

Care and Management of Farm Animals during the Rainy Season

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Introduction

In India, livestock is an integral part of agriculture and contributes to the economy since old ages. Many farmers of India rear Cattle, Buffaloes, Sheep, Goat, Pigs and Horses etc. Livestock rearing requires the utmost care and protection of animals from extremes of weather conditions. Extremes of weather are always harmful for living beings, especially monsoon that favors the propagation of different kinds of pathogenic organisms like bacteria, virus, fungus and parasites. Despite of this, animals need shelter to protect themselves from heavy rainfall, winds and hailstorm. In this article we will discuss about some basic problems faced by the livestock owners and their possible solutions.

Problems of livestock rearing during rainy season

The problems encountered by the farmers in the rainy season can be categorized in following points:

1. Leaky roofs of animal sheds-

leakage of water into animal sheds causes the discomfort of animals. The amount of humidity increases significantly in the shed and thus causes the accumulation of ammonia gas in the shed. That leads to the irritation of eyes. Wet sheds also favor the growth of many commensal and facultative bacteria.



- 2. Feed and water-**the rainy season doesn't imply the sufficient quantity of the safe drinking water for the livestock. Similarly, the fodder grow at the rainy season contains lots of the moisture that filled up the stomach and practically it has no use. The watery feed leads to the water feces. In addition, if the storage feed become wet because of leakage of rain water from broken roof, then it will develop moulds. If we give mouldy feed to the animals then these can cause cancer to them.
- 3. Internal parasitic infestation-**In rainy season due to overflow of drain water, the cases of parasitic infestation become high. Farm animals accidentally consumes parasitic eggs (eg. Tinea eggs) along with green fodder, that leads to formation of tissue cyst in the muscles of cattle and pigs.
- 4. External parasitic infestation-** Tick infestation is more frequently observed in the rainy season. Large number of ticks in the animal shed cause the haemoprotozoan diseases namely trypanosomiasis, theileriosis, babesiosis and some rickettsial diseases such Q fever.
- 5. Udder infection-** cases of udder infection is more in rainy season due to wet shed and bedding. Udder and teats of animal come in contact with dirty surface and enter through teat canal and causes swelling of teats and udder. Animal suffers from fever and milk production also decreases. If animals left untreated then it causes the fibrosis of udder and make them useful.

Some preventive measures must be taken during rainy season:

1. Before and during onset of rainy season animals should be deworm against various internal parasites.
2. Farm animals should be vaccinated for infectious disease i.e. Haemorrhagic septicemia (HS), Black quarter (BQ), and Foot and Mouth disease (FMD).
3. Provide clean and wholesome water for drinking to the animals and provide dry fodder along with green fodder to increase milk yield. Never leave animals for grazing during rainy



season.

4. To prevent the scarcity of fodder, farmers can prepare unconventional feed like hay and silage. Along with these they can also use mineral blocks like urea molasses mineral blocks (UMMB) to fulfil the mineral requirement of animals.
5. Animal shed should be repaired pre-monsoon to avoid any leakage of water during rain.
6. Provide proper ventilation in animal house.
7. Proper disposal of carcass by burning and deep burial method to prevent further spread of the infection.
8. Regular spray of insecticides in the animal shed to control the external parasites.
9. Clean cow dung, left overfeed and urine very frequently to prevent animals from udder infections.
10. Avoid long term stress such as transport and under nutrition condition.