

CHAPTER-I

**INTRODUCTION : IMPORTANCE
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Importance of Dairy Industry :

Before independence agricultural development in general and the cultivation of the livestock in particular was totally neglected. The sale and purchase of milk was not considered as a source of income in rural areas. The rearing of livestock and production of milk was subsistence oriented. But with the introduction of Agro-industries in general and the dairy industry in particular brought about a tremendous change in the attitude of the people, towards the rearing of stocks and the production of milk. Today with the help of high yielding varieties of buffaloes and cows milk is being produced on a very large scale and sold out through the dairies. This has changed the economy of the rural people, i.e. subsistence economy is giving rise to capitalistic type of economy.

Man, Land and Milk Production :

An estimated 70% of Indian human population depends on the land. This population has naturally tended to concentrate where conditions are most favourable to man - in the riverine areas, of the north for example, and the lush coastal regions in the south. With this human population

comes also the bovine population; every small farmer who can do so keeps a pair of bullocks and every rural household which can afford it keeps one or two milch animals.

This means that, because the human population has tended to concentrate in areas where the environment is most favourable to man, the bovine population is also most concentrated in these areas. But these are the very areas where the land-man ratio is the smallest.

Despite the apparent over-crowding on the land, the efficiency of milk production often appears to be highest in these areas. Where there is balanced mixed farming, milk production per animal is usually higher and availability of milk per capita greater.

Most milk producers are small farmers and milk production is mainly a matter of bye-product conversion.

Milk production in India can be summarised as follows : millions of farmers crowded into small holdings; little land for pasture or forage production reliance on highly seasonal rains; often causing severe dry season, shortage of feed-stuffs, milch animals largely self selected by their ability to produce some milk and males for draught at very low levels of nutrition; the everincreasing numbers

on the land tending to increase the need for draught animals (and therefore, for their mothers.)¹

Cattle Development (Animal Husbandry) :

Cattle occupy an important position in the economy of the country. In view of their valuable contribution to the rural economy a high priority has been given for their development in the national plan.

India is the home of some of the best breed of cows and milch buffaloes in the world, including the wellknown tropical milch breeds, like Gir cattle, Murrah and Surati buffaloes. Some fine draft cattle breeds are also our prize possession. These include Khilari, Hallikar, Harayana, Ongole, Kankrei cattle breeds. The approach adopted in the cattle development is to upgrade the productivity of indigeneous breeds by selective breedings. However, in the case of non-descript cattle population, which constitute the major portion cross-breeding with recognised temperate dairy breeds such as Jersey and Holstein Friesian has been adopted to combine the productivity of the exotic breeds with the adaptability of the indigeneous variety.

Important projects for cattle development are 'Operation Flood and Intensive Cattle Development Projects'. The other activities include establishment of nucleus

breeding herds, maintenance of herd books for nationally important breeds of cattle and programmes for artificial insemination. An integrated-approach has been developed to give simultaneous attention to improved breeding, augmentation of feed and fodder resources, effective health cover, extension service and marketing facilities.²

As a result of technological development in the field of dairy industry a number of people have taken to dairy farming in rural India these days. They are not only rearing the traditional breed of the cattle readily available in the vicinity but also the cross breed cattle which are not readily available in the neighbourhood. People are taking to dairy farming on a large scale mainly because milk and the milk products are fetching attractive price in the market. Commercialization of milk and milk products has brought about a tremendous change in the economic conditions of the rural people.

In the light of this tremendous development in the dairy farming throughout Maharashtra, an attempt has been made in this study to find out the extent of dairy farming in the village Herle, Taluka Hatkanangale, Diststrict Kolhapur, and to examine the impact of dairy farming on the overall life of the village masses.

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