

Encouraging women to be self-reliant in dairying

Women being the predominant player in dairying, their empowerment in terms of knowledge and skill would bring appreciable dividends for the family, society and the dairy sector as a whole. ICAR-National Dairy Research institute (NDRI), Karnal is always at the forefront in empowering women especially on value addition to milk and milk products. While interaction with women groups formed under the Department of Science and Technology (DST) funded research project namely, "Improving Livelihood of Rural Women through Dairy based Secondary Agriculture", Dr M.S.Chauhan, the Director, NDRI laid emphasis on the concept of Atmanirbhar i.e. self-reliance in dairy production, processing and marketing. He further stated that in times of pandemic like Covid-19 crisis, when everyone is fearing in moving out for purchase of various household requirements, village level production and distribution would be highly useful. This especially hold good for milk and milk products as they can be easily procured and products can be prepared. In this process, women being the critical worker in dairying activities, they can certainly contribute and fulfill the dreams of self-reliance. He further elaborated the developing branding of the products by women SHGs. He also advised the women groups to train the fellow women so that the scientific message would reach larger audience. Dr K.Ponnusamy while welcoming the participants informed that out of 27 women groups formed under the DST project, ten groups are efficiently working in three districts of Haryana. He further stated that women groups prepare paneer, whey drink, burfi, gulab jamun, curd and ghee depending upon their demand in their respective areas.

Mr Abhimanyu, District Development Manager (DDM), NABARD, Karnal stressed upon the utilization of credit facilities from banks for starting and expanding the dairy venture. He further stated that NABARD has launched an app and a retail outlet "Farm Mantra" which will help women SHGs and local farmers to connect with the markets and sell their products through this online outlet. He further stated that women groups can develop the enterprise model and start the outlet for marketing. Dr Rajeev Gulyani, Retired Principal Scientist from Central Sheep and Wool Research Institute, Avikanagar explained the role of SEED Division of DST and emphasized the hygienic production of milk products which can fetch higher price in the market. He stressed upon the importance of developing the capacity of women to absorb the technologies in right perspective.

Dr Arun Kumar Misra, In-charge, Agricultural Technology Information Centre (ATIC) highlighted the purity, packaging and branding of dairy products prepared by women groups.

Dr Latha Sabikhi, Head, Dairy Technology, NDRI, Mr Jubin Salu, District Project Manager, Haryana State Rural Livelihood Mission (HSRLM), Karnal, Ms Kavitha, Block Project Manager, HSRLM, Gharunda block, Mr Rajendra Singh, Ms Rajbala Mann also participated in the discussion. At the end, Dr Chauhan distributed utensils to women groups which would help them to prepare the milk products with all required quality attributes. The meeting ended with vote of thanks.