
Introduction

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This Workshop was promoted and supported by FAO and in particular by the Animal Production and Health Division, within the strategies for improving buffalo production in developing countries. We must thank Dr Maki-Hokkonen if we have succeeded in gathering so many participants from many countries interested in buffalo production.

The reason why so many different countries have been invited is that we believe that discussion is needed on the various on-going experiences before deciding to implement future cooperative activities. The people invited have many things to say to each other. However, they have had few opportunities in their own countries to discuss their issues, projects and goals with other experts. All of them have been involved to some extent and at some stage in the establishment of milk performance recording for buffalo in their country. Their experience is precious. Therefore, the major purpose of the Workshop will not be to examine existing systems of animal recording and the various experiences, but it is necessary that everybody frankly explains the constraints, difficulties, problems met as well as the obtained successes during the various trials of implementing animal recording systems.

The discussion will therefore be the focal issue of this Workshop. From the discussion, we will be able to draft recommendations and guidelines for establishing and maintaining successful buffalo recording systems. Moreover, the discussion will allow everybody to know each other better and to maintain continuous links in the future.

In order to finalise the discussion and for it to be more worthwhile for future outlets, we decided to divide the Workshop into four sessions:

- 1) *In Session 1* the seven most relevant case studies of milk recording performance in buffalo will be briefly presented and discussed. Then the participants will be divided into two working groups, so that each working group will be composed by no more than ten people. The two working groups will discuss separately, in two different rooms, for one hour, with a group leader for each session. At the end of each session, the two groups will meet together and each of the two group leaders will summarise the discussions and conclusions of the group.

In each of the three following sessions the two working groups will be led by a different group leader. Each session will be dedicated to answering a different topic, as follows:

- 2) *Session 2:* Justifications and components of a functional milk recording scheme (group leaders: R. Aleandri, Italy and A. Nigm, Egypt).
- 3) *Session 3:* Initiation and implementation of a functional milk recording system in countries where it does not yet exist. Identification of opportunities and constraints (group leaders: K. Trivedi, India and K. Juma, Iraq).
- 4) *Session 4:* Identification of the necessary components for establishing and maintaining a programme for the genetic improvement of dairy buffalo (group leaders: A. Georgoudis, Greece and Tz. Peeva, Bulgaria).

Sajjad Khan, Professor of Animal Breeding at the University of Faisalabad and Drona Rasali, Nepal Agricultural Research Centre, accepted to be the Chairperson and the Rapporteur, respectively, for the whole session, to ensure the running of the Workshop following the established schedule, to coordinate the plenary discussion and to help in drafting the conclusions and recommendations.

Both the Chairman and Rapporteur will participate in the discussions for the different working groups.



Figure 1. Drona Rasali (rapporteur) and Sajjad Khan (Chairman) during the discussion in Bled.