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Role of women in Mixed Farming

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Abstract

Agriculture lays the foundation for human Civilization. Modern agriculture support 7.8 billion world populations through considerable increase in yields resulting from intensified farming with high level of input and chemical fertilizers and pesticides as well as advanced crop and livestock production technologies. Due to increased demand for food, chemical fertilizers is applied to squeeze more yields from land which may lead to environmental degradation such as soil matter depletion, nutrient loss, soil degradation etc. Intensive livestock and crop (separated) production has resulted in soil fertility loss and environmental pollution. It is a challenge before us to increase food production without compromising the integrity of environment. In such context, idea of sustainable agriculture arises to pursuit for balancing food production and environmental welfare as a double-edged strategic goal. To achieve this goal, farming system might be designed with due consideration of economics and environment and society. Recently mixed farming system receives increasing attention for its self sustainable feature. Mixed farming is characterized as a method of farming in which both crop and livestock farming are integrated for the goal of meeting family necessities and profiting from both enterprises. The case for integrating these two is based on the premises that by-products from the two systems are used on the same farm. Farmers engaged in mixed farming are economically better off than others because risk and uncertainties in crop production can be reduced by integrating livestock with that of crops. Livestock is an important source of income and employment in rural areas. They contribute to household income and provide full time occupation with better utilization of human resources. The role played by women as an essential human resource cannot not be neglected. Women contribute their energy in farm operations and livestock management besides their household activities. This paper presents an overview about the role of women in mixed farming.

Keywords: Mixed farming, women