

### Indigenous breeds are always profitable than cross breeds

**L**ivestock is a very important component for profitable farming as most of the agricultural by-products can be used to feed them converting them into manure immediately. Other economical gains are in the form of wool, milk, egg, meat and skin. In India, very good draught animals like bullocks and he buffaloes can be freely obtained for cultivation. Agriculture is not growing a crop only, it is an integrated system of tree cropping, animal husbandry, crop cultivation, and other allied activities. Particularly, in dry farming system, the farming family is engaged only for 80 to 85 days. The rest of the year i.e., for about 280 days the farmers waste their time in visiting friends and relatives spending money. If farmers don't have animals on the farm, they have to sell away their hay and waste most of their by-products and lose a lot of bio-mass. It is the most important thing to retain as much biomass as possible on the farm to increase soil carbon in the farm land.

In Indian agriculture system, cattle were an integral part and were treated as members of the family. People held them in their living houses and cared for them like any other family member. There were more than 70 breeds in our country, 3 or 4 strains in each ecological zone right from the smallest "Malenadu gidda" (Western Ghats dwarf) to the giant strains like Tharparkar, Devani, Ongole, suitable for the local weather and soils. In the plains, we had Hallikar, Amruthamahal, Krishna Valley, Baragur, Punganur, Kangaayam and Vechur in Kerala. They were adapted and able to withstand heat, cold and rain and fed on locally available vegetation. They have a big hump and a vast piece of skin hanging under the neck and a lot of sweat glands to discharge excessive heat from their bodies. They have a long tail with long hair that could move upto 360°, so that they can chase away flies and mosquitoes biting them. They have developed immunity against many diseases like foot and mouth disease as they have very small foot with a very narrow gap in between their hoofs, compared to the cross breed cattle which have a very big and wide gap between their hooves.

Since the local breed cattle are used to our tropical weather and locally available fodder, their maintenance is cheaper. But farmers were misguided about higher milk yields and profits. Particularly, during the past 10 years, dairy farmers are loosing Rs. 5/- on each litre of milk they sell, since the cost of each input like fodder, concentrates, medication and the cost of milch cows have virtually doubled. Actually milk is not necessarily a human food. In India, we were confined to using buttermilk and ghee only. Unfortunately, the British medical science taught us to depend on animal proteins. At the same time when Scandinavian countries, particularly Holland and Denmark had hills of skimmed milk and fat oil stocks

unsold, they got in to India to sell them. Their bulls that were slaughtered for beef were sold at a premium price for cross breeding Indian cows. That is how they were imposed on innocent rural farmers inducing them to produce milk for urbanities

for their luxurious life styles of consuming coffee, tea, curd, butter, kova, cheese, milkshakes, chocolates and paneer etc., and various sweets made out of milk and its products. In the name of nutrition they consume them and suffer from obesity. Most of the times when I think of nutritional sciences, I feel that they are very well manipulated to provide a good business for medical industries in the name of health services.

The other face of the tragedy with crossbreed cows is that the male calves have to be sold as soon as they are born, because they cannot be used as bullocks for cultivation and transport. They do not have hump to hold the yoke to pull the plough and cart. They are unable to work in the hot sun of our country, hence no farmer wants to bring them up. Usually any animal gives birth to 50% of male and 50% female calves. Hence there is a huge loss by selling male calves of cross breed cows. This is how dairy farmers incur huge losses by selling away their male calves to butchers. Where as in the case of any indigenous male calves they bring them up and use as bullocks for cultivation and the excess are sold between Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 50,000 and make a huge profit.

Cow is not just a machine to produce milk with concentrated enzymes and medication. It should provide cowdung, urine, for fertilizing the land to produce healthy food and provide beneficial bullocks for cultivation. These days cow urine is found to be very useful in curing many diseases including cancer. The research station on cattle at Nagpur has come out with many beneficial products like soap, ointment for colds, phenyl, distilled cow urine as medicine, mosquito repellents and so on. Hence, it is very important and urgent to save indigenous cattle from extinction for the welfare of the country. During 1990 when U S S R collapsed and many Western countries imposed banning supplies to Cuba, particularly chemical fertilisers, the Cuban government banned cow slaughtering to come out of fertiliser scarcity and very soon they produced enough compost. The whole world should learn a lesson from a non Hindu community country to ban cow slaughtering to save soil and its productivity.

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