

Organized round table meeting to discuss ‘augmenting pig production system in NER’ at ICAR-National Research Centre on Pig, Guwahati in Collaboration with APEDA on 9th September, 2017

One day round table meeting to discuss ‘augmenting pig production system in NER’ was organized at ICAR–National Research Centre on Pig, Guwahati (ICAR - NRCP) in collaboration with Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA). The meeting was intended to create a platform for the stakeholders to interact and discuss issues related to piggery sector and to identify the critical gaps and the possible strategies to bridge the gaps, especially in the NE Region. The programme was attended by over 40 participants, which include representatives from APEDA; ICAR-NRC on Pig; State Animal Husbandry Departments of NE States; Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries (DAFD), Govt. of India; British High Commission; British Pig Association; Assam Livestock and Poultry Corporation; Meghalaya Institute of Entrepreneurship; ICCo; Rashtriya Gramin Vikas Nidhi; PHD Chamber of Commerce; commercial pig farmers, entrepreneurs; exporters of pork and pork products etc.

The meeting begun with the address by Dr. Dilip Kumar Sarma, Director, ICAR–NRC on Pig. In his address to the house, Dr. Sarma has given an overview of the piggery sector in the country, its strengths and weaknesses to the delegates. Mr. Upendra Kumar Vats, General Manager, APEDA gave a detailed report on the status of export and import of pork and pork products with respect to India. He has also presented the SWOT analysis of piggery sector in the country and suggested measures for the way forward. Mr. Vats also suggested the ‘hub and spoke’ model for augmenting the supply chain/ value chain for piggery and pork processing in the country. He also appreciated the facilities and efforts of ICAR–NRC on Pig in developing export standards and establishing a quality control laboratory, which will be helpful for testing pork and pork products.

In his inaugural address, Dr. D.K. Sarma, Director, ICAR-NRC on Pig has emphasized that piggery is one of the few agricultural sectors, which has the real potential to double the farmer’s income in short span of time. He urged the house to focus the discussion on the following aspects which are vital for augmenting the pig production scenario in the country: a) strengthening the traditional system of pig rearing, b) introduction of good management practices in pig farms, c) introduction of exotic germplasm to upgrade the indigenous stock whereby the FCR can be improved, d) ensuring economic yet quality feed to the pig farmers, e) strengthening of the state animal husbandry functionary to address the issue of pig health and preventing the illegal import of pigs through the porous international borders, f) setting up of sufficient number of slaughter houses with required amenities for ensuring production of hygienic pork etc.

Directors/ Joint Directors/officials from the state animal husbandry departments of North Eastern Region have briefed about the status of piggery in their respective states. They have informed the house about the availability of pig germplasm (indigenous/crossbred/exotic), status of pig breeding farms, status of state pig breeding policy; availability of quality feeds, disease status, slaughter facilities present, vaccine availability, inflow of animals from outside the state

etc. with respect to their respective states. The important issues/weaknesses pointed out by the representatives were mostly common to the states viz. non-availability of quality pig germplasm; high inbreeding depression in the existing parent stock; high cost of commercial pig feed; non-availability of quality feed materials; lack of functional pig breeding farms; non-availability of swine fever vaccine; lack of slaughter houses for hygienic pig slaughter operations; emergence of trans-boundary disease etc. The representative from Sikkim has informed the house that the Animal Husbandry Department has already taken initiatives for organic pork production along with organic fodder crops production in the State. Mr. Chris Jackson, President, British Pig Association has briefed the house about the pig production practices followed in UK, availability of high quality genetic material which will be of use for improving the genetic make of Indian breeds, disease control strategies followed etc. Mr. Chris also highlighted the need for promoting those breeds with better FCR to tackle the issue of high feed cost.

Dr. Sulekha S.L., Assistant Commissioner, Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries has provided a realistic picture of status of pork import to the country. Dr. Sulekha has elaborated about the 'innovative project' being implemented by DADF towards augmenting the pig production scenario in the NE states. She informed the house that the said project include three state programme viz. a) establishment of nucleus pig farms in each NE states, b) import of live pigs from UK/Canada/Germany to these states to improve the existing stock and c) establishment of multiplier units for distribution of quality pig germplasm to the farmers. She also reiterated that development and notification of a pig breeding policy is must for every state government and DADF will shortly come up with a national pig breeding policy and guidelines for import of pig germplasm.

Assam Livestock and Poultry Corporation has stressed the need for developing a database on the availability of pig germ plasm in the region and creation of a warehouse for storage of maize in the region. Meghalaya Institute of Entrepreneurship has pointed out the need to set up pig development centres to ensure better dissemination of service facilities to the pig farmers. Entrepreneurs and commercial farmers have stressed the need for pig focused schemes for financial assistance towards setting up of large scale farms/ processing units. They also reiterated the urgent need for a vaccination policy to be introduced in the Government schemes, with respect to CSF and FMD.

The house has spent sufficient time to discuss various key issues related to augmenting the piggery sector during the meeting. The following action plans were evolved during the discussion:

1. State Animal Husbandry Departments has to speed up the procedures and set a time limit for import of pig germplasm.
2. In the first instance focus may give on import of large white Yorkshire, Hampshire and Landrace.
3. Animal Husbandry Departments has to speed up the notification of pig breeding policy with respect to the respective states.

4. A quality assurance unit for pig feed need to be established for independent third party checking of the quality of feed.
5. Cooperative pig farming need to be strengthened to ensure implementation of better production practices and completing the pig value chain with ultimate benefit to the pig producers.
6. State Animal Husbandry Departments need to take up the issue of setting up of pig abattoirs in their respective states towards ensuring clean pork to the consumers.

The meeting ended with concluding remarks from Dr. D.K. Sarma, Director, ICAR-NRC on Pig. He thanked all the delegates for making it possible to attend the meeting and actively participating in the discussion process. He also thanked APEDA for granting permission to organize the important meeting.



Delegates participating in the round table meeting