

## India is the largest producer of milk in the world: Radha Mohan Singh

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Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Radha Mohan Singh said that it is a matter of immense pride that India is number one in milk production in the world. In the year 2015-16, the growth rate of milk production has been 6.28 % due to which total production has reached 156 million tonnes. And now, per person milk availability is 337 gram on an average, while on the world level it is 229 gram. It is worth mentioning that in comparison to the years 2011-14, the growth in milk production during the years 2014-17 has been 16.9%. The Government of India has undertaken several new initiatives in the field of animal husbandry.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of polytechnic at Kamdhenu University, Sabarkantha, in Gujarat, the Agriculture Minister said that the standard of living of urban and rural families is rising, therefore, the demand for the animal protein is increasing. So, it is necessary that we constantly make effort to increase the production of our livestock, poultry and fish so that the country's citizens are well-nourished and healthy. That is why it is the responsibility of veterinarians to contribute in keeping the nation healthy by increasing availability of animal protein.

He said that the Government is committed to double farmers' income by 2022 and veterinarians play a significant role in fulfilling the Government's resolution to double the farmers' income. A healthy animal will result in greater production which will automatically enhance the farmer's income and the country will proceed on the path of economic prosperity.

Agriculture Minister said that India is world's highest livestock owner at about 512.05 million out of which 199.1 million are bovines, 105.3 million buffaloes, 71.6 million sheep and 140.5 million goats. In the case of goats, India is at the second position in the world and it is approximately 25 % of the livestock. India is second largest poultry market in the world and it includes the production of 63 billion eggs and 649 million poultry meat. India's marine and fish industry are growing at around 7% compound annual growth rate. Overall, India's livestock sector is growing fast and emerging as a major contributor in the global market.

The Agriculture Minister said that the Government of India is ensuring the quality of education in universities is of international

standards. In this direction, ICAR's Fifth Deans Committee Report has been approved. Schemes like 'Student' and 'Arya' have been started with scholarships. Students' scholarship amount has been increased.

In the end, the Minister said that to see our nation prosper and agriculture sector and farmers flourish, we need to work together. When the agriculture will grow, the farmer will be happy and the country will move forward.

Under Rashtriya Gokul Mission, on the lines of Gokul Gram 'Gir, Cow Sanctuary' has been approved. This will be established in Dharampur, Porbandar under Livestock insurance coverage. Earlier only two milk animals were included, now 5 milk animals and 50 small animals are included. This scheme has been implemented in all the districts of the state, whereas earlier only 15 districts were included.

During the year 2014-16, about 26,000 animals have been insured in Gujarat. To fulfil the shortage of veterinarians, a veterinary college has been established in Junagadh.