

## **Bringing Home the Bacon: Promoting Pig Farming in Sikkim and Other North Eastern States**



*Piggery Sheds constructed through RKVY*

### **Background & Objectives**

More than 70% of the population of Sikkim eats pork. Traditionally almost every household rears a few pigs to cater to their requirements. However, supply of pork is far short of demand. Production of pork is presently at 171 MT in Sikkim against an estimated demand of 1246 MT. Similar is the situation pertains in almost all North Eastern Hill States of Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram. Demand supply gap almost makes it certain that financial viability and success of piggery based ventures is quite assured.

Pig farming is traditionally undertaken by the rural poor belonging to the lowest socio-economic strata. They have limited means to undertake scientific pig farming with improved foundation stock, proper housing, feeding and management. Therefore, suitable schemes to popularize scientific pig breeding and rearing of meat producing animals with adequate financial provisions are necessary to modernize the pig industry and to improve the productivity of small sized rural pig farms. The biggest constraint of promoting pig rearing is the availability of

good breeding stocks to produce piglets for rearing by the farmers.

Department of Animal Husbandry, Livestock, Fisheries and Veterinary Services, Sikkim had 5 piggery demonstration farms at different districts, namely:

- BOP Piggery Farm, Chungthang (North Sikkim)
- Tingvong Demonstration Piggery Farm (North Sikkim)
- Gyaba Piggery Demonstration Farm, Gyalshing (West Sikkim)
- Mangalbaria Demonstration Piggery Farm (West Sikkim)
- Karfectar Piggery Demonstration Farm (South Sikkim)

These farms were, however, inadequate to provide necessary number of piglets. Moreover, there was no pig breeding farm in East Sikkim and the farmers had to depend on other farms. To ease this constraint, it was decided to set up two more 50 sow farms under RKVY, one at Assamlingzey in East Sikkim and the other at Mellidara in South Sikkim in 2009-10.

Piglets from these farms can be provided to rural farmers of Sikkim, especially educated unemployed youth of villages, to take up piggery enterprises. This would not only meet the growing demand of pork & pork products of the state but also provide farmers a supplementary source of income.

Other north eastern states- Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Tripura and Mizoram have also decided to take up not only setting up of new pig farms, but also strengthening of existing farms, distributing pig units to farmers for raising pigs and also production of fodder for pigs.



## **Intervention**

Two mother parent nucleus farms set up at Assamlingzey in East Sikkim and at Mellidara in South Sikkim, with parent stock capacity of 50 sows each will have 4 satellite breeding farms at the village level. The nucleus farm will supply piglets to satellite farms, which in turn will provide piglets & fatteners to the weaker sections of the communities. These farmers will rear the piglets in the villages to meet increasing the demand for piglets & pork.

The mother farm units will produce good quality boars and sows, develop Parent Stock for production of young boars for public as well as check inbreeding of the existing stock and produce porkers and fatteners to meet the growing demand of ham, bacon, sausages and other popular pork products.

Farms will be managed on scientific basis to demonstrate knowledge intensive technologies to encourage shift from input-intensive technologies to improved technologies which maximize the efficiency of scarce natural resources, undertake collaborative applied research activities for production of alternative feeds, search for unconventional feed ingredients, herbal drugs and supplements etc. Farms will also be used to train and demonstrate model piggery farming practices to the unemployed youth/farmers and develop them as entrepreneurs in pig breeding. The farms will also be used as a demonstration units for imparting practical training to people on piggery management and production

Both the farms have become functional. An investment of Rs. 90.67 lakhs was made in constructing sheds for housing 50 sows and breeding pigs in each of the two mother farms. 240 piglets were born until 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2011 in these two farms. 50 piglets were transferred to the satellite centers and 20 units (10 piglets- 9 female and 1 male) were given to 20 farmers for raising pig production.

### **Outcome**

Phipra Hang Subba was provided 9:1 piglets to start the satellite farm in September, 2010. The production of piglets in this farm is about 100 to 110 per year. His income per year is approximately Rs. 2 -2.5 lakhs.

Two other beneficiaries, Nimkit Lepcha and Phurba Dorjee Tamang have also reported similar increase in their incomes.

Pig meat is a preferred source of protein in the North East. RKVY projects in various states have strengthened the existing farms and set up new pig breeding farms to assist in promoting development of genetically superior, high producing livestock, which has helped in improving the socio economic status of weaker section of farmers and unemployed youth by providing them with a supplementary source of income, protein rich food as well as organic manure that would add to their crop production.