

An Overview and Constraints of Pig Farming in Assam - A Review

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Abstract

Constraints or problems are always there in any kind of work, and piggery in Assam is not at all exceptional to it. Piggery on large scale on commercial line is a new concept in Assam and it is yet to gather momentum by overcoming all kinds of problems. The problems associated with pig farming and the prospects of pig farming in Assam have been discussed in this article.

Keywords: Pig Farming in Assam; Constraints; Pig Population; Pork Production

Introduction

Agriculture is the prime source of livelihood in the socioeconomically weaker section of the society and it provides livelihood security to more than 75% of the rural population in Assam. Majority of pigs are reared in traditional small scale alimentation system which acts as a source of income, employment generation and livelihood security primly to the tribal population in the state. As per 19th 10 livestock census (GOI), India's pig population is 10.29 million, where Northeast Region (NER) holds 38.42% of the total pig population in the country. Assam alone comprises of 1.636 million pigs which is 15.89% of the total pig population in India, where local indigenous pigs accounts for 1.022 million and exotic/ crossbred pigs were 0.614 million. Pig population in Assam shares 8.57% of the total livestock population in the state. Share of meat from pig industry is 39% of the total meat produced in the state i.e. share of meat production from pig is 17481 tonnes as against total meat production of 44813 tonnes in Assam during 2015-16 (Integrated sample survey report 2015-16). There is decreasing trend in the indigenous pig population in Assam from the previous census (Livestock census, GOI, 2007) while it is seen that the population of exotic/crossbred pigs are increased by 8.81 %, which might be due to low profitable margin in indigenous pigs as a commercial venture. Reason for which farmers are showing more interest to rear crossbred and graded pigs.

Pig industry in Assam

| Category | 2003 | 2007 | 2012 | % Change (2007-2012) |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------------------|
| Exotic/ Crossbred | | | | |
| Male | 234.00 | 287.10 | 334.20 | |
| Female | 257.00 | 272.50 | 279.47 | |
| Total Exotic/ crossbred | 491.00 | 559.60 | 613.67 | +8.81 |
| Indigenous/local | | | | |
| Male | 514.00 | 746.16 | 528.91 | |
| Female | 538.00 | 694.67 | 493.44 | |
| Total indigenous | 1052.00 | 1440.83 | 1022.35 | -40.93 |
| Total pigs | 1543.00 | 2000.43 | 1636.02 | -22.27 |

(Source: Livestock census report, 2003, 2007, 2012 GOI)
 Table 1: Exotic/Crossbred and Indigenous Pig Population (In Thousands) of Assam of Last Three Livestock Census

| | Pork | Total meat production from livestock | % Share |
|-----------|-------|--------------------------------------|---------|
| 2007-08 | 11.74 | 29.30 | 40.07 |
| 2008-09 | 12.01 | 30.69 | 39.13 |
| 2009-2010 | 13.25 | 31.59 | 41.94 |
| 2010-11 | 14.91 | 33.83 | 44.07 |
| 2011-2012 | 14.70 | 34.19 | 42.99 |
| 2012-2013 | 14.61 | 36.34 | 39.89 |
| 2013-2014 | 15.96 | 38.34 | 41.63 |
| 2014-2015 | 16.53 | 42.60 | 38.80 |
| 2015-2016 | 17.48 | 44.81 | 39.01 |

(Source: Integrated Sample Survey Report 2015-16)

Table 2: Meat Production Trend of Assam (In Thousand Tonnes) from 2007-2016

As per the last three consecutive censuses (Livestock census report, 2003, 2007, 2012 GOI), data reveals that there is a sharp decline i.e. -22.27% in the total pig population in the state from 2007-2012 (Table 1). It is also seen that the major share of meat in the state is coming from the pork i.e. from 2007-2016 on an average 40.84% of meat in the state is shared by the pig industry. In any case, it is fascinating to take note of that, contrasted with the populace pattern of pigs in Assam, the creation of pork amid the period between 2007-2008 and 2012-2013 demonstrated a consistent increment. The decrease in the pig population with an increase in pork production can only be explained by the fact that exotic crossbreds became very popular throughout the state during the period of high yield. Along these lines, there is a need of an hour for the advancement of small holder pig rearers in the state to elevate their financial status through preparing in scientific pig production and appropriate showcasing plans (Table 1) (Table 2).

Major Challenges in the Pig Production in Assam

Livestock sector is an integral part in the agricultural growth of the state. To increase the farmer's income would require trading to different challenges. Major constraints impeding the development of the piggery sector are as follows:

Availability of Feeds and Fodders: A good quality ration determines a good production and reproductive performances of the pig. But, there is a large gap between demand and supply of feed and crops in Assam, particularly when it comes to pig. As there is no compound feed manufacturer in whole of the Northeastern region, the feeds are procured from the rest of the states, hence price of the commercial feed is more than a poor farmer can afford. So, efficient utilization of nutrient rich locally available fodders like Tapioca chips, tapioca flour, rubber seedcake, thippi or tapioca waste, tobacco seed cake, mango seed kernel, molasses, fallow, hatchery waste etc. agro-industrial by-products can aid to better production performance.

Production Performance of the Local Pigs in Assam: Assam local pigs are very poor in performance in terms of body weight and prolificacy, which makes them unprofitable in commercial venture. Although it can be achieved by, improving the indigenous pigs through scientific selection of the breeding stock.

Financial Problems: Fund has the key task to carry out for improvement of piggery. A pig homestead ought to dependably be outfitted with vital types of equipment, nutritious sustenance and medicines. A pig rarer must almost certainly bear the labor cost what's more; he/she should almost certainly make vital interest in foundation. Henceforth, the rearers need a decent measure of value generation which will yield acceptable salary. In Assam lion's share of the populace live hand to mouth and don't have adequate cash for interest in other monetary exercises like pig cultivating. In this way, the greater part of the imminent readers needs to rely upon either institutional organizations or private offices for required account. Farmers can take benefit of different funding agencies like NABARD and different government schemes.

Lack of Veterinary Services: Lack of available veterinary support in terms of infrastructure (for hospitals and diagnostic labs) and technical manpower are insufficient. Improper vaccination and deworming leads to massive economical loss. Measure to prevent and control these diseases must be strengthened. The shortage of veterinarian and para-veterinary personnel is a constraint that requires attention.

Lack of Extension Services: Arranging extension services make the farmers familiar with new scientific techniques in livestock rearing. It also helps in awareness of the farmers relating to the different diseases, prevention, precautions etc. to be taken during different time period.

Technological Intervention: Different technologies associated with enhancing the productive and reproductive performances in other livestock are well documented, but the pig industry is neglected/not focused in this regard.

Marketing Facilities: Pork marketing in Assam is mainly in the hands of rural tribal people which is fully un-organized. People in this region slaughter the live pigs in the traditional method, which is not conducive for wholesome meat production. In reality, the production, processing and marketing of pork is running in a chaotic way. Many pork selling centers have no permanent structure and run occasionally, or once in a week in open space.

Technical Problem: The lack of skilled or trained personnel at grass root level. The farmers are not aware of high yielding breeds and use of sophisticated technologies that advent in the recent times.

Conclusion

Despite having enormous constrains in piggery sector in this region of the country, there lies huge scope and potentialities in entrepreneurship development for socio-economic upliftment and sustainability of the farmers specially the educated youths. The youths can become self-reliant by taking up piggery as a startup venture by taking economic assistance from banks and availing the benefits of government subsidies. Concern authorities should motivate and also give support to the farmer community and provide emphasis on health care and treatment facilities.

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