



Animal Husbandry Development Schemes in India: Opportunities for Farmers and Rural Entrepreneurs

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Animal husbandry sustains rural livelihoods, nutritional security, and employment in India. Dairy, poultry, small-ruminant, piggery, feed, and milk-processing enterprises offer openings for farmers, women, rural youth, and entrepreneurs, but limited finance, weak infrastructure, disease, low productivity, and poor market access hold many back. The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD) addresses these constraints through the National Livestock Mission (NLM), Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM), Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme (LHDCP), National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD), Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF), Kisan Credit Card (KCC) facilities, and support for dairy cooperatives and Farmer Producer Organizations (SDCFPO). This article summarizes each scheme's purpose, beneficiaries, and entrepreneurial applications, and stresses project planning, technical knowledge, biosecurity, market linkages, and verification of current eligibility.

Keywords: animal husbandry, livestock entrepreneurship, rural development, dairy farming, National Livestock Mission

Introduction

Livestock provide milk, meat, eggs, wool, and manure, along with supplementary income and financial security, particularly for small and marginal farmers and landless households. Entrepreneurial options include dairy farms, rural poultry units, sheep, goat, and pig enterprises, fodder and feed production, milk collection and processing, and livestock waste management. Yet many aspiring entrepreneurs struggle to arrange capital, obtain quality breeding stock, reach veterinary services, and build market links. The DAHD, under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, runs programmes addressing breeding, entrepreneurship, disease control, working capital, processing infrastructure, and marketing. Knowing each scheme's purpose and eligibility helps applicants choose well.

Major Central Government Schemes

National Livestock Mission (NLM). Implemented since 2014–15 and revised in 2021–22, the NLM has three sub-missions: breed development of poultry, sheep, goat, and pigs; feed and fodder development; and research, livestock insurance, extension, and innovation. Eligible activities include rural poultry breeding units, sheep and goat farms, pig breeding, fodder seed production, silage, hay-baling, and fodder-block units. Support is open to individuals, FPOs, SHGs, Section 8 companies, and state governments, depending on the activity [1].

Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM). Launched in December 2014, the RGM conserves indigenous bovine breeds and raises milk productivity through artificial insemination (AI) coverage, semen-station strengthening, sex-sorted semen, IVF, genomics, and the National Milk Recording Programme. Revised provisions add heifer-rearing centres and interest subvention for high-genetic-merit heifers. Most components are fully grant-funded, and beneficiaries vary by component [2].

Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme (LHDCP). Animal health determines productivity, mortality, and farm profitability. The LHDCP has three components: the National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP), Livestock Health & Disease Control (including Assistance to States for Control of Animal Diseases and mobile veterinary units), and Pashu Aushadhi, which provides affordable generic veterinary medicines. Its objectives include controlling foot-and-mouth disease and bovine brucellosis, and eradicating peste des petits ruminants (PPR) by 2030. State and Union Territory departments implement it, and farmers benefit through vaccination, diagnostics, and veterinary outreach [3].

National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD). The NPDD strengthens milk procurement, chilling, testing, processing, and marketing. Assistance flows through state dairy federations, milk unions, and cooperatives, so individual farmers benefit mainly by participating in these supported institutions [4].

Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF). Created under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat package, the AHIDF encourages private investment in dairy and meat processing, animal feed plants, breed-multiplication farms, veterinary vaccine and drug production, and animal-waste management. Eligible entities include individual entrepreneurs, private companies, MSMEs, FPOs, Section 8 companies, and dairy cooperatives. Its latest published continuation period ran to 2025–26, so applicants should check its present status [5].

Kisan Credit Card (KCC). Feed, medicines, vaccination, labour, and utilities must be paid for before income arrives. The KCC extends short-term working-capital credit to eligible animal husbandry and dairy farmers through participating banks, subject to lending norms and credit assessment [6,8].

Support for Dairy Cooperatives and FPOs (SDCFPO). This programme strengthens the financial and operational capacity of dairy cooperatives and dairy FPOs, improving procurement, processing, marketing, and market access for small producers [7].

Table 1. Comparative overview of major schemes

Scheme	Main focus	Principal beneficiaries
NLM	Breeding, entrepreneurship, feed and fodder	Individuals, SHGs, FPOs, cooperatives, approved entities
RGM	Indigenous bovine breeding and productivity	Cattle and buffalo farmers, breeding agencies, institutions
LHDCP	Vaccination, disease control, veterinary services	State agencies; farmers through services
NPDD	Dairy procurement, testing, processing	Dairy institutions and producer networks
AHIDF	Processing, feed, and other infrastructure	Entrepreneurs, companies, MSMEs, FPOs, cooperatives
KCC	Working-capital credit	Eligible animal husbandry and dairy farmers
SDCFPO	Cooperative and producer-organization development	Dairy cooperatives and FPOs

Conclusion

These schemes address breeding, entrepreneurship, animal health, dairy infrastructure, and credit, but none guarantees profit. Success depends on choosing the right scheme, technical

competence, sound financial planning, biosecurity, reliable inputs, and market access. Assistance works best when it supports a viable business plan with sustained technical backing.

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