

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR INCREASED PROCUREMENT OF MILK IN MAHARASHTRA

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1. *The Problem*

Compared to the earlier years, the public sector dairy plants in Maharashtra were able to procure much larger quantities of milk during 1974-75, especially during the winter season. The increase in the procurement was so sudden and substantial that the Milk Supplying Schemes in cities like Bombay and Poona could not only issue milk ration cards to all the families on their long waiting lists but they had also to search for additional clientele to dispose of the extra milk. Considerable quantities of fluid milk were converted into milk powder to contend with the excess procurement of milk. In the context of the scarcity of milk which had become so chronic during the earlier two years, the sudden increase in the supply of milk to the city dwellers in 1974-75 was quite surprising. The present study¹ tries to identify the factors responsible for the increased procurement, through some case studies.

An attempt is made in the first instance to identify the areas in the State, which had contributed substantially to the increase. Further analysis needed for the identification of the factors, is restricted only to some of the areas which had shown a very large increase.

2. *Milk Procurement Procedures*

For the procurement of milk in the rural areas, the Maharashtra State is divided into three regions viz., the Poona region, the Konkan region and the Nagpur-Aurangabad region. There are 9 Government Milk Schemes operating in the Poona Region and 5 and 6 Schemes in the other two regions respectively. These milk schemes are run by the Dairy Development Department in the State. The Government Milk Schemes procure milk from a variety of sources. The major agencies for milk supply to the Schemes are the Unions or Federations of the milk producers' co-operatives in their areas of operation. These unions collect milk from their member societies in villages and sell it to the Milk Scheme at the gate of the Government Dairy Plant. Besides, certain other co-operative bodies like the Co-operative Sugar

¹ The study was taken up in the Agro-Economic Research Centre, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Poona, at the instance of the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation.