fifty percent of the respondents

felt that non-availability of skilled labourers (64.0 percent) during peak seasons was also a constraint in poultry farming.

Table 2. Constraints faced by farm women in poultry farming

Sr. No.	Constraints	Frequency (n=50)	Percentage
1.	Lack of financial and material resources	18	36.0
2.	Risk and uncertainty in poultry farming	48	96.0
3.	Non-availability of credit	7	14.0
4.	Difficulties in getting loan from the Bank	3	6.0
5.	Lack of knowledge about poultry farming	1	2.0
6.	Lack of technical guidance from the Experts	3	6.0
7.	Non-availability of Veterinary Health Care services	2	4.0
8.	Non-availability of quality farm inputs	-	-
9.	Lack of family support	1	2.0
10.	Lack of marketing	-	-
11.	Non-availability of skilled labourers	32	64.0
12.	Lack of transport facilities	1	2.0
13.	Low price for eggs	50	100
14.	Low price for culled birds	50	100
15.	High cost of commercial concentrates	45	90.0
16.	Damage to eggs during transportation	5	10.0

CONCLUSION

The results presented in Table No. 1 clearly shows that, farm women monopolise in almost all the poultry operations. Out of 20 operations, their participation was cent percent in 10 major poultry farming operations. The active participation by the farm women shown that, there is a vast scope and importance in poultry farming to eradicate the unemployment and under employment problems faced by the farm families involved in dryland or rainfed agriculture. Poultry farming can be one of the best alternative for the areas suffered by poor annual rainfall, lack of irrigation resources and soil fertility problems etc.

Poor price for eggs and culled birds followed by risk and uncertainty in poultry farming were the major constraints faced by the farmwomen. Almost cent percent of the respondents expressed their

total dissatisfaction with the market price of eggs. The rate of inputs like poultry medicines, feeds and vaccines are increasing every year but there is stagnation in the price of eggs. The risk and uncertainty in poultry farming was mainly due to bad weather and sudden outbreak of serious viral diseases. Necessary exposure and guidance may be given to the poultry growers regarding preventive measures like vaccinating the birds, and management aspects of poultry farming during unfavourable weather conditions etc. To avoid the labour

scarcity, family members can be utilised provided they are trained and exposed to poultry farming operations by veterinary experts.

Poultry farming was proved to be a profitable farm occupation in the rainfed areas, where, lack of irrigation, poor annual rainfall and poor soil fertility are the major problems. The issues raised by the farm women need to be taken with proper attention, this will lead to the personal satisfaction of the poultry level growers and further improvement of egg production at the national level.

REFERENCES

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