

**Invited article**

**Range Mgmt. & Agroforestry 43 (1) : 1-10, 2022**

**ISSN 0971-2070**



**Role of dairy cooperatives in fodder seed production system**

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**Abstract**

The importance of green fodder and the use of quality seeds of improved fodder varieties for fodder cultivation have been realised by dairy cooperatives due to their positive effect in enhancing green fodder yields and improving the quantity and quality of milk produced by animals. Dairy cooperatives have played a very important role in increasing production and distribution of notified varieties of fodder crops to farmers by timely indent placement and lifting of breeder seed from different ICAR and agricultural institutes every year. Presently dairy cooperatives are the highest lifters of breeder seed of fodder crops, around 15-20 metric tons annually. Annually, dairy cooperatives are producing around 4500 metric ton seeds through 17 fodder seed processing plants in different states. Since 1983, dairy cooperatives have been very successful in continuously running quality fodder seed marketing and distribution programme through establishment of northern region and national fodder seed grids to cater fodder seed requirement of their farmers at affordable prices living in remote rural areas. This paper provides an overview of past developments, present status and challenges faced by dairy cooperatives in fodder seed production and marketing areas, necessary external and internal supports required to overcome issues and strengthening of ongoing fodder seed production and marketing programmes so as to give some insights to the researchers, planners, implementers and end-users working in fodder seed enhancement.

**Keywords:** Breeder seed, Dairy cooperatives, Fodder varieties, Seed marketing, Seed production