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PROBLEMS OF POULTRY FARMERS AS PERCEIVED BY THE FARMERS, EXTENSION PERSONNEL AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT IN TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted at the Namakkal block in Tamil Nadu for investigating the problems of poultry farmers. The problems identified were, unawareness of decision making, housing, disinfection, medicine purchase, feed processing, chick medication and culling technologies.

INTRODUCTION

Poultry, which was a backyard venture in our country till 1970, has become the main occupation of the farmers and over the past three decades, it has grown phenomenally. Thus poultry became the major activity. Though the overall bird population has gone up the poultry industry is struggling. During the past two to three years, many small farmers with 1000-5000 birds have started winding up (Mathialagan, 1999) due to various technological needs and problems (extension needs). Gangadharappa *et al.*, (1996) observed that poultry farming technical know-how is not freely available. Hence this investigation was carried out with objective to study problems of poultry farmers with reference to all the poultry farming activities as perceived by the farmers, extension personnel and technology developers.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was conducted at the Namakkal Block of Namakkal district in Tamil Nadu as it has the maximum number of poultry farmers. Based on the number of poultry farmers in each panchayat, the panchayats were grouped into three categories (more number of farms, medium number of farms and less number of farms) of which ten per cent of poultry farmers were chosen for the sample by applying the principle of sample proportion to size from each category, the required number of poultry farmers were chosen using the principle of systematic sampling. Respondents from all the extension agencies formed the sample for the extension personnel. In that way 30 extension personnel were selected. All the scientists related to poultry, working in Veterinary College and Research Institute, Namakkal were purposively selected and formed the sample size of 30 for the technology developers.

The farmers, extension personnel and technology developers were asked to indicate the problems faced by the farmers in poultry farming due to unawareness of the technology, otherwise called extension needs and were asked to rank these problems as they perceived. Rank Based Quotient (RBQ) was calculated using RBQ formula (Sabarathnam 1988).

$$RBQ = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} (fi)(n+1-i)}{Nn} \times 100$$

Where fi is the frequency of farmers for the ith rank of the technological need, N the number of farmers and n the number of ranks.

Table 1. Problems of Poultry Farmers as Perceived by the Farmers, Extension Personnel and Technology Developers in Tamil Nadu

S. No. Problems	Block Magnitudes Value			
	Farmer n=42	Extension Personnel n=30	Technology Developers n=30	Average
I. Decision Making				
1. Decision making technologies not reached	2931.58	6971.32	8908.42	6270.44
2. Misguidance by traders	3381.50	2526.18	—	2953.84
3. No model farms to see and decide	—	—	902.21	902.21
II. Housing Management				
1. Technology not reached	1252.67	1111.78	—	1182.23
2. Bank not ready to finance the farmers having old Deep litter sheds with 30 feet interval	125.03	125.03	—	125.03
III. Disinfection and Sanitation				
1. Technology not reached	3852.74	7251.99	5328.00	5477.58
2. Improper dosage of water sanitizer	—	2861.73	—	2861.73
3. Improper cleaning of feeder and waterer - lack of knowledge	—	—	1815.07	1815.07
IV. Input Purchase				
1. Misguidance and Cheating by traders in medicine purchase	100.29	—	5323.26	5423.55
2. Purchasing incorrect medicine (misguidance by neighbours and non honouring of Vets advice	—	3438.43	1184.24	2311.29
V. Feeds and Feeding				
1. Feed processing technology not reached	—	—	1025.21	1035.21
2. Body weight based feeding technology not reached	—	306.66	—	306.66
3. Not aware of the significance of water analysis	—	—	228.04	228.04
VI. Brooder Management				
1. Proper Medication technology not reached	817.43	2315.43	1776.00	1636.29
2. Brooder Management technology not reached	—	184.23	—	184.23
VII. General Management				
1. Culling technology not reached	1529.73	3601.33	4419.87	3183.64
2. Floor space in deep litter technology not reached	—	1554.00	2257.65	1905.83
3. Light management technology not reached	—	522.21	718.21	620.59

Contd..

VIII. Disease Prevention and Control					
1.	Immunity assessing-technology not reached	—	416.29	1515.52	965.91
2.	Not at all vaccinating	—	573.06	—	573.06
3.	Improper dosage of vaccination and disposal of empty vials-technology nor reached	—	383.97	509.59	446.78
4.	Titer tested vaccine demand and titer not assessed due to lack of knowledge	67.01	287.00	904.57	419.53
5.	Disease prevention technology not reached	126.93	—	—	126.93

Each problem was quantified by calculating magnitude values (M.V.), and average magnitude value. The number of birds (NB) in the study area, average production loss percentage (APLP) were multiplied by the appropriate RBQ (M.V.= NB x APLP x RBQ) to get the block magnitude value.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A) Farmers Perception: Table-1 reveals that the following technologies did not reached the farmers and they become the problems viz., decision making (2931.58), poultry housing (1252.67), disinfection (3852.74), chick medication (817.43), and culling of non layers (1529.73). Because of unawareness of the housing technology result in defective housing construction and management which have indirect effect on production and productivity of the birds. Further due to improper disinfection there was a severe disease out breaks which, result in heavy morbidity and mortality of birds. By maintaining unproductive birds without culling due to lack of know how and ultimately to heavy losses.

B) Extension Personnel: It could be observed from Table-1 that the farmers and extension personnel felt that decision making technologies were not reached the poultry farmers (average magnitude value 6270.44). While the extension personnel gave top priority to the decision making problems the farmers gave only less priority. The housing management was felt as a need by the farmers (1252.67) and extension personnel (1111.78). The unawareness of the disinfection (7251.99), culling (3601.33), proper medication (2315.43) and immunity assessing (416.29) technologies were reported by both the extension personnel. Improper medication either over dozing or under dozing or irregular administration of medicine result in, excess expenditure drug toxicity, drug resistance etc.

C) Technology Developers: Technology developers gave top priority to decision making technological need (8908.42). While the technology developers (5323.26) perceived that misguidance and cheating by traders in medicine purchase as the most important need the farmers gave only least priority, but this was not at all felt by the extension personnel. The different perception of the scientist, extension personnel and farmers indicates that there is lack of linkage in the three important systems. The unawareness of the disinfection (5328.00), culling (4419.87), floor space in deep litter (2257.65), proper medication (1776.00) and immunity assessing (1515.52) technologies were reported by the

technology developers. The rest of the problems reported by the respondents were not appear to be the concern of majority as their magnitude value is very less.

CONCLUSION

Based on the problems of poultry farmers, suitable extension programme should be formulated and implemented to carry the poultry farming technologies to the farmers. Moreover problems solving approach should be followed rather than transfer of technology approach for winning the confidence of rural poultry farmers. The training strategies can be formulated and course syllabus can be redesigned to impart knowledge and skill to the poultry farmers by KVKs, FTCs, Universities and State Animal Husbandry Department. Emphasis must be given viz., decision making technologies, housing management technologies, disinfecion and sanitation, culling of non layers, medicine purchase, medication etc. The linkage mechanism has to be developed to increase the extent of linkage among the three systems. Efforts should be geared up towards 'demand driven' or farmer centered extension.

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