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References


Constraints in Duck Farming Practices in Northern Districts of Tamil Nadu


Farmers Training Centre, Enathur, Kanchipuram-631 561, Tamil Nadu

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Abstract

Indigenous ducks play a vital role in sustainable livelihood of the duck farmers. Two popular varieties of indigenous ducks viz., Sanyasi and Keeri are being reared traditionally generation after generation by the duck farmers of Tamil Nadu, under nomadic system with little or nil inputs. The constraints faced by duck farmers in northern districts of Tamil Nadu, viz., Kancheepuram, Thiruvarur, Thiruvannamalai, Vellore and Villupuram were studied. Major constraints in duck farming were inadequate finance, non-availability of good quality ducklings and marketing of eggs and spent ducks locally. The other constraints faced by the duck farmers were cost of feed ingredient, duckling mortality, marketing and technical knowhow.

Key words: Constraints, duck farming, Tamil Nadu.

Ducks are reared traditionally by poor farmers for their livelihood. Farmers, who cannot afford to keep large animals because of the big investment required, can easily maintain a few chicken or ducks within their homestead premises (Das et al., 2008).

Indigenous ducks (Sanyasi and Keeri) are still preferred by the farmers and proved to be a sustainable livelihood preposition for several poor rural farmers. The duck farmers

1Corresponding author: Email : veeramani@tanuvas.org.in
have gained their farming knowledge through their ancestors. Traditional duck farming is popular in the districts viz. Kancheepuram, Tiruvallur, Tiruvannamalai, Vellore and Villupuram comprising north eastern agro-climatic zone of Tamil Nadu. The literacy rate among the duck farmers was very poor and nearly 50 per cent of the duck farmers were illiterate. The survey work was conducted to study the major constraints faced by the farmers in duck farming practices.

Materials and Methods

The respondents were interviewed through a set of standard questions which was derived in consultation with experts. The Northern districts of Tamil Nadu comprise 40 per cent of duck population. Hence this area is selected for the study. The area of study comprised Uthiramerur taluk in Kancheepuram district, Orathur taluk in Tiruvallur district, Arani and Vandalur taluks in Tiruvannamalai district, Nemili taluk in Vellore district and Villupuram and Tindivanam taluks in Villupuram district. Five blocks were selected under stratified random sampling procedure and all the duck farmers (72 Nos.) were enumerated. Information was collected by personal interview method using a standard pretested questionnaire. Garret’s ranking technique was adopted for analysis. The duck farmers were asked to rank the factors that were limiting duck rearing. The orders of importance thus obtained from the respondents were converted into ranks by using the following formula:

$$\text{Per cent position} = \frac{100 \times (R_i - 0.50)}{N_j}$$

Where,

- $R_i$ = Rank given to the $i^{th}$ item by the $j^{th}$ individual.
- $N_j$ = Number of item ranked by $j^{th}$ individual.

The per cent positions of each rank were converted into scores by referring the table given by Garret and Woodworth (1969). Then for each constraint, the scores of individual duck farmer were added together and divided by the total number of respondents for whom the scores were added and mean scores thus calculated were arranged in descending order and ranks were given. By this method, the most limiting factors were identified in duck farming practices.

Results and Discussion

The major constraints faced by the duck farmers were classified and Garrets’ ranking was calculated and presented in the Table I. The first and foremost constraint encountered by the duck farmers was the inadequate finance followed by non-availability of good quality chicks and shrinkage of land for foraging etc. Gajendran and Karthickeyan (2009) opined the same. Besides pesticide usage in agriculture causes reduction in egg production, problem in market-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>Nature of constraint</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>69.20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Non-availability of good quality chicks</td>
<td>65.74</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>No bank loan</td>
<td>64.45</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Shrinkage of land for foraging</td>
<td>63.03</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Restriction of land owners to allow the ducks for foraging in the field</td>
<td>59.14</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Non-availability of cheap feed ingredient</td>
<td>45.75</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Water source</td>
<td>42.26</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Mortality / Disease</td>
<td>38.15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Marketing problem</td>
<td>31.05</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lack of technical advice</td>
<td>19.00</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ing of eggs, very low domestic consumption of egg and meat and reduced profit margin were the other constraints. Gopinathan et al. (2009) and Sivakumar et al. (2009) observed similar trends. Alam et al. (2012) observed the first constraint as lower price of duck eggs and meat in Bangladesh followed by higher price of feed, lack of training, outbreak of disease, inadequate veterinary services, irregular supply of duckling, lack of sufficient capital, price fluctuation of duck egg, problem of theft and environment pollution.

The other constraints faced by the duck farmers were non-availability of cheap feed ingredient, mortality during brooding period, marketing and lack of technical advice, non-availability of good quality ducklings, lack of sufficient finance to purchase ducklings leading to increased dependency on the egg vendors / traders for finance. The farmers’ inadequate awareness to consult veterinarians for vaccination and treatment of ducks, poor literacy and restriction by the agricultural field owners to allow the ducks for foraging in their fields, even though the soil fertility improves, which resulted in migration to faraway places for foraging were the other probable reasons for the poor performance of ducks.

Summary
The findings of the study are based on expressed opinions of the duck farmers. Hence the objectivity would be limited to the extent of the duck farmers’ honest opinions. In spite of these limitations, this study would provide a better insight in preparing future plan of action for duck farmers’ development. The well-targeted extension on technical know-how for duck farming will help remove production constraints and improve productivity. The extension work on consumer awareness on the benefits of duck egg and meat is the need of the hour for uplifting the poor duck farmers.

References


