

NDDB arm to launch domestic bovine sex-selection technology

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To increase the population of milch animals and their productivity, an indigenous and affordable sex-sorted semen technology will soon be rolled out for dairy farmers in India.

Field trials

NDDB Dairy Services, a subsidiary of the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), has successfully conducted field trials of sex-sorted semen.

The sex-sorting semen technology separates male sperms from the spermatozoa of cattle and ensures only female calf is delivered as a means to enhance milk output. "We have successfully conducted field trials in Maharashtra and Chennai. The success ratio of an animal delivering only a female calf is 87-90 per cent – 20-25 female calves were produced," said CP Devanand, deputy managing director, NDDB Dairy Services, on the sidelines of International Dairy Federation's (IDF) World Dairy Summit 2022.

Devanand further said the

technology has been indigenously developed in collaboration with Bengaluru-based bio-engineering company Jiva Sciences Private Limited; Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru; Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai; and National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), Bengaluru.

Currently, the sex sorting technology for bovine semen is sourced through international players such as the US-based Sexing Technologies (ST USA), through its Indian arm ST Genetics India. The cost per dose of sexed semen for artificial insemination is ₹1,500-2,000; when an animal requires multiple doses, the cost shoots up to ₹4,000, making it unviable for the average farmer. "We are ready for commercial launch by the end of this year, at around ₹250 per dose of sexed semen, which is much more affordable compared to existing alternatives. This will be made available through our semen centres," said Devanand. The technology is mostly used for cows, as the male buffalo carries higher value than a bull.

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