

CHAPTER - 5

Problems And Difficulties of Co-operative Dairy
Societies And Their Members.

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Problems and Difficulties

Introduction :

In the foregoing chapters a discussion about the development of co-operative dairy societies has been undertaken. It is clear that these societies have made satisfactory progress and have been instrumental in effecting economic and social changes in the Baramati Taluka. Although a fair amount of success has come their way, the co-operative societies could confer a better boon on the members if they were not faced with a number of problems.

The need for transportation felt by the dairy business has been dealt with earlier. The transport system must be time saving, economical, safe and sound. For that there should be proper roads and vehicles. The situation in the Baramati taluka is not promising. The main problems faced by the co-operative dairy societies while successfully and profitably discharging their duties are,

(i) Lack of proper roads :-

Proper roads are required for milk and general transportation. The better type of vehicles can be used, if there are proper roads.

There are five main roads for milk transportation in Baramati Taluka. Out of these five, four are macadamised roads and one is a 'Katcha' road which is in the process of being metalised. Twenty-two percent villages in the taluka lie by

the road and the remaining seventy eight percent are far from these roads. The co-operative societies, in these villages have to use the 'Katcha' roads, resulting in delay. In the rainy season many a time these roads become unusable and in the summer too these roads become useless. Because of the 'Katcha' roads, milk spills from cans and there is a loss to the co-operative dairy societies.

(ii) No proper vehicles :-

It is not possible to use proper vehicles on 'Katcha' roads. Milk is transported mainly by tempo, jeep-trolley, tractor-trolley and trucks. The nearest societies are using bullock-carts;. These transports are time-consuming, besides leading to wastage of milk through avoidable spillage.

(iii) Transport rates are old :

The government of Maharashtra subsidises transport costs of the co-operative dairy societies. The rates are settled according to distance travelled. The rates vary from 1 paise per litre-kilometre to 15 paise per litre-kilometre. However these rates are fairly old and need an upward revision.

(iv) Low capacity of the chilling centre :-

The daily milk handling capacity of the chilling centre is only 30,000 litres, where as the actual need is for nearly one lakh litres per day. This situation creates a number of problems.

Owing to this low capacity the process of accepting milk and its dispatch for delivery must be a continuous and more importantly a simultaneous process. In order that such processes

are not hampered, it becomes absolutely imperative that the tankers are always present and on time. If for any reason the tankers are late, the personnel at the chilling centres have no other recourse than to stop accepting more milk. In such instances the milk gets bad and has to be thrown away resulting in a loss to the societies.

(v) Early collection of milk :

Owing to low capacity of the chilling centre, the acceptance of milk has to begin quite early in the mornings. Such collection at the chilling centre begins at 6.00 a.m., and if milk has to be sent there the co-operative societies will have to begin, collecting milk from their members much earlier, probably around 4.00 a.m. Then only can they reach the chilling centre on time. This causes quite a bit of inconvenience to the collector as well as the producers. This has a negative bearing on milk production. These societies are collecting milk from their members in a hurry. It is not possible to test the milk from all the members, so at times, low grade milk may be inadvertently accepted.

(vi) Short-collection of milk at the chilling centre :

Since the 'in and outgo' processes at the chilling centre is fairly rapid, and since milk from the societies is carried in cans, the personnel at the chilling centre in their hurry to employ the cans in the operation, do not take adequate care to see that all the milk in the cans has been poured out. This entails loss for the co-operatives. Such reported 'short-collections' vary between 100 and 200 mlg, per can per day.

(vii) Discrepancy in the weight of milk :-

A number of members from various societies have complained that the work of accepting milk is carried at such speed that the members cannot verify ~~that~~ the results, particularly that of the weight. This results in loss for some and gain for others. In every lot there will be a difference of 2 to 3 litres in the weightage.

