

Southern Regional Station of ICAR-NDRI organized Farmer's Interaction Meet on the eve of live telecast of Honourable Prime Minister, Shri. Narendra Modi Ji's address at the Krishi Unnati Mela 2018 on 17.03.2018

ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute, Southern Regional Station, Bengaluru arranged a farmer's interaction meet on the eve of live telecast of Honourable Prime Minister, Shri. Narendra Modi Ji's address at the Krishi Unnati Mela 2018 at Indian Agricultural Research Institute, Pusa, New Delhi on 17.03.2018. Prior to the live telecast of Honourable Prime Minister's address, farmers interaction meet was organized on "Strategies for enhancing productivity of Indigenous cattle and buffaloes" and "Clean Milk Production". Dr. M.T. Manjunath, Director, Department of Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services, Govt. of Karnataka was the Chief Guest while the Head of the Station Dr. K. P. Ramesha presided over the function.

Dr. Manjunath reiterated that in our enthusiasm to augment milk production, greater reliance was placed on crossbreeding and indigenous animals did not receive due focus. For obvious reasons, farmers also tended to discount the importance of indigenous cattle. In the recent years, the policy lapse has been revisited and Government has been accordingly laid importance for indigenous breed improvement through various schemes under Rastriya Gokul Mission. He emphasised that better price for the milk of indigenous cattle must be explored.

Dr. Ramesha, during his presidential address, informed the farmers about the merits of Indigenous bovines in terms of their adaptability, disease resistance and milk quality. He reiterated that although we are top milk producing country in the world, uncontrolled crossbreeding has resulted in dilution of our Indigenous breeds and it is high time to control the genetic erosion of indigenous breeds as a number of local breeds are at the risk of extinction. Further he appraised the farmers with the scientific breeding, feeding and management of Indigenous cattle so that their productivity is improved. In addition, he also said that in the era of climate change, Indigenous animals offer much scope for the farmers, especially smallholders as these animals are drought tolerant and can thrive at low input system with moderate milk production. He emphasised that it is not only the milk but also the urine and dung of indigenous cattle fetch good remuneration for the farmers as they have medicinal values besides their use in biogas, compost and soil fertility enhancement.

Subsequently, the farmers' interacted with the scientists of the Station on different aspects of dairy animal production, health, reproduction, milk quality and dairy processing. The farmers were appraised about the solutions for the common problems faced by them. Information booklets on dairy animal production, printed in local language, were distributed to the farmers for their benefit.

The interaction meet was followed by live telecast of Honourable Prime Minister, Shri. Narendra Modi Ji's address to all the farmers and the staff of SRS. Later, the PM's address was also translated into Kannada language for the benefit of the farmers. After that farmers were taken around fodder museum, herbal garden, vermicomposting unit, hydroponic unit and Livestock Research Centre.

A total of 26 Extension Officials and around 200 farmers from Ramnagara, Mysore, Bangalore Urban, Mandya, Kolar and Chikkaballapur districts of Karnataka State besides Scientists, Staff and Students of the Station participated in the event.

