

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Studies on feeding and housing management with economic performance of gaolao strain of Nagpuri Buffalo

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ABSTRACT - The present investigation was made to assess the feeding management and housing management and to evaluate the economical performance of gaolao strain of Nagpur buffalo breed located in Wardha district. From the observations, it was clearly established that majority of buffalo owners from all the tahsils allowed their buffaloes to graze in forest area throughout the day *i.e.* practically for 10 hours. With regards to housing practices, it was noticed that none of the buffalo owners provided ideal constructed houses to their buffaloes inspite of the fact that, they were maintaining a sizeable herd. The AFC of gaolao strain was found comparable with other strains of Nagpuri breeds, but was higher than other buffalo breed. On an average, milk and dry days were 263.74 and 146.55 days, respectively. This means the gaolao strains was regular breeder in comparison to other buffalo breeds like Murrah, Mehsana and Surti, the trend therefore indicated that gaolao strain was medium milk producing buffalo with shorter lactation length and dry period.

KEY WORDS - Feeding, Housing, Lactation length, Lactation milk, Dry period, Milk yield

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INTRODUCTION.....

Indian dairy farming has unique characters where animal husbandry is an integral part of crop husbandry. The country has 98 and 222 million buffalo and cattle, enjoying the privilege of possessing 57 per cent of world's buffalo and 16 per cent cattle population. Country ranks the first in respect of cattle and buffalo population in the world. Today India ranks the first in the world in milk production, which rose from 17 MT in 1950-51 to around 100 MT by 2006-07. As a result the per capita availability of milk was 230 g/day in 2005-06 and is expected to reach 245 g per day in 2006-07 (Anonymous, 2006).

Buffalo a "Asian animal" plays an important role in farmers economical life, being an integral part of the farming system. Buffalo is economically important in every region. Its milk and meat are rich in nutrients, especially higher fat content and lower cholesterol value. The animal has a ability to digest more crude fibre and higher efficiency of utilization of

metabolic energy for milk production than that of high yielding cows (Roy Choudhary, 1988).

Nagpuri breed has its native area in Maharashtra. However it is believed by the people that although the terms Nagpuri, Ellichpuri, gaolao, Shahi, Pandharpuri and Marathwadi are synonymous, but the population do indicate distinct differences in their body confirmation and physical characteristics. Maharashtra state possesses 6.14 million buffaloes which is 6.26 per cent of the buffalo population of India. The Vidarbha region today possessed 0.79 millions buffaloes which comes to 12.70 per cent of the Maharashtra state buffalo population. The buffalo milk production is to the tune of 0.38 million tonnes (Census, 2004 and District Social Survey Report, 2005-06).

The gaolao or Gauli type of buffaloes predominantly spread all over Wardha district. However, gaolao buffaloes are found in large number in Western part of Wardha district