(viii) No discipline at the chilling centre :-

There is no discipline at the chilling centre. Vehicles are parked anywhere and haphazardly in the compound of the chilling centre. Number of people crowd at the place of collection of milk. There should be a proper method for accepting milk at the chilling centre. Some societies send one vehicle to the chilling centre ahead of others for securing a "beach-head" and the remaining milk is brought later by other vehicles. This type of practice is detrimental to the interests of particularly those societies which are at a fairly long distance from the chilling centre, or for those who have only one vehicle. This procedure necessitates unduly long waiting.

(ix) No proper control :

To maintain discipline at the chilling centre the officers should exercise proper control. This, however, is not the case at the chilling centre at Baramati. People crowd at the place where milk is accepted. Such overcrowding takes place in the laboratory also, where the milk is tested for quality. This is due to the anxiety felt by the societies. However, the chemist

is not supposed to associate a milk sample with a particular society. In the absence of a proper procedure for testing and analysing of milk, some societies have recourse to malpractices.

(x) No proper milk testing :-

Payment for milk is made according to the quality of milk supplied, which makes it absolutely necessary to take a sample for testing. It is tested after the milk has already been accepted. The milk sample is supposed to undergo, Fat, S.N.F., lactometer tests, and adulteration tests. Yet, the societies continue to complain against no tests or improper tests which can account for possible losses.

(xi) Nepotism at the centre :-

Nepotism is said to be rampant at the centre. It may be at different stages but all societies cannot participate in this practice. Some societies gain unduly due to this practice creating a 'class' of unequals amongst the co-operative dairy societies. This practice is an object negation of the principles of co-operation and co-operative gain for all.

A number of visits were paid to the chilling centre. It was found that a number of people were meeting the officer and were requesting upgradation of the quality of milk in the report submitted by them, meaning, falsification of records. Such requests are reported to be entertained for a consideration. Adulterated milk has to be seized and no payments for such milk can be made. There is a separate column in the register for such information. But it has been found that a number of alterations are made in this column. So some

societies are providing poor qualities of milk and receiving payments for good quality milk.

(xii) Encouragement for adulteration :-

Lack of proper control encourages further adulteration. Whenever it is found that there is adulteration of the milk i.e. adding of salt, sugar, starch, jaggery etc. criminal suit should be preferred against these societies. But this practice has not been followed at the centre. In fact, adulteration of the milk appears to be carried out in the open, at the centre by the society personnel. This is an 'open secret' and has been voiced even in the local news papers with no visible change or effect. This is a symbol of loose control by the society and the centre.

(xiii) Government Policy :-

Government is not adopting any firm policy in this regard. From 1984, the Pune district has adopted 'Anand Pattern' which is known as Operation Flood. But in the Anand Pattern there is one society in a village. But in Baramati taluka at the end of 1984-85, only 24 villages were having one co-operative society in each village. There were 139 co-operative societies in 67 villages altogether, resulting in unnecessary duplication and weakening of some societies. But the government, despite this fact, continues to give permissions to start new societies. When the government is not working according to the rules or policies laid down by it then, needless to say, others will not care to work according to the rules. This policy of the government creates cut-throat competition amongst the co-operative societies.

(xiv) Increase in Prices of cattle feed and fodder.

Profitability of business depends on the cost of production. In the dairy business profitability depends upon the prices of cattle feed and fodder, and price received for milk supplied.

In reality, the prices of cattle feed and fodder have increased in the last decade whereas the price of milk has not increased to that extent. From 1973-74 to 1984-85 the price of cattle feed and fodder has increased by more than 350 percent, but price of milk paid by the government has increased by 133 percent only in the same period. So this business has not remained convenient from the point of landless or small farmers.

These problems or difficulties can be sought to be remedied through the following measures.

All co-operative dairy societies should unite and then seek redressal measures from the government. If there is unity amongst the co-operative societies, all these problems will be solved. But there should be common interest. All societies are coming to supply the milk at the chilling centre, thereby overcrowding the place. If certain co-operative societies collect their milk at a certain fixed place and then transport it to the chilling centre by one vehicle, there will not be over crowding of people or vehicles at the chilling centre. It will not create conditions for corruption.