

Government of Himachal Pradesh
Animal Husbandry Department



No. AHY-E(3)-60/2012 Dated Shimla-171002, 4th June, 2014.

Notification

The Governor, Himachal Pradesh is pleased to notify the following Policy to control Stray Cattle Problem in the State:-

POLICY TO TACKLE PROBLEM OF STRAY CATTLE

Livestock plays an important role in the economy of the hill farmer. Almost every household in the State maintains a few heads of livestock of one kind or the other. Although, as a result of various livestock development/ improvement programmes, farmers have started rearing improved breeds, but large numbers of non-descript and unproductive indigenous animals are still being kept by them as draught animals for ploughing and for manure. The indigenous livestock population and in many cases their cross bred progeny are dependent on grazing/pasture land and forest and their presence in such locations is a common sight. When these animals become unproductive, old or sick, there is a tendency to abandon them rather than be responsible for feeding them. The problem has been exacerbated by the shortage of fodder as holdings have become smaller and the extent and productivity of common grazing lands has also reduced over time. Control on movement of cattle in neighboring states has also meant that the pressure of stray cattle has increased in the state.

Cow slaughter was banned in Himachal Pradesh under the Prohibition of Cow Slaughter Act, 1979. In rules framed under this Act, it was visualized that the number of stray cattle would be limited and taken care of by the Gosadan established by the state at Khajjian. As the problem

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05/06/14

Sh. Suran Khatwal

Secret - II

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grew larger, the state has adopted a policy that on the one hand seeks to secure the assistance of civil society in the establishment and operation of more Gosadans and on the other hand involve the rural local bodies in enforcing owner responsibility for unproductive cattle.

There are now 75 Gosadans in the State with capacity to house 7451 animals. At present these gosadans are giving shelter to 6498 animals. Government is assisting many of these Gosadans within its limited resources and also seeking the involvement of Temple Trusts in this endeavour.

The legal framework for local body involvement in tackling the problem of stray cattle has been introduced through provisions for Gram Panchayat responsibility in cattle registration and empowering them to levy fines on defaulters. U/S 11-A of the Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj (amendment) Act, 2006, suitable provision has been made to ensure local body responsibility. The various sub sections require that cattle owners are responsible for registering their cattle with the Gram Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat is allowed to charge a registration fee and also a fine from owners allowing cattle to stray. The Gram Panchayat is also expected to assist in ensuring appropriate identification marks on all cattle and in identifying and taking care of stray cattle.

ISSUES AND TRENDS

The current policy of government is proving insufficient to tackle the problem due to a number of reasons. The size of the stray cattle population estimated at 32,130 in the livestock census of 2012 is much larger than the capacity of the existing Gosadans and the state government's

ability to enhance financial support for this purpose is limited. If all these animals were to be housed in Gosadans, the estimated financial requirement is Rs. 80 crore (as one time capital expenditure on sheds) and a recurring annual expenditure of about Rs. 66 crore (at the rate of Rs. 56 per animal per day) to feed and maintain the animals in Gosadans. The current budgetary provision is Rs. 1.00 crore and this is supplemented by civil society organizations which manage the existing Gosadans. In addition to the financial limitation, increasing the number of Gosadans is constrained by non availability of land for this purpose.

The cattle, registration work has been rendered difficult in the absence of Gram Panchayats taking interest in this matter. Even so, the work of registering existing cattle has been accomplished to a considerable extent. However, it has not been possible to secure any benefits from this registration, for two reasons. Owners of unproductive cattle tend to mutilate and remove the registration marks so that they cannot be identified as owners of such animals. The Gram Panchayats have shown no interest in rounding up stray cattle and fining the owners.

~~Burning~~

Despite these constraints affecting existing policy, the stray cattle population in the state has declined since 2007. The animal census of 2007 showed the stray cattle population to be 37,346. Provisional figures of 2012 have shown that this has reduced by 13.97% and now stands at 32,130. This achievement is closely related to two other trends: the number of productive, cross bred cattle in the state has increased by 23.96 % and the unproductive nondescript cattle population has declined by 20.73 %. However, a survey by the Department has also brought out that 58% of the stray cattle are cross bred. Further analysis brings out that stray crossbred

cattle are largely the result of malnutrition and in a minority of cases also due to poor application of Artificial Insemination Techniques.

The above discussion brings out the need for policy to:

- i) Address the constraints relating to the financing of Gosadans.
- ii) Consider measures to ensure Gram Panchayats perform the role envisaged for them, and
- iii) Build on the factors assisting in reduction of stray cattle population.
- iv) Address the factors responsible for cross bred cattle becoming unproductive.

FRESH POLICY INITIATIVES

The following is proposed in this regard to ensure that the problem of stray cattle is mitigated in the short run and eradicated in a medium term scenario :-

- i) Mobilize greater resources from civil society organizations and temple trusts to ensure running of existing gosadans to their full capacity and establishment of new Gosadans.
- ii) All Temples in the state will be asked to make available 10% of donations/offerings received by them annually as grant to the State Animal Welfare Board which will further allocate this to gosadans on a normative basis.
- iii) Ways to motivate people/agencies/industrial houses etc. to contribute for stray cattle rehabilitation or for adoption of cows at gosadan will be explored. Contributions to Animal Welfare Fund will be invited out of CSR funds of companies and tax exemption status will be sought for donations to the fund.

