**A STUDY ON HUSBANDRY**

**PRACTICES OF DAIRY FARMING AT**

**CHITTAGONG SUBURBAN AREA**

 **ABSTRACT**

The present study was assigned to determine the present status including general information, feeding, breeding, housing, milking etc. and costs & returns of small dairy farms, to compare the productive and reproductive performance of crossbred and indigenous cows and to make recommendation for development of small scales dairy farm. With this view, the empirical data were collected by using pretested questionnaire. The study was conducted at preselected 30 dairy farms in Chittagong suburban area, and two months-long survey was diminished on thirty small dairy owners. It appeared from the study that 57% farm owners belong to business class and remaining 43% to different categories. 53% took dairying as a side-business whereas only 47% took it as a main business enterprise. Major percentage of farm owner education level was Higher Secondary 60% and the average number of animal per farm was 13.01. The average monthly income of farm owners found in the study area was Tk. 4387. It was observed that farm owners had 85.4% crossbred (Indigenous cattle crossed with Friesian and Jersey) and was 14.6% indigenous cattle and 87% farmers used artificial insemination and rest used both artificial and natural services. Daily milk yield/cow/farm was 4.27 and 1.78 liters for a crossbred and indigenous dairy cows respectively. It was estimated that the rearing cost of dairy cow was Tk. 67.5/cow/day and return from rearing dairy cow was Tk. 85.2/cow/day. The net return was Tk. 17.7/cow/day from crossbred in the study area and cost benefit ratio was 1: 1.26. The dry period, calving interval, services per conception & day’s open of crossbred was 98.5$\pm 18.9, $419$\pm 11, 3.1\pm 0.82, 118\pm 25.8 $and indigenous was 140$\pm 10.4, $428$\pm 24.7,$ 1.95$\pm 0.44,$ 137$\pm 7.78$ respectively. The study showed that there were significant (P<0.01) differences within the dry period, services per conception, day’s open, highest and lowest milk production and lactation period of crossbred and indigenous dairy cows. The study also showed non-significant differences within calving interval for crossbred and indigenous. In case of small dairy farming, the farms were facing a lot of problems such as scarcity of feeds and fodder, high price of concentrate and lack of technical knowledge. Although the dairy cow owners face problems, the study observed that there were potentials particularly for the small dairy farmers. The farmers keeping 8-10 crossbred cows professionally could earn a modest livelihood.

**Key words:** Cost and return, crossbred, dairy farming, indigenous, performance.