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Extension Tools for Increasing Backyard Poultry Production in District Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand

Anil Saini

Assistant Professor, Animal Science, KVK, Pithoragarh, GBPUA&T, Pantnagar, Uttarakhand, India

ABSTRACT: The present investigation is about the use of extension tools as trainings, On Farm trials and front line demonstrations conducted at farmer's field on backyard poultry and at KVK by Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) and Animal Husbandry Department, Pithoragarh. The KVK demonstrated the improved strains of backyard poultry in selected farmer's field to scale up the practice in the locality by proving their potential over the local strains at micro farming situation. Over the years improved strains demonstrated were Kuroiler CARI breed and Chabro. KVK demonstrated backyard poultry in 15 villages. The adoption percentage was 59.56 to 74.70. The use of extension tools such as training and demonstration for widespread use of poultry production with other agricultural resources effectively uplifts the normal economic conditions of the farmers of Uttarakhand.

KEYWORDS: Farmers trainings, Front line demonstrations, KVK, Poultry trials, Uttarakhand

I. INTRODUCTION

Pithoragarh is the fourth largest district of Kumaon hills, bordering Tibet (China) and Nepal. The town of Pithoragarh is located at the height of 1,645 m and is nestled in a beautiful valley. The district is vast and is more than 200 km from one end to the other. The farming situation is different in lower hills, mid-hills, and high altitude hills. The total poultry population of Pithoragarh was 26876 birds (Census 2012)[3]. The primary source of income of the farmers is from cereals, vegetables, and milk and its products. Use of poultry production is less preferred for several reasons, such as poor knowledge of poultry production, lack of availability of improved backyard poultry chicks. Usually, farmers use locally available chicks in the surrounding villages. Some are purchased from vendors, usually selling males of layer type of birds and non-descript type of birds that are very low in weight and egg production. There is one Government Hatchery of Department of AH in Bin, Pithoragarh supplying chicks for backyard poultry to Pithoragarh and its surrounding districts for various government schemes, so being overburdened lesser opportunity to get chicks to the farmers of the district. There is much demand for poultry meat and eggs in the district, and at present, this demand is met by the daily truckloads from the poultry farms of the foothills of kumaon hills who charge more price due to transport costs. So to encourage poultry farming as a source of livelihood and reasonable profit in less investment, the present intervention was planned by KVK to enhance poultry farming as a source of income for the district's farmers.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Since the inception of Krishi Vigyan Kendra in 2004 at Gaina, Aicholi, Pithoragarh (UK), the field visits to adopted and other villages revealed the reasons for discouragement among the farmers to undertake poultry farming as a source of income. The primary reasons were the poor knowledge of poultry production and its management, learning & availability of high-yielding poultry chicks, and no connection with poultry enterprises of the market. Due to these facts, the poultry training programmes, On-farm trials and front line demonstrations were planned at villages in the

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action plan of the KVK. One to two days of training in the villages and seven days of training at KVK were done in the years. The resource persons/veterinary officers of the AH department, Pithoragarh, were invited to provide detailed training. Exposure visits of trainees to Government Hatchery and hands-on practice at the KVK demonstration unit were done during training. Besides this, meeting with chicks and feed dealers was done in the training program.

Table: 1. The number of training programs on-farm trials and frontline demonstrations organized by KVK and the AH department.

Sr.	Year	No. of training	No. of OFT	No. of FLD	No of Participants	
					Male	Female
1	2010	13	02	15	120	157
2	2011	12	02	15	108	145
3	2012	13	02	15	111	142
4	2013	14	02	15	125	172
5	2014	14	02	15	103	176
6	2015	12	02	15	98	149
7	2016	13	02	15	105	148

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The training on poultry productions and its management of the farmers yielded in growing trends among farmers as a source of readily available cash source as well good quality of protein for their families at a far lower cost. Also, socially, it is accepted/adopted by the farmers as the poultry meat is easily available to families of the same village within the village, so no need to go far away poultry meat shops in the cities. The improved backyard poultry is the colored bird, and it is more liked by the people over broilers and hence fetch more price than broiler.

Table 2: Adoption of backyard poultry by the farmers

Sr.	Year	No of Participants		No. of farmers adopted poultry	Adoption %
		Male	Female		
1	2010	120	157	165	59.56
2	2011	108	145	172	67.98
3	2012	111	142	172	69.16
4	2013	125	172	211	71.04
5	2014	103	176	201	72.04
6	2015	98	149	197	72.87.
7	2016	105	148	16	74.70

With the knowledge gained and encouragement from the benefits of backyard poultry units, more people adopted this. The market is developed where farmers can purchase improved backyard poultry chicks from private hatcheries like Venky's Kuroiler/FFG and from Govt hatchery on prebookings. On average, the farmer with a small unit of 20 chicks earns between 6000-8000 in three months. To reduce the chick raising cost/ cost of feed, the chicks were fed kitchen waste & allowed for scavenging in the daytime and poultry feed once a day. Katoch et al. (2010)[1]

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reported that in Himachal Pradesh traditional poultry system was prevailing in the state since commercial-scale poultry was not successful due to local conditions of the hills. Thakur et al. (2016)[2] reported that capacity building of farmers is an effective tool to augment poultry production, and training should be organized at regular intervals to sustain the enterprise. Banja et al (2017)[4] reported that the performance of all improved strains were higher than the indigenous strains in terms of growth and egg production.

Training and demonstrations are prerequisites of the newer farmers for successfully advancing poultry production in rural areas. With the help of small-scale backyard poultry production, the farmers quickly opt for large-scale commercial farming after gaining sound technical knowledge from the higher institutes in long-term training with hands-on practice. So the KVK and AH department has created skilled farmers in more and more villages for backyard poultry production and generating more income at less cost with other agricultural activities of livelihood. So it is believed that such extension activities should be expanded to vaster areas so that the district's farmers are benefited in a short time and also market of poultry might have increased manifolds.

V. CONCLUSION

The use of extension tools such as training and demonstration for widespread use of poultry production with other agricultural resources effectively uplifts the normal economic conditions of the farmers of Uttarakhand. Such efforts by Krishi Vigyan Kendra and the AH department of the district are very useful to increase the ready income of the farmers.

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