- iv) Gram Panchayat members and Panchayat Veterinary Assistants will be made aware about their responsibility in the matter of stray cattle so that they actively engage in cattle registration, collection of fines, fees for keeping animals, creation of cattle pounds/ gosadans etc. Some percentage of fees and fines will be allowed to be kept for these officials to create an incentive for the performance of this function.
- v) The Department will intensify its efforts to make people aware of managerial practices to be followed for rearing crossbred cattle. The Department will also take steps towards formulating an area specific Breeding Policy. Department will ensure dissemination of information regarding balanced diet requirement of crossbred cattle and make available superior indigenous options for farmers unable to meet the nutrition requirements of cross bred cattle.
- vi) The feasibility of electronic identification of cattle will be explored so that the problem of mutilation of identification marks can be eliminated.
- vii) The fine amounts specified in the Act for imposition on cattle owners abandoning their cattle, will be enhanced.
- viii) Financial institutions will be asked to insist on registration of animals when extending loans for animal husbandry activities.
- ix) Registration will be made compulsory for rendering treatment to animals in veterinary institutions.
- x) Gram Panchayats undertaking exemplary work in cattle registration, maintenance of cattle pounds/gosadans and fining of offenders will be recognized and rewarded so that concerned Gram Panchayats can become examples of good performance and other GPs have an incentive to undertake such work.

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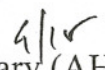
- xi) Artificial insemination facilities will be extended to all Gram Panchayat institutions connected by road in a time bound manner and option of Artificial Insemination for different breeds will be made available to present a choice to the farmer to suit specific needs.
- xii) Trainings in Artificial Insemination technique will be regularly held for the staff of the department to increase their proficiency, since infertility which is a key contributing factor for stray animals, is partially a result of AI by untrained inseminators. All Paravets will be properly trained to provide artificial insemination services in a time bound manner.
- xiii) Male animals are also being abandoned by the farmers, since with mechanization of agriculture, rearing of males is often not considered necessary these days. Hence, Department of Animal Husbandry will explore possibility of making available sexed semen for producing predominantly female progeny.
- xiv) All nondescript male animals will be castrated in a time bound manner.
- xv) HP Milk Federation will ensure modernization of its operations to improve milk marketing in the State. This step will help in increasing returns to the farmer thereby increasing their interest in proper maintenance of cattle by livestock owners.
- xvi) Steps for filling up of vacant posts and up gradation of dispensaries to Veterinary Hospitals shall be initiated.
- xvii) Department of Animal Husbandry will formulate terms/guidelines for providing land on lease to NGOs for opening the Gosadans.

~~Running~~

TARGETS

- i) Full utilization of existing Gosadan capacity of 7451 by the end of 2015-16.
- ii) Introduction of scheme to reward best performing Gram Panchayat in management of stray cattle problem in 2015-16.
- iii) Refresher Trainings in A. I. Techniques to all Paravets by 2015-16.
- iv) Intensification of training programmes for livestock owners from 2014-15.
- v) New Breeding Policy to be finalized in 2014-15.
- vi) Enhancement of cross bred cattle proportion in total cattle population to 60 % by 2022.
- vii) Reduction of stray cattle numbers to levels which are contained in Gosadans / Panchayat cattle shelters by 2022.

By order

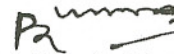

Addl. Chief Secretary (AH) to the
Government of Himachal Pradesh.

Ends. As above. Dated Shimla-2, the 4th June, 2014.

Copy is forwarded to the following for information and necessary action:-

1. The Secretary to Governor Himachal Pradesh Shimla-2.
2. The Accountant General (Audit) H.P. Shimla-3.
3. The Sr. Dy. Accountant General (A&E) H.P. Shimla-3
4. The Addl. Chief Secretary (LAC) to the Govt. of Himachal Pradesh Shimla-2.
5. The Addl. Chief Secretary (Panchayati Raj & Rural Development) to the Govt. of H.P., Shimla-2.
6. The Addl. Secretary (GAD) (Confidential and Cabinet) to the Govt. of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-2.

- 7 All the Administrative Secretaries to the Government of Himachal Pradesh.
- 8 All the Deputy Commissioner Himachal Pradesh.
- 9 All the HOD's Himachal Pradesh.
10. All the Managing Director and CEO Board and Corporations in Himachal Pradesh.
11. The Senior Private Secretary to the Hon'ble Animal Husbandry Minister, HP. Shimla-2.
12. The Director, Animal Husbandry, HP Shimla-5.
13. All the Joint Director of AH through by the Director of Animal Husbandry.
14. All the Deputy Director/Assistant Director of Animal Husbandry through by the Director of Animal Husbandry.



(Budhi Singh Verma)
Deputy Secretary (AH) to the
Govt. of Himachal Pradesh
0177-2880522