

Human Resource in Cooperatives – Future Requirements and Challenges – Identification of Gaps

Human resource development in dairy cooperative sector needs for a holistic approach to facilitate efficient handling of enhanced volumes of milk of the envisaged 50% of marketable surplus of 100 million tonnes of milk by 2021-22 by organised dairy sector. Specifically, dairy cooperative sector requires competent manpower to ensure full compliance with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and the Regulations, thereunder.

HR related issues faced by dairy cooperative sector, which need attention, are as follows:

1. Most of the manpower currently working in dairy cooperative sector was employed during Operation Flood and, therefore, is retiring or on the verge of retirement. The problem gets further complicated as young professionals are not hired to fill the gap. In most of the places employees are hired on contractual terms.
2. Compensation is not found adequate to match with salaries offered by other sectors especially to managerial category officials. Most of the milk unions are now facing problem in attracting and retaining the managerial officials to manage the business and human resources.
3. Reputation of the most of the milk union as a serious employer is at stake, which prevents quality persons to join the organisations. Conducive environment to attract young talent to manage dairy affairs is lacking. Moreover, vulnerability of professionals has been found in highly politicized cooperative leadership. In such cases either professionals leave the sector or succumb to the pressure. In both the ways it is detrimental to business.
4. Human resource development affair is seen by most of milk unions as administration issue and is handled by administration department therefore no succession plan was chalked out. This is resulting in low motivation of officers/staff. The growth and diversification in most of the milk union has not taken place in last 5yrs which is restricting avenues of career growth of the employee working within the organisation.
5. Training and capacity building strategy to build competent professional, especially in middle and higher management is missing in most of the milk unions.

The biggest challenge for the cooperative dairying sector will be getting committed professionals who are willing to work for farmers and engaged with farmer's institutions. Therefore, the success of cooperative dairy industry in 21st Century lies on identifying, attracting, recruiting, retaining and training human resources. The decision makers in dairy cooperatives are required to play a major role in expanding human resources in dairying by attracting the qualified personnel and retaining them for competence enhancement, training and capacity building support and mutual linkages with institutions for continuous research and adoption of technological advances.