

Formation of Ghungroo piglet cluster at tribal villages: ERS-IVRI conducted activities under DAPST on 20 and 21 February, 2025

The Ghungroo breed of pig is a unique Indian breed found in the Himalayan foothills of West Bengal. To conserve this breed, the Experiment Station (ERS) of the Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) has been working to propagate and popularize it in various districts of South Bengal, including Nadia, North and South 24 Parganas, Hooghly, and Jhargram. The key activities include distributing piglets and feed, and conducting extension programs to develop skills, change knowledge, and improve attitudes towards scientific pig farming, particularly among tribal farmers and women. By targeting women in tribal communities, the program aims to empower them economically. In the villages where ERS-IVRI has intervened, primarily through the DAPST flagship program, a significant increase in family incomes has been observed. Additionally, the number of pigs has increased, and farmers have shown positive changes in their knowledge, attitudes, and adoption of scientific pig farming practices. The program has also seen an increased interest from educated youth in taking up animal farming and allied entrepreneurship as a career.

This year, we have selected a few new villages outside the home tract of the Ghungroo breed of pigs, with the aim of creating clusters of this breed in these areas. The villages we have initiated work in are: 1. Gayespur (Kalyani, Nadia, West Bengal) 2. Makaltala and Farmania Villages (Habra I, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal) 3. Gopalpur and Pangaskhali villages (Canning I, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal).



Awareness cum exposure visit on 20th February, 2025 of beneficiaries from Canning I Block

On February 20, 2025, 16 tribal farmers (including 14 women) from Gopalpur and Pangaskhali villages in Canning I, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, visited our research institute. The farmers interacted with our scientists, who introduced them to the different sections of the institute. During the visit, the institute organized an awareness program on pig farming. The farmers shared that they had initiated pig farming with non-descript pigs, but the productivity was not satisfactory. The scientists found that the farmers had very limited knowledge of scientific pig farming and were facing issues such as disease, high feed prices, and lack of access to good breeds. In response, Dr. Arnab Sen, the Head of Research Centre, suggested that the farmers should adopt a cluster-based approach to pig farming, which would help them access organized markets and increase their incomes. Dr. S. Naskar provided guidance on good farm management practices, including housing, feeding, and animal care, to improve productivity. Dr. G.K. Das expressed the institute's willingness to provide support for establishing a pig farming cluster in these villages through the District Agriculture and Pilot Scheme (DAPST). He discussed the importance of addressing reproductive issues, timely vaccination, and setting up a well-organized medicine bank in the village. He also emphasized the potential for integrated farming, such as combining pig and fish farming or pig and poultry. Finally, Dr. T.K. Biswas explained the purpose and modus operandi of the DAPST, the economics of pig farming, breeding, different pig breeds, and marketing.



Inputs distribution on 21st February, 2025 for beneficiaries from Habra I block

On February 21, 2025, an input distribution and farm demonstration event were held at the Kalyani animal farm of ERS-IVRI. The event targeted tribal beneficiaries from Makaltala and Farmania villages in the Habra I block of North 24 Parganas district. The farmers were selected based on a prior survey of their demographic status and economic condition. Preference was given to those who were interested in or had prior knowledge of pig farming. A total of 40 piglets (16 males and 24 females) of the Ghungroo breed, raised on the farm from selected parents, were distributed among 19 beneficiary families. Additionally, the farmers received 1,500 kg of pig grower mash on the day, and they will be provided with 2,500 kg of feed in the coming months. Regular health and vaccination camps will be organized for the beneficiaries. During the event, Dr. T.K. Biswas demonstrated the proper farm activities and provided a brief overview on the scientific aspects of pig feeding, housing, management, breeding, health care, and marketing.