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**ANALYZING THE PERFORMANCE OF
MAHINDA CHINTHANA'S DAIRY VILLAGES
IN BATTICALOA DISTRICT**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Implementation of the dairy village programme plays an important role in the economy of dairy village farmers in Batticaloa district. However, the implementation of this dairy village programme under the Mahinda Chinthana results in very huge benefits for dairy village families and country too. This research aims at assessing the performance of dairy village programme, through management practices, extension service provided by the department and problem faced by the farmers.

The study was conducted in Batticaloa district for a period of four months (October 2009 to January 2010) by using a questionnaire based survey system. A total of 150 farmers benefiting from dairy village implementation programme were interviewed using a formal questionnaire. The questionnaire included issues on socio economic condition of dairy village farmers, details on livestock, management practices, problems faced by the dairy farmers and extension services.

The study revealed that almost more than half of the farmers (66%) had experience more than 10 years, which is sufficient for better management and care for more milk production. Majority of the farmers were small holders (56%) and medium holders (35%). Almost 42% of the respondents were practiced fully intensive rearing system while 39% were adopting tethering system for programme cattle. All farmers were rearing cattle for milk purpose. With regard to educational level, most of them were coming under primary level (48%) and another 7% of them were not even schooled. 75% of the dairy village farmers fed their cattle with concentrates while only few of them (20%) feed their cattle with sufficient amount of concentrates. Most of the farmers reported that the major constraints (82%) in dairy village farm was

high cost for concentrate feeds followed by low price for milk production, lack of grasses and grass land, lack of credit facilities, and drought due to lack of water.

The result of the study showed that the implementation of dairy villages increase the farmers annual income significantly. This enables them to feed their family more months than before. The dairy village programme also help the farmers to get better knowledge and practice regarding good management practices, pasture and fodder production, better health management practices etc. Besides the positives impacts of the programme were efficient manure disposal, better disease caring practices etc.

To conclude, the implementation of dairy village programme highly benefited the farmers in improving their livelihood. But the management systems were very poor (58%) in some special cases like rearing system and feeding specially concentrate feeding. If this kind of practice will change, it may leads to good performance by the programme cattle in future.

Key words: Dairy village, Programme cattle, Indigenous cattle, management practices

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