

Introduction:

The present study was aimed at understanding the socio-economic conditions and adoption of sheep management practices in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh, India as it serves as a benchmark for evolving meaningful extension strategies and other policy interventions.

Sheep farming is one of the popular and good sources of income for small, marginal, landless farmers and also for labours. All over India, sheep farming is popular even in Andhra Pradesh it is been widely spread over, and there are less number originated breeds in Andhra Pradesh but the number of sheep farms is numerously high. The sheep have reared the fluvial deltas, plains, mountains ranges, and sandy lands.

There are over 65 million sheep in India. A large proportion of mutton production occurs in rural and hilly areas often characterized by small-holding size and limited resources. Sheep rearing is one of the main economic activities in these areas and is considered a potential tool for rural development and improving food security. The profitability of sheep farmers in Andhra Pradesh is very high as many people eat sheep meat.

Scope and national economy

The importance of sheep farming to the national economy is sponsored through meat, fiber, and also through wool.

The 20th Livestock Census of India estimates the total number of sheep in the country at 74.26 million in 2019. The total estimated and on average population of sheep in Andhra Pradesh is 17.8 million.

The important breeds in Andhra Pradesh

1. Nellore sheep breed
2. Deccan sheep bread

“Breeding ram king of flock”

Criteria for selecting shepherd	Criteria for selecting ram
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Breeding ram and ewes ratio in the flock is 20 to 25 2. Shepherds with 40 to 50 size of flock are selected for providing breeding ram(Generally shepherds will have one breeding ram up to the flock size of 50, for which one breeding ram is not sufficient. So, we have provided additional breeding ram) 3. Poorest of the poor and women are given priority. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Breeding rams which are suitable for local area, Physical appearance like Strong, healthy, Disease free and majestic appearance rams. 2. Rams between 1.5 to 2 years Rams which are healthy , disease free rams purchased at sandies 3. Rams with high breeding efficiency Rams with 40 to 50 Kg body weight

Approach

In the initial stage of implantation, awareness was created on inbreeding depression and the importance of breeding rams with expert advisors by Dr Hassan Saheb and Dr Gopal Reddy. The list of shepherds was collected, and prioritized according to the need and financial condition of the flock with at least 50 sheep in a Flocks is selected.

The major problem is inbreeding depression because of this the resistance to withstand is very low hence leading to a high rate of mortality is noticed to address this major issue only one solution to introduce breeding ram into the flock”

Physical Inspection

The first step in this process is the physical evaluation. The ram should be closely inspected to ensure his eyes and teeth are in adequate health. Feet and leg soundness is hugely important, a ram that will be breeding lots of ewes in a larger paddock will need to be very mobile.

Any long hooves or foot rot should be trimmed and treated. Larger issues such as arthritis or injuries from the year should also be noted. Generally, these types of injuries are nothing serious, however, an injured leg may require the acquisition of a replacement ram. If the ram has quality feet, legs, eyes, and teeth the next phases can be evaluated.

Impact

In view of the reduced mortality and morbidity on account of regular vaccination, providing treatments for seasonal disease, and de-worming of goats, the goat rearers are now geared up economic status. Regular training and knowledge dissemination through communication materials and Animal health camps have led to the adoption of improved practices of rearing and management. The project has successfully impacted the lives of shepherds and their families and has driven them towards a sustainable livelihood practice.



Residing in the small village of Burjugadda in Valmikipuram his flock (70 sheep) he has been rearing since 14 years when he began nobody in his village knew about the cause of inbreeding depression and vaccinating or deworming their goat Many goats died and rearers lost their income. Since 2.5 years proudly pursue goat rearing as an aspirational occupation.



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What worked well



- ✓ Awareness and training programs are conducted to the shepherds about the importance of breeding rams in the development of flocks. Shepherds have developed an attitude toward selecting rams from other flocks instead of from their own flocks.
- ✓ changes observed after introducing ram into the flock
 - Lambing rate is improved by 10%
 - Healthy lambs with more body weight are borne
 - Body weight gain is more in lambs by 10%
 - 5% Less lamb mortality noticed
 - Faster development of flock
- ✓ Precautions need to take before and after introducing the ram
 - Healthy and disease-free rams with good breed characters are purchased
 - After purchase rams are maintained separately for observing general conditions, health, and diseases and introduced into the flock
- ✓ Behavioural Changes in the community
 - Shepherds started taking precautionary measures in controlling seasonal diseases
 - Habituated to regular vaccination, deworming for better development
 - Shepherds have adapted the scientific procedures suggested by the veterinarian

Economic

Intended outcomes in the process of achieving community accepted the breeding rams as and there is ripple effect which was seen in within the communities, villages sheperds purchased by their own and also



Selection of breeding rams