Research Note :

KNOWLEDGE OF THE SECTARIES OF MILK CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES REGARDING ANIMAL HUSBANDRY PRACTICES

Karamjit Sharma[1] & G. S. Saini[2]

After achieving green revolution, Punjab has made good efforts to bring white revolution in the state. Consequently substantial investment both in public and private sector had been made for dairy development. In Punjab, a network of milk producers co-operative societies are operating under a three tier system, State Milk Co-operative Federation at the apex, Milk Union at the district level and Primary Milk Co-operative Societies at the village level have been constituted. The secretary of the society is selected amongst its members. The secretaries of Milk Co-operative Societies have very good rapport with dairy farmers at village level. They are very helpful in solving the day to day problems faced by dairy farmers. Thus, the secretary has a key role to play in this society, being close the dairy farmers of the area. Their knowledge about different practices of dairy farming is helpful to them in discharging their duties of performing the functions of the society and meeting the dairy technology needs of the people. How far are they able to perform their role needs further probing. Consequently, a study to measure the knowledge of the secretaries of the milk co-operative societies related to selected animal husbandry practices was undertaken.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Ludhiana district of Punjab. There were 625 milk co-operative societies attached to milk plant and five chilling centres. Out of these, fifty milk co-operative societies were selected in proportion to total number of societies attached to the milk plant and chilling centres located in the district. All the secretaries of these societies were taken as respondents of this study. A knowledge test was developed to measure the knowledge level of the secretaries. This test was designed with the help of various experts related to each selected areas i.e. fat testing, artificial insemination and animal health care. Initially this test comprised of bettery of 73 knowledge items. The raw statements were administered to a non-sampled group of fifteen secretaries. These were quantified by giving the score of one to correct answer and zero to wrong answer. The total score of the secretaries were obtained by adding their score for all the statements.

The difficulty index for each of the item was calculated. The items with difficulty index values ranging from 25 to 80 were retained in final test.

The discrimination power index was also calculated. It refers to the ability of the knowledge item to differentiate the well-informed secretary from the poorly informed ones. The items with discrimination power index more than 20 were included in the final test. The final knowledge test comprised 47 items.

The reliability of the knowledge test was measured by using split half method. The coefficient of reliability was calculated to be 0.9736.

The validity of research instrument was calculated by taking square root of the reliability coefficient, which came out to be 0.9713. The content validity of the instrument was insured by taking the views of the experts.

The data were collected with the help of structured interview schedule personally by the investigator. The frequency and percentage were calculated for the interpretation of data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The response of the respondents were taken and the average knowledge score was worked out for each respondent for all selected three areas. It was found that the average knowledge score of the respondents varied from 0.29 to 0.92. The frequency of average knowledge score in all the selected three areas has been presented in table 1.

1. Associate Prof. Ext. Edu., K.V.K., Ferozepur, 2. Prof. of Deptt. of Ext. Edu., PAU, Ludhiana-141004, Punjab.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to their knowledge about 'artificial insemination' 'fat testing' and 'animal health care'

Sr. No.	Category	Average counted score	Artificial insemination		Fat testing		Animal health		Overall	
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Low	0.29-0.50	9	18.00	7	14.00	19	38.00	8	16.00
2	Medium	0.50-0.71	25	50.00	22	44.00	29	58.00	39	78.00
3	High	0.71-0.92	16	32.00	21	42.00	2	4.00	3	6.00
	Total		**50**	**100.00**	**50**	**100.00**	**50**	**100.00**	**50**	**100.00**

In the area of artificial insemination, half of the respondents had medium knowledge score (0.50 to 0.71) whereas 18 per cent and 32 per cent of the respondents had showed low (0.29 to 0.50) and high (0.71 to 0.92) knowledge score respectively.

In the area of 'fat testing' 44.00 per cent and 42.00 per cent of respondents fell in the 'medium' and 'high' knowledge score categories respectively. On scrutiny of the responses related to the area of 'animal health care', it was found that only 4 per cent respondents had high knowledge score whereas 58.00 and 38.00 per cent of the respondents showed 'medium' and 'low' knowledge scores respectively.

In an overall analysis of knowledge test of the respondents, it was found that the maximum number of respondents (78.00) had 'medium' knowledge about all the three selected areas and only 16 per cent and 6 per cent of respondents had 'low' and 'high' knowledge score respectively.

It can be concluded from these findings (table 1) that knowledge level of the respondents was deficient in the areas of animal health care and artificial insemination. Fat testing is their routine work and it has been found that almost half of them had high

level of knowledge in this area. Accordingly, it is suggested that training programmes may be planned to update the knowledge of the secretaries of the Milk Cooperative Societies in the areas of animal health care and artificial insemination.

CONCLUSION

The Secretaries of the Milk Cooperative Societies require more training in the areas of animal health care and artificial insemination. Accordingly, training programmes may be planned to update the knowledge of the secretaries in these areas.

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