

Haryana Cows- A Success Story

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Shifting of preference from Crossbred cattle & Buffaloes to Haryana Cattle: An impact of implementation of HLDB Haryana PS project

Rohtak, located in the state of Haryana, boasts to have an excellent germplasm of Murrah buffalo and Haryana cattle. Breed improvement programmes on Murrah buffalo and Haryana cattle are being carried out under National Dairy Plan (NDP I) in this region by Haryana Livestock Development Board (HLDB), Haryana under technical guidance of National Dairy Development Board (NDDB).

Khidwali village of Rohtak is inhabited by farmers who mainly depend on livestock and agriculture for their livelihood. With the advent of cross breeding and popularization of Murrah breed, a large number of farmers of this village had shifted from Haryana cattle rearing. By the beginning of this decade, many farmers were trying to revert to Haryana cattle rearing due to the susceptibility of crossbred cattle to various diseases in the harsh environment conditions and high input requirement of the Murrah buffalo, but they were facing difficulties in getting good Haryana germplasm.

Realizing the facts, HLDB with technical guidance of NDDB initiated the project for “Production of High Genetic Merit Haryana bulls through Pedigree Selection” from March 2014 under NDP. Khidwali was one among the chosen centres, where the project was implemented. Through powerful extension activities including village awareness camps and infertility camps, the field staff of the project were able to turn many struggling farmers of this village like Shri Rajesh s/o Satya Narayan into successful farm-entrepreneurs. Shri Rajesh who had his masters in history elaborates the journey through many initial failures, with much fervor, as he finally reaches to his success in Haryana cattle rearing. He briefs the advantages for Haryana cows in just two points: low input and high demand. Previously, he had three Murrah buffaloes costing 1-1.5 lakhs rupees each and a crossbred HF priced almost 60

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thousand rupees, and now with the same money, he has 12 Haryana cows with average per animal productivity a bit lower but the overall milk production has obviously increased. Additionally, the lesser input requirement in terms of feed, fodder, and most importantly, water, especially in the resource stressed region, is an added advantage. They can thrive well even on crop residues, which he was burning earlier. This is how he perceives the low input factor. The preference for “Desi” cow milk and more tolerance in the adverse environment is creating greater demand for Haryana cows.



Among the 12 Haryana cows he owns, three have their calves on foot and five are pregnant; all utilizing the semen supplied by the PS project. In the herd, he has cows producing up to 15 litres of milk per day and none of them is yielding less than 10 litres of milk per day. At present, most of his villagers are approaching him for good desi cows, and he has started business of buying desi cows and selling them after impregnating with Haryana semen. He says that the ear tagged animals fetch more returns on sale because of the confidence among the farmers that the cows and calves from the PS project are better ones. He also acknowledges the support provided by the project officials of HLDB in giving holistic support in his venture.

He was quick in realizing the swing in favour of desi cow milk and products. Now, he sells desi cow ghee at the rate of Rs 1100/Kg (almost 3 times the market rates). The consumers are even ready to pay the money two or three months in advance to get the desi cow ghee, but he is finding it difficult to match his supply in accordance to the demand.

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He intends to expand the farm by including more Haryana cows. The Haryana cows have made him a successful farm-entrepreneur after many failures in livestock agriculture, and a hero among his fellow villagers. He now leads a happy life with his wife Promila and two children Pooja and Aji, and will be moving to his new two storied home from his kutcha house, soon. He seems happier as his brothers have also joined him, with their desi cow farms, in his neighborhood.