

**LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION PRACTICES
FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL
LIVELIHOODS: A PARTICIPATORY
ACTION RESEARCH IN RAINFED
AREAS OF AP**

*DBV Ramana,
A Vijay Kumar,
Sreenath Dixit and
B Venkateswarlu**

ABSTRACT

Livestock, more particularly small ruminants (sheep and goat) and modestly large ruminants (cattle and buffaloes) happen to be an important means of livelihood of the farmers in rainfed areas of Andhra Pradesh State. Poor genetic potential of the existing breeds, insufficient and poor quality feed and fodder resources, high incidence of contagious diseases and inadequate knowledge on appropriate management of livestock were identified as the major constraints behind low productivity of different species of livestock. The National Agricultural Innovation Project (NAIP) introduced a Participatory Action Research approach for enhancing livestock production in order to provide sustainable livelihoods to poor livestock keepers for better and stable income. Animal health camps and prophylactic vaccination campaigns were employed to create awareness among farmers regarding the adoption of better livestock production practices. Deworming, supplementation with mineral mixture, chopping of crop-residues primarily of sorghum stover, backyard production of Azolla, etc. were integrated into the prevailing rearing practices. Small ruminant production was promoted on an enterprise mode as livelihood option for the landless. Backyard poultry with improved breeds was employed for empowerment of rural women. Through farmer-farmer interaction, many farmers realised the economic benefits of innovative livestock practices and came forward to adopt them. The project interventions had a significant impact not only on the farming community but also on the landless and rural women. The project experiences suggest that capacity building of local youth as service providers and livestock keepers and strengthening linkages with animal husbandry department would help in promoting the innovative livestock production practices and providing sustainable rural livelihoods.

* Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture, Santoshnagar, Hyderabad-500 059, India
damarla97@gmail.com

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