

Breeding of Kangayam cattle by Smt. Soundram Ramasamy



Smt. Soundram studied upto 5th standard. She is owning 9 acre of ‘Korangadu’ pasture land (pasture land in dry land) and 5 acre of garden land. Her mother Smt. Palaniyammal has also been living with her. Because of hard work they developed best practices in livestock keeping (maintaining 4 breeding bulls of kangayam cattle, 45 sheep of meichery breed at present) which they have been doing for many generations in their family.

Earning income through animal breeding

In their family they have been maintaining local breed of cattle called as ‘Kangayam’. It is known for ‘draught’ purpose. Nowadays the demand for draught animal is not there and many farmers shifted to rearing crossbred dairy cows which in turn fetch good income through sale of milk. These animals are suffering repeat breeding . There is no good bulls for natural service in the area. Few farmers are still interested

to keep Kangayam cattle for their breed value or sentiments attached with the local breed. Soundram selected best male calf and developed a breeding bull. She becomes expert in identifying the marks or body characterization of kangayam breed. She along with help of Nataraj of Karuppanvalasu Puthur surveyed best kangayam bulls or male calves in the area and adopt them for improving the productivity in Kangayam cattle. While selecting male calves for breeding bulls they observe the characters such as small or shortness of horn, thin tail (sannam), face short (kuttai) and legs short (kaal sannam) ; prominent eyes, larger hooves(kulambu) , wider shoulder bone (vila elumbu) ,larger hump (thimil) ;they choose such calves usually from 2nd lactation animals. The animal should not have whorls or body markings except *raja suli* and *thamini suli* .

Her bull is able to serve about 20-30 animals in a month. She collects Rs. 150/- per natural service. The conceiving rate is more than 80% and she tells very few cows are brought for second time for servicing she claims . By seeing good demand for natural service she is now maintaining 4 breeding bulls of Kangayam breed. The service rate is about 100-120 animals per month or more .

The bulls are grazed in *Korangadu* pasture land of 10 acres. *Korangadu* typically consists of a mixture of grass, legumes and tree species including annual and perennials. It has predominantly three major species of flora which are spatially in three tiers. The lower tier of *Kolukattai* grass (*Cenchrus* sp.) , an upper tier of tree species including *Acacia leucophloea* that is locally called *Velvel*, and a live fence comprised of a thorny shrub locally as *Mullu Kiluvai* (*Commiphora berryii*) makes up the middle tier.

For maintaining 4 bulls an area of 10 acres pasture land are needed which supports grazing of animals for a period of 3 months during rainy season. In the remaining months they supplement with sorghum straw, paddy straw and last year she spent Rs 30,000 for procuring the dry fodder . She is also keeping 45 sheep and taken 5 acres of *Korangadu* pasture land on lease basis (*boghi*) by paying Rs3000 per year . In *Kornagdu* pasture land she sow legumes viz. *naripayaru* (*Phaseolus trilobus*) and horse gram each 5 kilo which supplies protein to animal diet. Sheep fetch an annual income of Rs 75,000 mainly through disposal of about 20 lambs in a year . Combination of sheep + cattle breeding is risk free source of sustainable income from available resources of land and man power she feels.

Based on traditional knowledge of her mother Smt. Palaniyammal she developed the following practices which are known for better up keeping of animals.

i) For cows not conceiving

The animals should be treated for control of intestinal worms. They administer 200ml of neem oil and also 4-5 lemon fruits (fruits are cut and administered orally).In addition they administer Aloe vera in the empty stomach for 3 days continuously. This will ensure conceiving in cows after natural service

ii) For maintaining the vigour of breeding bulls

Cotton seeds 2 Kilo, rawrice 23 kilo are to be soaked together in water for 5 hours and this has to be fed daily. (One coconut will be grated and mixed with this ration). They spend Rs.250 daily for 4 bulls. In addition ½ kg of groundnut cake is soaked in water and mixed with drinking water for animals to drink. This will be sufficient for 4 bulls.

iii) For Diarrohea in sheep/cattle

Leaves of *Thuthi* (*Abutilon indicum*) 2 handful, leaves of *Poovarasu* (*Thespesia populnea*) 2 handful and cumin 50 gm are to be ground well and administered one time.

iv) For HCN poisoning

Due to intake of dried sorghum plants (young seedlings withered due to deficit of water) the animals will develop choke leading to death if not attended immediately. For this she is administering jaggery mixed water or chilli powder mixed with water.

v) For animals not taking water

The root of (6"length) *varikumatikai* (*Citrullus colocynthis*) is ground well and administered orally. This is also effective for blood tinged diarrhoea in cattle and sheep.

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