

UNIT 11: LIVESTOCK

Livestock makes a significant contribution to Pakistan's economy, accounting for 55.4 per cent in the agriculture sector in 2011–12 and 2012–13, and 11.9 per cent of the GDP during the same period. It has earned US\$1970.2 million from exports of live animals, processed meat, dairy products, and animal products, including leather, during this period.

Livestock includes cattle, buffaloes, sheep, goats, camels, horses, donkeys, and mules. Farm animals were particularly useful when large-scale mechanization had not taken place, to pull ploughs and carts and draw water from wells for irrigation, and cow dung was used as fuel and fertilizer. Today the role of cattle has changed as large and medium-sized farms are mechanized; irrigation, especially in Punjab, is by canals and tube wells, and modern transport is used to carry farm goods to the markets. Cattle make up the bulk of livestock in Pakistan and along with buffaloes and goats are the main sources of meat. Buffaloes, followed by cows, are the main source of milk. Pakistan is ranked today as one of the world's five largest producers of milk and has attracted a number of multinational producers of dairy products. Cattle are also important for the tanning and leather industries, and leather, hides, wool, and hair are exported.

Livestock would be a more productive sector of the economy if better feed and care, and improved veterinary services are provided. As there is a limited area of cultivable land, only a small proportion of it is given to the production of animal fodder, resulting in overgrazing on range lands and village grazing grounds. Cyclical growth of fodder on available land would also increase the output.

Livestock contribution to the national GDP is higher than that of crops. The Punjab government plans to modernize facilities for the livestock market at district level by providing proper weighing systems, veterinary services and documentation. A sizeable amount has been allocated for this in the current, 2014–15 budget; the project is funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). This will help create awareness amongst farmers about the

