

A STUDY ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF BROILER FARMERS IN THE VAVUNIYA DISTRICT

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Abstract

Broiler production has become popular industry for the small holders that have great contribution to the economy in Sri Lanka. A study was conducted to assess the socio-economic functions of broiler farmers in the Vavuniya district. This study covered 150 farmers of 15 villages, which located in three veterinary ranges in the study area. Data were gathered by using a structured questionnaire. The broiler meat production plays a significant role in the major source of animal protein in the diet of people in the district, because it satisfies the needs of the local population for consumption of animal protein for a healthy diet. Many broiler farmers (92%) in the study area were at the subsistence level and they raise broiler production to support their family income only, a few farmers (8%) are engaged in large scale commercial broiler production which provides employment opportunities to a certain extent. In the study area, cost of production for broiler is increasing trend, due to escalating cost of formulated ration and day old broiler chicks. This has become the major constraint in the expansion of this industry among the broiler farmers. The percentages of single, married and other civil status (divorced and widows) among the broiler farmers were 14.7%, 68% and 17.3% respectively. The greater popularity of broilers among married homesteads (68%) could be largely attributed to available human resources. Majority of the broiler owners (55.2%) belonged to middle age group, while 28.2% of broiler owners were from young age group and 16.6% hailed from the old age group. 22.7 % of the farmers had the family size of lesser than three, 50.7 % of the farmers had the family size of 4-5, 16% of the farmers had the family size of 6-7 and remains 10.6 % of the farmers had the family size of >7. Families consisting of 4-5 members have the peak in the broiler production. Majority of the broiler farm owners (26.7%) were in primary category, 66.7% of farmers had secondary education and only 6.6% farmers got tertiary education. Most of the broiler farmers depends on their own investment (49%) and other sources, such as debit from relations, foreign money etc. Only 15% and 12% are coming from NGOs fund and Bank loan respectively. Agriculture provided occupational livelihood to 51% broiler farm owners, whereas, 8% of the respondents earned through animal husbandry, 17% of the respondents engaged in both, as a main occupation and rest 24% of the respondents involve in other jobs such as government service, business, laborer etc. Seasonal fluctuation in the demand has been observed in the Vavuniya district, demand of broiler and broiler products are normally peaked in the period between December to April, because

many religious ceremonies come in these periods, such as Christmas, Ramzan and Singhalese and Tamils New Year. Some decline in consumption of broilers and broiler products in the period between May to November, because majority of the population in this district are Hindus and their religious temple festivals fall between these months. This inconstant demand has prevented many farmers for operating broiler production as a main occupation. The result revealed that, broiler production is a part time livelihood industry in the Vavuniya district which connected with the socio-economic aspects of the farmers.

Keywords:

Broiler farming, socio-economic, Vavuniya district