



Current Policy Environment

The Orissa Government Policy on Agriculture Development, including Livestock seeks to ensure the welfare of the vast majority of its people living in the rural areas and stresses social justice and equality of opportunity as important considerations in the development strategy. Within the confines of this basic objective, the state's policy intends in general to build a progressively modern and dynamic agricultural livestock economy in the state leading to improved employment potential, increased income, self-sufficiency in food and food security for the state. During the past five decades of the planned development era post-independence, the state however, has operated pretty much without a comprehensive policy framework in the Agriculture and Livestock sectors. The state formulated its first comprehensive Agricultural policy framework, including a component of Animal Husbandry, only in 1996.

Livestock sector in Orissa is highly livelihood intensive and over 80 per cent of its rural households own livestock of one species or the other and earn supplementary incomes from them. Livestock holding is less iniquitous than land holding and income from livestock is more equitably distributed. The sector contributes 7.25 per cent of the state's net domestic product and, therefore, development of the livestock sector is the critical pathway to rural prosperity. However, livestock sector policy so far, had only a marginal presence in the sectoral economy and the policies, in general, have failed to galvanise purposeful action.

The Government of Orissa, therefore, appointed a high-powered Steering Committee in 1998 to make a comprehensive review of the state livestock sector and to recommend new policy directions in order to enable the State Government to formulate a new Livestock Sector Policy Framework. The Steering Committee felt that, in the wake of the changing economic policies nationally and globally, the state livestock sector policy has to take a more holistic view of the sector and find ways of catalyzing rapid economic growth and development in the decades to come. The Steering Committee recommended that the State should formulate a comprehensive new policy framework for its Livestock Sector in order to help the sector to play its appointed role in the development of the state in the decades to come. These proposals for a new policy framework are based on the recommendations of the Steering Committee.