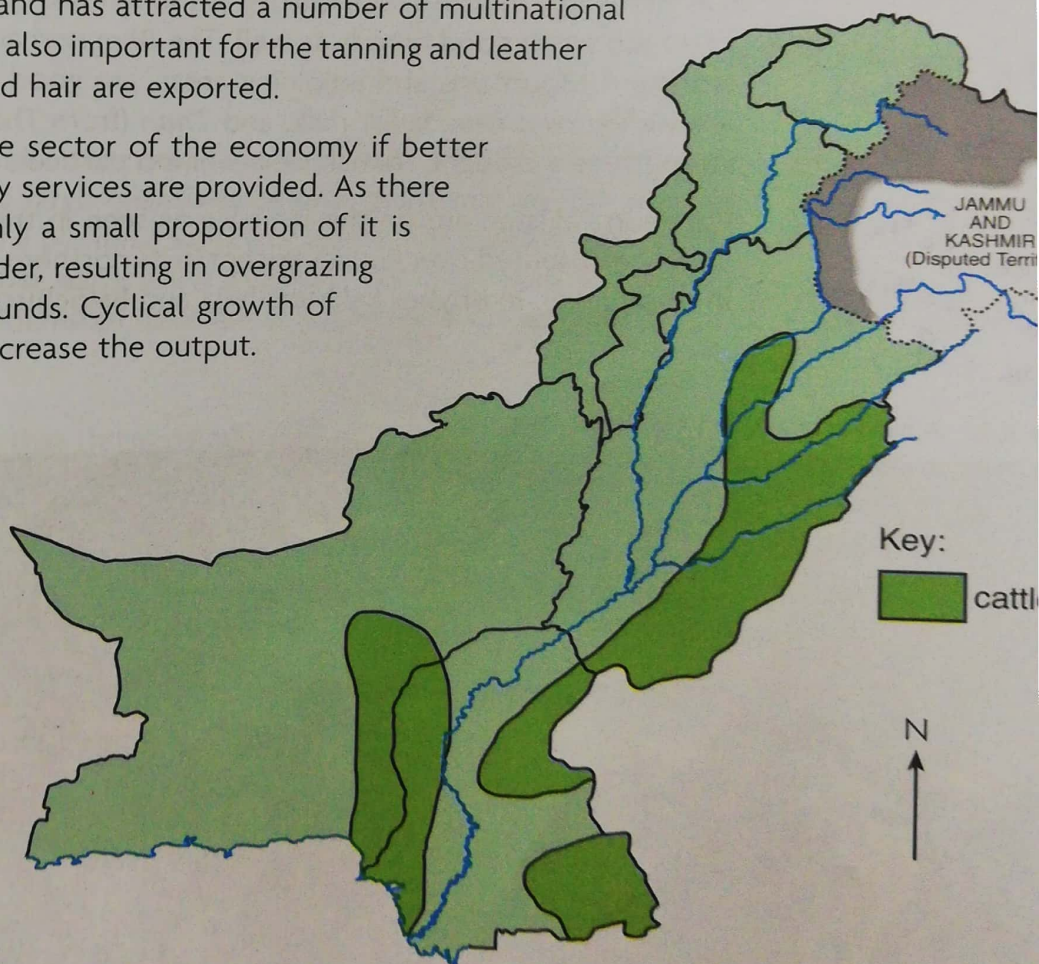


Figure 11.1: Distribution of cattle in Pakistan

Cattle

Cattle are an integral part of farm life in Pakistan hence there is even distribution across the country except for rugged areas and the cold highlands. The cattle in Pakistan are of the genus *Bos Indicus* (Zebu cattle). Although the quality of cattle in general is quite poor, there are some good breeds as well. The *Bhagnari* and the short, stout *Dhani*, found in the Northern Mountains and adjoining areas, are good work animals. *Red Sindhi* and *Sahiwal* are well-known breeds for milk, and *Thari* (from Tharparkar) is reputed for its milk and its strength as a draught animal. However, no particular breed has been developed for beef.

Cattle in Pakistan are on the increase as seen in the table above; the cattle population is widely distributed over Punjab, except in its northern region. In Sindh cattle are concentrated in Tharparkar. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, the cattle population is sparse.

