



Animal Husbandry

 drishtiias.com/printpdf/animal-husbandry

Why in News

A variety of policy concerns and the ongoing discussion over **farm laws** have fixed the spotlight on **infrastructure investments necessary** to boost productivity levels and fill critical gaps in production especially in the **Animal Husbandry**.

As the bulk of establishments in this sector is **concentrated in rural India**, the **socio-economic relevance** of this sector cannot be overstated.

Key Points

- **About:**

- Animal husbandry refers to **livestock raising and selective breeding**. It is the management and **care of animals in which the genetic qualities** and behavior of animals are further developed for profit.
- A large number of **farmers depend upon animal husbandry for their livelihood**. It supports the livelihood of **almost 55% of the rural population**.
As per the **Economic Survey-2021**, the **contribution of Livestock** in total agriculture and allied sector **Gross Value Added** (at Constant Prices) has **increased from 24.32% (2014-15) to 28.63% (2018-19)**.
- India is the **highest livestock owner of the world**.
As per the **20th Livestock Census**, the total **Livestock population is 535.78 million in the country** showing an increase of 4.6% over Livestock Census-2012.
- Animal rearing has **multidimensional potential**.
For instance, **Operation Flood**, launched in 1970, **helped dairy farmers direct their own development, increased milk production** ("a flood of milk"), augmented rural incomes and ensured reasonable prices for consumers.

- **Importance:**

- It has **contributed significantly to the empowerment of women** and has increased their income and role in society.
- It is a **major risk mitigation approach for small and marginal farmers**, particularly across the rain-fed regions of India.
- It is at the **centre of poverty alleviation programs** from equity and livelihood standpoints.
- Livestock productivity has been identified as **one of the seven sources of income growth** by the **Inter-Ministerial Committee under the government's target of doubling farmers' income by the year 2022**.

- **Challenges:**

- **Non-availability** of superior **quality breeding bulls**.
Poor quality of semen produced by many of the laboratories.
- Shortage of **fodder resources and ineffective control of animal diseases**.
- **Absence of field oriented conservation** strategy for indigenous breeds.
- **Lack of skills and quality services** to farmers for improving productivity and **improper infrastructure** to support the sector.

- **Government Initiatives to Boost this Sector:**

- **Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF):**

- **About:** This is the first major fund launched by the government that includes a diverse set of stakeholders such as **Farmer Producer Organizations (FPO)**, private dairy players, individual entrepreneurs, and non-profits within its ambit.
- **Launch:** June 2020.
- **Fund:** It has been set up with an outlay of Rs.15,000 crore.
- **Aim:** To support private investment in Dairy Processing, value addition and cattle feed infrastructure.
- **Incentives** will be given for establishing plants for export of **niche products**.

A niche product is a product targeting a specific section of a larger industry and market. Niche products are often (but not always) more expensive than more generic products.

- It will also support the establishment of **animal feed plants of varying capacities** – including setting up of **mineral mixture plants, silage making units, and animal feed testing laboratory**.
- **National Animal Disease Control Programme:**

It has been launched for **Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis** with a total outlay of Rs.13,343 crore to ensure 100% vaccination of cattle, buffalo, sheep, goat and pig population.
- **Rashtriya Gokul Mission:**
 - To develop and conserve indigenous breeds of bovine population.
 - To enhance milk production and to make it more remunerative to the farmers.
- **National Livestock Mission:**
 - Launched in the year 2014-15.
 - To ensure quantitative and qualitative improvement in livestock production systems and capacity building of all stakeholders.
- **National Artificial Insemination Programme:**
 - To suggest novel methods of bringing about impregnation in female breeds.
 - To prevent the spread of certain diseases which are genital in nature, thereby enhancing the efficiency of the breed.

Way Forward

- If investments are undertaken in a timely manner, even as the country seeks an exit out of the **pandemic**-induced economic slowdown, pressure will be reduced across the farm sector with immense benefits for the entire economy.
- Macro benefits regarding **climate change** and employment are linked to the Animal Husbandry sector and **enhanced infrastructure** can make processing units more energy-efficient and help mitigate their carbon footprint.

Source:TH