

Extension Needs of Tribal Goat Keepers of North Coast Zone of the Andhra Pradesh, India

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Livestock farming is an important source of livelihood security, poverty alleviation and employment generation to millions of resource poor of India. The agrarian economy particularly in hilly areas revolves round the livestock and especially goats have been tribe's most reliable livelihood resource since domestication. Most of the tribes in India worship their own Gods and Goddesses reflecting their dependence on nature and animals, with subsistence earnings. The tribes '*Savara*' and '*Jatapu*' of North Coast zone of Andhra Pradesh rear goats as subsistence farming, whereas, they can improve their household income by commercializing their operations. The goat rearing pattern of the tribal farmers was assessed in the hilly area of North coast zone of Andhra Pradesh. A total of 120 tribal farmers from 30 villages of three *Mandals* of Vizianagaram district were selected through multistage sampling. The tribes were marginal farmers who cultivate paddy and '*raagi*' in wet lands and cashew in dry areas. Main source of their income was forest produce and cattle, goat and poultry were maintained by them. These tribes need to change their traditional subsistence practices to scientific rearing so as to improve net productivity from goat husbandry. The tribal women can be encouraged to rear goats as commercial enterprise through formation of SHGs to avail government support. These tribal goat keepers can be oriented to scientific goat rearing practices through capacity building measures, farmers to farmer extension, SHG formation and organized marketing interventions.

Key Words: Extension needs, India, Tribal goat keepers, SHGs, scientific rearing.