23% meat Product

Location Period 250 days

Milk = 32%

Punjab 50%

Sindh = 22%

KPK = 19%

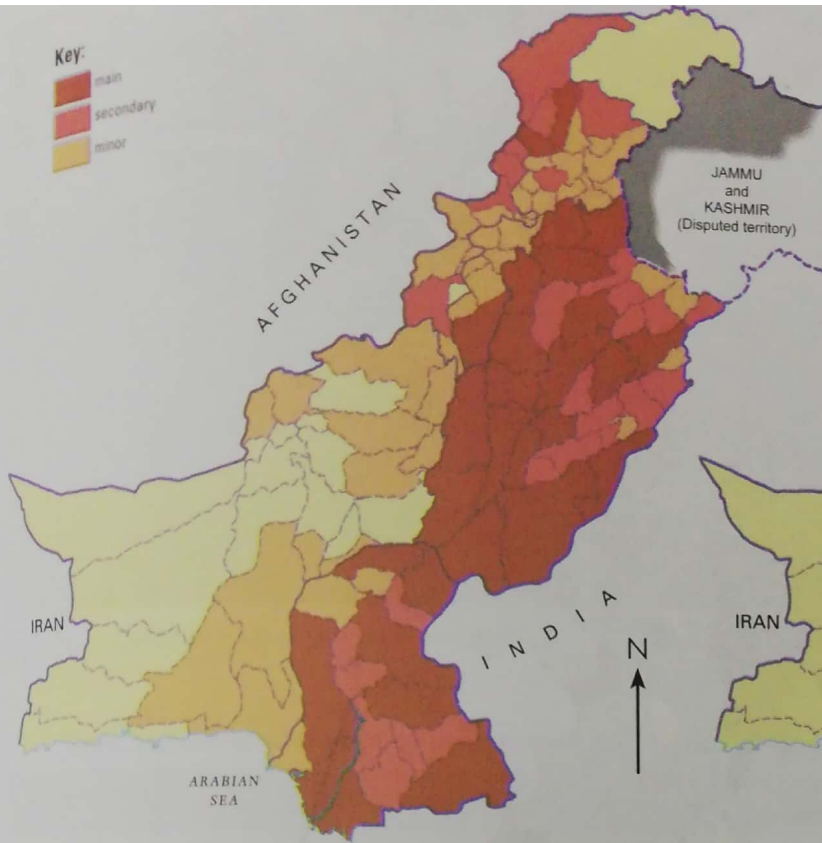


Figure 11.3: Cattle rearing regions

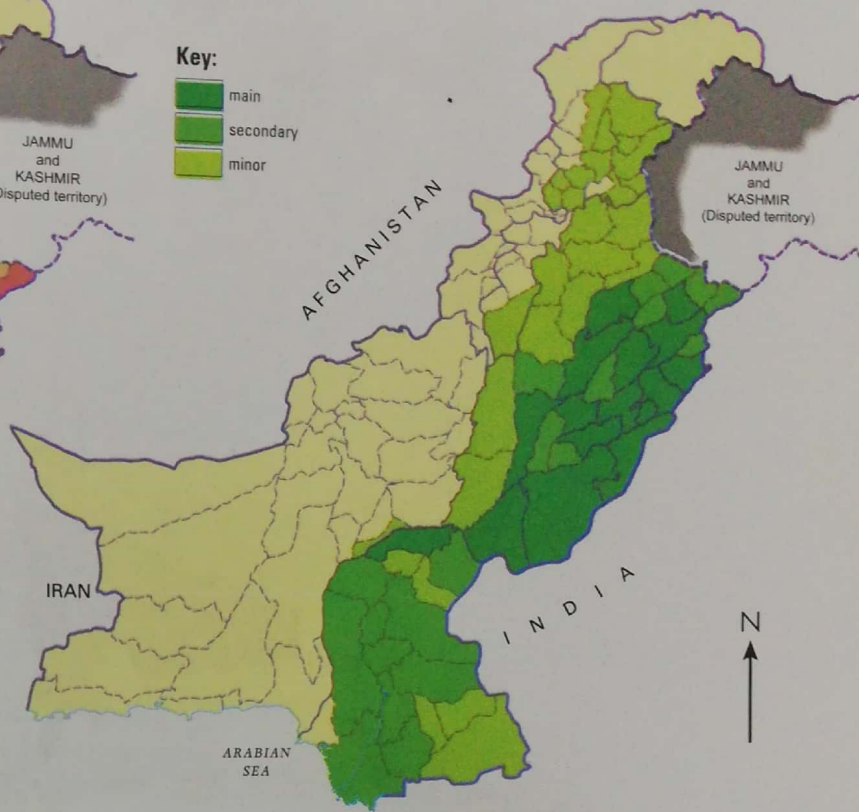


Figure 11.4: Buffalo rearing regions

Buffaloes

Buffaloes are an important source of milk and meat. The prominent breeds in Pakistan are *Nili Bar*, *Kundi*, and *Ravi* for producing large quantities of milk. Buffaloes do not tolerate cold weather and thrive in places with a plentiful supply of water. The buffalo head count is highest in the canal colonies of Punjab, particularly in Sahiwal for their quality, followed by Sindh. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan have fewer buffaloes in comparison.

Nili Bar = 66%
305 day lactation
76% in lactation period
Punjab = 71%
Sindh = 20%

Sheep and goats

Sheep and goats are adaptable animals that thrive equally well on rugged terrain and plains; hence they are dispersed across the country except in remote and very cold areas. In Punjab, the main goat-rearing regions are from Rahimyar Khan to Bahawalnagar, and in Chakwal and Attock. The eastern and central regions in Sindh and the central and north-western regions in Balochistan are important for goat rearing; however, the goat population is scattered in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Sheep are reared mainly in eastern and southern Sindh, extending eastward into Punjab, in central to west Balochistan, and in some parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

As evident in Table 32, the number of sheep and goats has registered an increase. In recent years, meat (mutton) from sheep and goats has competed well with beef from cattle. Goatskin is also used in the leather industry. Sheep are primarily raised for wool and meat. Wool production in Pakistan has also increased but its quality needs improvement as the wool industry in Pakistan is dependent on it, especially for carpet making. Sheep are clipped twice a year and the average annual wool yield per adult sheep is 1.82 kg.

Poultry farming

Poultry has long been a part of subsistence farming in Pakistan. Poultry meat and eggs are an affordable source of animal protein. In 1964 Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) laid the foundation of commercial poultry in the country. The poultry industry is today the most organized segment of agriculture with an investment of over Rs 730 billion. The poultry industry provides employment to about 1.5 million people.

The two main types of poultry farming are:

- i) rural poultry;
- ii) commercial poultry.

Rural poultry

Rural poultry in Pakistan is associated with subsistence farming for self-sufficiency in poultry products, meat, and eggs besides food grains and vegetables. Some urban dwellers also keep chickens and hens as a hobby which provides meat and eggs. Despite competition from commercial poultry since 1964, rural poultry continued to dominate with more than 60 per cent of poultry meat and eggs, but now it constitutes 25 to 30 per cent. Rural poultry production takes place all over the country, whereas commercial poultry is concentrated in selected areas. Rural poultry is also more expensive than commercial poultry, but also less prone to epidemics, such as bird flu, and healthier in terms of high protein products.

Commercial poultry

Commercial poultry farming in Pakistan began in 1964 when PIA, in collaboration with Shaver Poultry Farms of Canada, established a commercial hatchery in Karachi. A poultry feed mill was also started around the same time by Lever Brothers at Rahimyar Khan, followed by others at various locations. Commercial poultry in Pakistan has come a long way since then and made admirable progress.



Figure 11.7: A view of a commercial poultry farm

The early phase (1964–71) of commercial poultry had slow growth. The government encouraged poultry farming through tax exemptions and by allowing the import of equipment and improved breeding stocks. Consequently, rapid development of poultry farming took place during 1971–75, particularly around large cities like Karachi and Lahore. The poultry industry recorded a boom during 1976–80. The production of eggs increased from 624 million in 1976 to 1223 million in 1980. The broiler birds increased from 7.2 million to 17.4 million. In 1981 the glut in the market and poultry diseases brought about a depression in this industry which lasted until 1990. To protect the birds from the polluted atmosphere of big cities like Karachi and Lahore, some poultry farms were relocated to the cooler climates of Abbottabad, Murree Hills, and the Quetta Valley; some large farms were had a controlled environment for better productivity. In later years, multinational companies have also invested in poultry farming on scientific lines in Raiwind, south of Lahore. Poultry meat constitutes close to 27 per cent of the total meat production in the country.

The Poultry Research Institute, Veterinary Research Institute, and Agricultural University, Faisalabad have been active in efforts to control avian diseases and increase productivity in poultry. However, the effects of diseases like avian flu, and natural disasters like the extensive floods in 2010 that caused huge losses need to be managed well.