



Dairy Entrepreneurship Development – The Success Story of Mr. Uzair Sikander

*Gowher Gull Sheikh, Manzoor A Yatoo, Syed A Haq, Rameez A Dar, Anees A Shah, Syed M Shah, and Arif A Pandit

Mountain Livestock Research Institute, Manasbal, Safapora, SKUAST-Kashmir

*Corresponding Author's email: gull2217@gmail.com

Entrepreneurship is widely perceived as a process of innovation and creative thinking essential not only for establishing industries but also for developing the agricultural sector. An entrepreneur is an individual who creates something new, undertakes risk, and bridges the gap between aggregate supply and demand by exploiting available market opportunities. Dairy farming, being a vital component of the rural economy, has immense potential for generating income and employment through enhanced productivity of milch animals. It represents one of the most promising sectors for entrepreneurship development in India (Lazar, 2014). The application of modern science and technology in dairy farming can greatly improve the socio-economic conditions of rural communities, making dairy farming more productive and profitable (Dakhore et al., 2002). A dairy entrepreneur is responsible for all activities involved in dairy farm management and should possess the ability to make independent strategic and operational decisions.

Profile of the Entrepreneur

This case study highlights the journey of Mr. Uzair Sikander, a 26-year-old dairy entrepreneur who successfully runs a modern dairy unit, “Kasperia Farm,” located about 14 km from Srinagar city in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, India. His journey serves as a motivation for aspiring livestock entrepreneurs who wish to start a dairy venture with limited resources. This success story aims to inspire unemployed youth, farmers, and entrepreneurs to understand every aspect of dairy farming—its challenges, opportunities, and requirements, so they can prepare effectively with the right skills, determination, and planning before starting their own enterprise.

Idea Generation

The inspiration for the venture began with a simple incident. Mr. Sikander, who was in the habit of reading newspapers daily, once came across an article highlighting the issue of milk adulteration. Concerned about the quality of milk consumed at his home, he decided to test it and found it adulterated and unhygienic. To ensure access to pure milk, he bought two crossbred cows to meet his family's needs. He also began supplying the surplus milk to friends and relatives, who appreciated its quality. Encouraged by their positive feedback and increasing demand, he realized there was a social need for pure and hygienic milk in the city. Driven by this purpose, he decided to transform his idea into a social enterprise with the mission to “provide hygienic milk to every household.” Leaving behind his profession as a lawyer, he resolved to establish a full-scale dairy farm.

Collection of Information

Before setting up the farm, Mr. Sikander conducted extensive research by visiting modern dairies to gather information about infrastructure, investment requirements, labour management, risks, and expected returns. He also sought technical guidance and scientific

support from the Mountain Livestock Research Institute (MLRI), Manasbal, under SKUAST-Kashmir. With their help, he learned about feeding and management practices across different physiological stages, animal health management, vaccination schedules, and milk quality parameters like fat and SNF percentage. Additionally, he utilized social media platforms to enhance his knowledge about modern dairy technologies and farm operations.

Procurement of Resources

Mr. Sikander started his dairy venture on his parental land (10 kanals) with four crossbred Holstein cows, investing around ₹3.20 lakh (₹80,000 per animal) and an additional ₹10 lakh for sheds and infrastructure. He hired two labourers at a salary of ₹8,000 per month each, provided them accommodation and basic facilities like electricity, water, and cooking gas, and personally trained them in dairy management based on his learning experience. For breeding, he initiated artificial insemination (AI) with the assistance of gynecological experts from MLRI, Manasbal. He installed a milking machine and acquired essential farm management tools to ensure efficient operations.

Present Status of the Dairy Farm

At present, “Kasperia Farm” houses around 30 cattle—10 lactating, 5 dry, 5 heifers, and 10 young calves. The farm produces an average of 200 litres of milk per day, which is directly supplied to Srinagar city through an auto vehicle, eliminating middlemen. The dairy’s milk production is growing annually by 20–25%, owing to improved management and scientific practices. The farm operates both closed and loose housing systems with separate sections for lactating, dry, and young animals. He has constructed a modern milking parlour with a capacity of 14 animals, ensuring clean and hygienic milk production using imported milking machines. The farm follows a “no-touch milk” policy from milking to delivery to maintain the highest standards of hygiene. For breeding, the farm adopts advanced reproductive technologies (ARTs) such as artificial insemination and oestrus synchronization, using imported semen from the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) and ABS. The farm is equipped with CCTV surveillance for monitoring and employs teaser bulls and heat-detection tools for breeding management.

Record Keeping and Management Practices

All farm records including milking data, health logs, and financial accounts are managed through Android-based software. Regular milk testing for subclinical mastitis is conducted, and all animals are routinely examined for nutritional deficiencies and diseases. Preventive health care measures such as deworming and vaccination are strictly followed, and treatment of sick animals is carried out only under the supervision of a qualified veterinary doctor. The farm also maintains guard dogs for security, especially when animals are kept in open paddocks.

Challenges Faced

Despite his success, Mr. Sikander faced several challenges during his journey:

- **Labour Issues:** Recruiting skilled and affordable labourers was difficult, as unskilled workers frequently left the job.
- **Housing Management:** Due to the temperate climate of Srinagar, managing cold stress in animals and ensuring year-round fodder availability was challenging.
- **Marketing and Pricing:** The farm’s distance (14 km) from Srinagar city increased transportation and cold-chain costs. Additionally, consumers were often reluctant to pay higher prices for quality milk.
- **Health Challenges:** Managing cases of repeat breeding and reproductive disorders was occasionally difficult.

Future Plans

Looking ahead, Mr. Sikander plans to:

- Establish a biogas plant utilizing the farm's organic waste to generate energy for various farm operations.
- Form a network of dairy entrepreneurs to ensure fair pricing and collective marketing of pure and hygienic milk, thereby countering the influence of adulteration in the dairy market.

Conclusion

The story of Kasperia Farm demonstrates how vision, determination, and scientific knowledge can transform a small idea into a successful social enterprise. Mr. Uzair Sikander's journey from a lawyer to a progressive dairy entrepreneur stands as a powerful example for the rural youth of India. His efforts not only promote hygienic milk production but also contribute significantly to rural employment, sustainable farming, and the overall growth of the dairy sector.

Reference:

1. Dakhore, K. M., Kadam, M. M., & Patil, S. S. (2002). *Entrepreneurship development through dairy enterprise in rural areas*. *Indian Dairyman*, 54(7), 29–33.
2. Lazar, N. (2014). *Entrepreneurship development in dairy sector: A tool for rural upliftment*. *International Journal of Scientific Research*, 3(8), 45–47.

