

Harnessing IT to help farmers reduce input costs and improve milk yield

Special Correspondent

HOSKOTE: How much cattle feed and green grass should Ambika Rajashekhar, a dairy farmer at Doddanallurahalli in Hoskote taluk, give her two cows? The answer lies in the laptop of M. Kanthamma (42), a dairy farmer.

The Information for Animal Production and Health (INAPH) software installed in the laptop of Ms. Kanthamma, a Local Resource Person (LRP), will calculate the exact need depending on the breed, age, weight, milk yield and other details of the cows. This scientific calculation, called Ration Balancing Programme, translates to reduced input costs and better quality milk yield.

The Doddanallurahalli Milk Cooperative Society is covered under the National Dairy Plan I (2012- 2017) of the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB). This



Members of the Doddanallurahalli Milk Cooperative Society at Hoskote who are covered under the National Dairy Plan Phase I.

has meant harnessing information technology to address the problems of dairy farmers at the grassroots level.

Ms. Kanthamma says proudly that people call her “cow doctor”. She has so far

covered 83 cows in her village under the programme and the input costs have gone down by about Rs. 5 per litre. Feed contributes to about 70 per cent of the total cost of milk production and reducing the

cost of feeding makes a big difference. The net gain by the farmer is about Rs. 68 per animal per day.

There are 137 LRPs operating in Bangalore Milk Union Limited (Bamul) alone, who undergo a 15-day training to use the software.

In the neighbouring village of Ganagalu, it is the Data Processing Milk Collection Unit (DPMCU) installed by NDDB in 2013 that has made a big difference to the 137 members of the milk society. The unit, which measures the quality of milk in a transparent manner and detects any adulteration, ensures that the farmer gets a fair price.

Anjanappa (70), a dairy farmer, says that the new system is a blessing and he now earns over Rs. 23 per litre. Dairy farming is the lifeline in this dry region, adds Jayamma Bacchanna. NDDB's project has not only provided a fair, transparent and quality-based procurement system, but also ensured regular payments once every fortnight.

Extension officer Sriram K. says that installing of DPMCU at Ganagalu has increased procurement from 443 litres to 472 litres per day. The percentage of milk fat also increased from 3.8 to 4.1. The total outlay for Karnataka is Rs. 141.46 crore under NDP Phase I, covering Bangalore, Kolar, Mysore, Raichur, Bellary, Hassan, Mandya, Dakshina Kannada, Dharwad and Shimoga.

NDP to cover 4,642 villages in State by 2017

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HOSKOTE: Karnataka is one of the 14 States covered under National Dairy Plan (NDP) Phase I, which is expected to achieve an additional target of milk procurement of 471 lakh litres per day by 2017, said T. Nanda Kumar, Chairman, National Dairy

Development Board.

Speaking to presspersons here on Thursday, Mr. Kumar said that NDP hopes to cover 4,642 villages by 2017 in the Karnataka, which is the second highest milk-producing State in the country.

The plan, he said, is aimed at “creating more

faith in the system” among the farming community by making the procurement process more transparent and helping the farmers improve production. The focus is on increasing productivity in the existing animals by increasing genetic material and feeding systems, he said.