

Recommendations of 46th Dairy Industry Conference **(Theme: Dairying – Sufficiency to Efficiency)**

The 46th Dairy Industry Conference was held from 8 to 10 February 2018 at Kochi, Kerala. The major recommendations which emerged are listed below:

Growth Sustainability in Dairying:

In order to sustain the growth in milk production, it is essential to offer remunerative price for milk. Further to enhance quality and efficiency, it is essential to create infrastructure for cold chain involving bulk milk cooling, efficient transportation and logistics at the village level. Additional budgetary allocations should be made for modernization of processing facilities. It will be desirable to diversify the existing product-mix to production of high value products having long shelf life to improve economic efficiencies.

The newly created infrastructure facilities may be integrated with other agro processing activities including fruits and vegetable for the holistic growth of the rural economy.

Policy Intervention for Growth and Efficiency:

It is necessary to bring about the convergence of Government policies to ensure equal opportunities for private, cooperative and public sector undertakings for robust growth of dairying. The conference recommended the creation of a nodal financial agency to address the problem of liquidity arising from the accumulation of huge stocks of milk powder and smoothen the cash flow. GST on ghee should be reduced to 5% from the existing rate of 12% to increase its sale and realize value of milk for payment to milk producers.

Milk Production for Doubling Farmers' Income:

In view of the shrinking natural resources, “animal population-driven dairying” needs to be discouraged and “technology-driven dairying” should be encouraged to ensure higher productivity and production.

A need for faster multiplication of superior germplasm by adopting multiple ovulation, embryo transfer and sexed semen techniques is emphasized. Efforts should be made to develop skilled personnel in this area of specialization.

Farmers should be encouraged to adopt safe milk production practices and to receive higher milk prices based on the microbial quality apart from the chemical composition.

Dairy industry may adopt Block Chain Technology for storing data related to livestock and to enable the financial institutions, insurance and developmental agencies to use the data to facilitate financial support without the requirement of an intermediary. The conference suggested the creation of a system for online sale and auction of livestock. Since this system would involve the sensitive social ramification, this initiative may be taken up by the Government agencies.

Vaccination process for the control of mastitis should be enlarged to cover all states of India to reduce the loss in milk production and to maintain robust health of animals.

It is also suggested to strengthen fodder seed supply linkage with the stakeholders and to promote agro eco-system resilience to counter climate changes.

Healthy Life-style Foods:

The country must take up funding of research on Life-style and healthy foods, conduct safety and toxicological studies on new generation additives and to devise appropriate mechanism for technology transfer from developers to end users.

Efforts should be made to develop appropriate trained manpower for managing the National and International regulatory requirements in view of the changing regulatory environment across the world.

Finance and Marketing:

The farmers need to be paid remunerative price for raw milk taking into consideration the cost of milk production as advocated for other agricultural commodities. The prices need to be reviewed from time to time keeping in view the dynamics of the input costs. The farmers need to be supported with adequate supply of inputs like balanced feed, processed paddy and wheat straws, veterinary care and breeding support and other similar inputs at minimal costs to encourage dairy development.

The farmers need to be supported with credit facilities for expanding their dairy business at lower interest rate similar to those made available for other agricultural activities.

The machineries used in dairy operations should be exempted from taxes to encourage technology-driven dairy development.

Quality and New generation additives:

The regulators should insist on the basic analysis of chemical and microbiological quality of milk received at the dairy plants. Milk processing units should ensure a well-established protocol for cleaning and sanitization of equipment and adopt methods to check the residual chemicals at the end of cleaning operations.

The processing plants need to employ professionally qualified and trained-personnel for plant operations and quality assurance. The governments and dairy plants must support research to develop kits for rapid detection of antibiotics, pesticides and Aflatoxin M1 and also to control measures to prevent adulteration.

Skilled and Human Resource Development:

Skill building should be initiated by combining vocational and entrepreneurship training programmes to facilitate the support to small dairy enterprises by matching supply to current demand of workers with skill and competencies.

Dairy industry should partake in short-term trainings as well as recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) programmes under National Schemes like PMKVY, DDUGKY, National Livestock Mission, etc.

The conference recommends the constitution of an independent dairy sector skill council and integration of skill development activities of different institutions/organizations to enable development of skilled manpower with both entrepreneurial and employable skills for

sustainable livelihood. Expansion of skill development activities for large and wide coverage can be achieved through open and distance learning and e-learning modes by adopting Public Private Partnership model for developing employable skills at the grass-root level.

Animal Health and Sustainability:

Suitable farm level policies need to be developed by the governments for ensuring good animal health keeping in mind the socio-economic dynamics and existing competitive resource advantages.

Concerted efforts in linking the milk producers to the organized supply-chain need further strengthening to ensure relatively stable milk prices that consumer can afford.

The income to the farmers from the milk sale needs to be exempted from income tax as is applicable to agricultural commodity.

Dairying should be treated at par with agricultural activities and the SOPS that the Central and State Governments offer especially on matters of taxation, subsidies and credits must be extended to dairying as well.

Newer Issues for Next Generation Dairying:

Information technology should be adopted by all service providers and stakeholders in bovine productivity enhancement programmes across the country, all service providing organizations in the country should be brought together to adopt and operate through a national level information network.

All the animals (bovines) should be uniquely identified with ear tags having a 12 digit number as per international standards to track the movements and all other activities and to generate relevant data. Information Network for Animal Productivity and Health (INAPH) should be the common system to be adopted by all the stakeholders to create data, carry out analysis and generate reports so that compiled data and required analysis would be available at national level which would further facilitate planning process with high accuracy in future.

Efforts should be made for the scaling up of the small scale model of dairy farming with 2-3 animals to increase their herd strength up to 40-50 animals for better socio-economic status of milk producers and all support should be extended to facilitate this growth.