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Major Constraints as Perceived by the Tribal Sheep Farmers in Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

majority of the sheep farmers perceived lack of knowledge on right time of crossing (95.83per cent) as a most serious constraint followed by inadequate knowledge on breeding practices (90.00per cent) as the second major constraint

KEYWORDS

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Major constraints as perceived by the respondents in adoption of sheep farming practices Constraints were operationally defined as all those factors, which hinder the process of adoption of sheep farming practices.

In the course of pilot study, the investigator took the opportunity of collecting the first hand information with regard to the constraints in sheep farming through informal discussion with the farmers as well as field personnel of Animal Husbandry Department and with consultation of available literature. Accordingly, 11 constraints were identified and sub-divided into breeding, feeding, management and disease prevention and control for eliciting the responses from the farmers. The constraints perceived by the respondents in the study area were measured by introducing a scheduled list of all the items. The responses of each constraint were placed on a two point continuum viz., agree and disagree. Based on farmers responses frequency and percentages were calculated. Higher the percentage the more severe the constraints as perceived by the sheep farmers.

RESULTS

MAJOR CONSTRAINTS AS PERCEIVED BY THE SHEEP FARMERS IN THE ADOPTION OF SHEEP FARMING PRACTICES

Breeding practices

The findings of Table 29 inferred that majority of the sheep farmers perceived lack of knowledge on right time of crossing (95.83per cent) as a most serious constraint followed by inadequate knowledge on breeding practices (90.00per cent) as the second major constraint .

Major constraints as perceived by the sheep farmers in sheep farming practices

S. No	Constraints	f	%	Rank
A	**BREEDING PRACTICES**			
1	Lack of knowledge on the right time of crossing	115	95.83	I
2	Inadequate knowledge in breeding practices	108	90.00	II
B	**FEEDING PRACTICES**			
1	Lack of awareness on fodder cultivation	111	92.50	II
2	High cost of concentrate feed	109	90.83	III
3	Inadequate knowledge in preparing balanced feed	120	100.00	I
C	**MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**			
1	Negligence in care of pregnant animals	108	90.00	II
2	Unhygienic maintenance of farm animals	112	93.33	I
3	Lack of knowledge on weaning	55	45.83	III
D	**DISEASE PREVENTION**			
1	Vaccination only during the out breaks	89	74.16	I
2	Inadequate supply of veterinary medicines	17	14.16	III
3	High cost of veterinary medicine	82	68.33	II

Feeding practices

The constraints perceived by the respondents in the area of feeding practices revealed that all the sheep farmers in the sample area i.e., 100 per cent expressed lack of knowledge in preparing balanced feed as the most serious constraint a great majority (92.5per cent) who expressed that lack of awareness on fodder cultivation as the second severe constraint and thirdly (90.83per cent) was high cost of concentrate feed.

Management practices

The respondents identified three major constraints in the area of management. They were unhygienic maintenance of farm animals (93.33per cent), negligence in care of pregnant animals (90per cent) and lack of knowledge on weaning of newborn lambs (45.83per cent) in descending order of their severity, respectively.

Disease prevention and control

Table 29 depicted that three –fourth of the respected all the respondents (74.16per cent) perceived problem of vaccination under taken only during the outbreak as major constraint followed by high cost of veterinary medicines (68.33per cent) as second and inadequate supply of veterinary medicines at veterinary hospitals (14.16per cent) as third severe constraint reportedly.

DISCUSSION

MAJOR CONSTRAINTS AS PERCEIVED BY THE SHEEP FARMERS IN THE ADOPTION OF SHEEP FARMING PRACTICES

Breeding constraints

Majority (95.83per cent) of the sheep farmers considered lack of knowledge on the right time of crossing as the major constraint in breeding of sheep while 90 per cent of the sheep farmers perceived that lack of knowledge on breeding practices as a serious constraint. It is evident from the results that there is a definite agreement that lack of adequate knowledge on sheep breeding is a constraint in sheep farmers of tribal areas.

The above study was in agreement with the findings of Rajanna et al (2011), Suresh et al. (2008), Sagar and Biswas (2008) and Raju (2003).

Feeding constraints

The constraints as perceived by the respondents in the area of feeding practices included lack of knowledge in preparing balanced feed as the most serious constraint followed by lack of awareness on fodder cultivation (92.5per cent), and high cost of concentrate feed (90.83per cent). which ultimately affect the sheep farming practices

The above study was in agreement with the findings of Rajanna et al (2011), Suresh et al (2008), Sagar and Biswas (2008), Kumaravelu (2007), Kuldeepporwal et al (2006), Selva Kumar (2003) and Raju (2003).

Management constraints

The three major constraints in the area of management are unhygienic maintenance of farm animals (93.33per cent), negligence in care of pregnant animals (90per cent) and lack of knowledge on weaning of newborn lambs (45.83per cent) in descending order of their severity respectively. Extensive method of rearing may be a reason for not providing appropriate care to the newborn, pregnant and also general hygiene. Sheep farming in tribal areas is carried out in a nomadic way so there is an inherent constraint in these areas.

The above study was in agreement with the findings of Rajanna et al (2011), Suresh et al (2008), Khatik et al (2001), Sivanarayana et al (2000) and Raju (2003).

Disease prevention and control - Constraints

In the present study, vaccination undertaken only during the outbreaks was the most serious constraint in disease control ranked first followed by high cost of veterinary medicines and inadequate supply of veterinary medicines at veterinary hospitals as perceived by the respondents in the study area.

The above study was in agreement with the findings of Rajanna et al (2011), Suresh et al (2008), Sagar and Biswas (2008), Dinesh Kumar et al (2006) , Kuldeepporwal et al (2006), Sravana Kumar (2003), Selvam and Safiullah (2002), Khatik et al (2001) and Sharma and Riyazuddin (1993).

All these constraints denoted that the farmers have realized the importance of controlling sheep diseases and they would like to know more about them. These problems could be tackled by organizing educational, mass media programmes on important sheep diseases, conducting vaccination campaigns and supplying the veterinary medicines on subsidized rates if not free of cost to the sheep owners so as to mitigate the above constraints. This opportunity could be very well exploited propitiously by the extension agencies in boosting the adoption of sheep farming practices in the field. This could be done by organizing extension educational programmes such as farm and home visit, film shows, demonstration and campaigns on sheep farming practices so as to bring about awareness and knowledge of sheep farming practices.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Efforts must be made to educate the sheep farmers so as to improve their knowledge and skills through the establishment of small viable sheep units in the selected pockets.
2. All the necessary technical inputs, supply and services like vaccination of the animals, deworming, medicines, supply of fodder seeds and slips in adequate quantities and breeding rams must be made available to the farmers effectively, so as to motivate them to increase meat and wool production.
3. Educational activities like organization of mass media programmes like deworming, vaccination and sheep health camps by the extension agencies will go a long way in the dissemination of scientific knowledge to the sheep farmers.
4. Government waste Banjar lands in the villages should be distributed to the landless sheep farmers' community for encouraging fodder cultivation.
5. Emphasis should be given for developing common property resources in a sustainable manner so that the farmers can overcome issues of fodder scarcity.
6. Educational activities should be further reinforced to increase the knowledge level of sheep farmers on improved sheep farming practices.
7. Subsidy facilities should be further extended to the members on soft terms for purchase of sheep.
8. Establishment of model sheep farms in the tribal areas and providing on farm training to the young sheep farmers may help in increased adoption of modern sheep husbandry practices.

REFERENCES

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