

# Current cattle breeding programme in SL

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# Introduction

- Most of the South Asian and Pacific (SAP) countries have similarities in setting the policy and execution of dairy and beef cattle genetic improvement programmes,
- but the degree of involvement by the state and the private sectors varies .  
Dairying plays an important role in socioeconomic development in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Myanmar, while the economic output from livestock in Indonesia and Malaysia is dominated by the beef indust

- Dairy development is supported by the public sector in our countries that aim to use dairying to alleviate poverty, hunger and provide livelihood support in terms of income and employment generation to the millions of landless and smallholder dairy farmers.
- milk production in SL has increased steadily over the last decade. Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have realized annual growth of 1.5%, 4.1%, 4.9% and 0.6% respectively, in total national milk production from 1993 to 2003. Consumption of milk and dairy products has been expanding dramatically with income growth, population growth, urbanization and dietary changes
- Approximately 18% of the global cattle population is from SAP. The respective policies of the countries show a serious commitment of governments to improve the general economy through the livestock sector, with particular support to smallholders.

- Animals are obviously an integral component in these systems - provide its products either directly to the household in the form
- of milk and
- meat.
- supply in bulk to the market as value added products.
- yield inputs for crop production in the form of organic fertilizer (dung and the farm refusals).
- Various attempts have been made to improve the milk production of native Zebu cattle through selection and crossbreeding.
- Over four decades of artificial insemination (AI) services in the Asian countries have resulted in a population that includes about 15 to 20% of crossbred and upgraded cattle.

- FARM STRUCTURE
- In the process of formulating breeding programmes for genetic improvement,
- the structure of the herd has a special role to play.
- Considering the characteristics of herd structures can generally be categorized into four groups, which can be based mainly on the size of the herd, but these groups also tend to differ in the size of the land holding and type of the labour employed .
- As mentioned previously, most of the dairy herds in Asia are owned by smallholders, However, in general, all four types of farming systems can be observed in all the countries in SAP.

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- TABLE 1. CHARACTERISTICS OF CATTLE FARMING SYSTEMS IN ASIAN COUNTRIES Attributes
  - Smallholder < 3 cows
  - 3–10 COWS
  - 10–20 COWS
  - Large dairy > 20 cows

## ● MANAGEMENT

- The breeding programmes that have been carried out in most of the countries have a history of well over 40 years in practice, resulting in a mixed population of purebred, crossbred and upgraded cattle with variable genetic make up.
- There is a vast diversity in breeds in Asian countries.
- Due to importation of exotic genetics, approximately 15 to 20% of the cattle population in these countries has germplasm from Holstein Friesian, Jersey, Brown Swiss, Hariana, Tharpakar, Ongole, Sahiwal and Sindhi.
- Depending on the agro-ecological zones, social structures, type of the breed, feed availability, the economic status, the knowledge on animal husbandry of the farmer and his or her interest in breeding and management, the average genetic makeup of cattle varies.
- Cattle with high proportions of exotic temperate blood tend to be managed intensively
- Exotic breeds are by definition not well-adapted to the local climate, feed resources and management systems and require some level of environmental modification to remain reasonably healthy and productive.
- The indigenous and exotic zebu types, on the other hand, are managed more extensively, allowing free grazing during the day and night paddocking.
- Intermediate crosses of the temperate breeds are most commonly kept under semi-intensive management systems.



- BREEDING

- In most of the countries in the SAP, both AI and natural service are practiced as methods of breeding.
- The AI centres are usually government-operated or run through private organizations that are contracted with and monitored by the government official responsible for animal improvement
- Options in the absence of AI are natural service through the use of a community bull (usually at no cost), one's own bull, or privately-owned bulls for which fees must be paid to the owner.
- A majority of cattle farmers prefer AI to natural service, but buffalo farmers generally prefer natural breeding because of the difficulty in heat detection and poor conception rate.





- SOURCE OF REPLACEMENT FEMALES

- The replacement females for the cattle herd are usually from the heifers bred within the same herd regardless of the size of the farm.

- MILK COLLECTION AND MARKETING

- A general rule is that larger farms have more access to marketing and smaller farms may have little to none. However, large farms will usually be located in regions where a milk market already exists or milk dealers will be drawn to large farms.

- BEEF MARKETING

- The marketing of beef is usually handled by a local authority, under the supervision of government veterinary personnel

