

With two buffaloes and a goat, and scientific approach, Punjab farmer creates Rs 1 cr in assets



Farmer Gurdeep Singh at his Goat, buffalo and crops farm. As thousands of young Punjabis chase dreams of settling on foreign shores, Gurdeep Singh, 35, of Bhagi Bandar village in Bathinda district chose to stay back. Nearly a decade later, that decision has helped him build a debt-free integrated farming enterprise worth Rs 1 crore. And all of it started with two family buffaloes and a goat of Beetal breed that he bought.

Today, Gurdeep's model of goat breeding, Neeli Ravi and Murrah buffalo rearing, apart from farming generates an annual turnover of Rs 36-37 lakh and a net income of around Rs 25 lakh. The success, he says, is proof that livestock farming, when managed scientifically, can become a reliable route to prosperity.

"Dairy and goat breeding are not businesses that push farmers into debt. If managed properly, they can actually help farmers come out of debt," says Gurdeep. After completing his BA, Gurdeep secured a job as a typist at the District Administrative Complex in Bathinda. Though the private job offered financial security, it never gave him satisfaction. "Sometimes you have to compromise with your principles. I wanted to earn honestly and independently. So, in 2014, after working for four years, I left the job and joined my father in farming," he recalls. "That decision completely changed my life."

Unlike commercial dairy farmers who begin with heavy investments, Gurdeep started with almost nothing. His family already owned two buffaloes for household milk consumption, while he purchased a single Beetal goat for a few thousand rupees.

“Instead of spending the earning, I reinvested every rupee into expanding the livestock enterprise. Over the next 10 years, careful breeding transformed that modest beginning into a thriving and profitable farming business,” he says.

Today, he maintains 21-22 Neeli Ravi and Murrah buffaloes, including 10-12 milking animals, besides nearly 50 pure-bred Beetal goats. He also cultivates crops on 11 acres, including eight owned by the family and three taken on lease.

Milk production remains the backbone of the enterprise. At any given time, 10-12 buffaloes are in milk. The premium-quality milk is supplied directly to households, generating annual sales of Rs 18-20 lakh.

“The remaining buffaloes are breeding animals being prepared to replace ageing animals and for selling purpose. Rather than purchasing replacements from outside, I develop my own stock,” says Gurdeep.

Every year, he sells two to three pure Neeli Ravi and Murrah buffaloes for around Rs 1.5 lakh each.

His goat-rearing journey too has followed the same principle of patient expansion. Instead of selling every kid born to his goats, he retains the female offspring to gradually build the herd. Today, he keeps around 50 breeding goats and sells more than 50 kids annually. Depending on their age, a kid fetches Rs 10,000-12,000, while breeding goats are sold for up to Rs 30,000. Goat breeding now contributes another Rs 6-7 lakh annually after expenses.

For Gurdeep, livestock is not just a source of income but a financial safety net. “Livestock is like a safety deposit that can be converted into cash at any time, much faster than money kept in a bank. Unlike machinery, these livestock assets generate income every day through milk production and breeding”.

The steady earnings have enabled him to buy an additional acre of farmland and a 500-square-yard residential plot.

His cropping pattern is designed to support the livestock enterprise. He grows maize for silage and green fodder, besides cultivating short-duration paddy, wheat and summer moong. Producing most of the fodder on his own farm keeps feeding costs under control and shields the business from market fluctuations.

“We save the income earned from crop cultivation and manage all our household expenses through dairy and goat farming,” he says, adding that he has never taken a loan.

The enterprise is managed by Gurdeep, his parents and his wife, while milk is supplied directly to households, helping build long-term customer relationships.

His farm has now become a learning centre, with four to five farmers visiting every week to understand buffalo and goat breeding. Gurdeep conducts these sessions free of cost and

encourages beginners to start small, breed their own animals, reinvest profits and focus on quality rather than numbers.

Despite having opportunities to move abroad, he chose to stay with his family in Punjab. Looking back, he has no regrets. "Rather we are more than equal to those who are earning in dollars," he says. "There is no need to go to Canada or America if we are willing to work in an innovative manner. Punjab's land itself can provide an income more than dollars at your doorstep."