



Breeds of Buffaloes in Gujarat: Important in upliftment of Rural Economy

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Introduction

India's livestock sector is one of the largest in the world. Buffalos are domesticated animals that are used for a variety of purposes, including dairy products, and draft work. Livestock is the main source of income of small and marginal farmers in India. About 20.5 million people depend upon livestock for their livelihood. Livestock contributed 16% to the income of small farm households as against an average of 14% for all rural households. Livestock provides livelihood to two-third of rural community. It also provides employment to about 8.8 % of the population in India. India has vast livestock resources. Livestock sector contributes 4.11% GDP and 25.6% of total Agriculture GDP. Livestock contributes about 25.6% and 4.1% in Agriculture and National GDP.

In Gujarat, total livestock population is 26.8 million showing decrease of 0.75% over previous Livestock Census-2012 and among that 10.5 million are Buffalo (showing increase of 1.52% over previous Livestock Census-2012), which are cover 39.29% of total livestock population of the country (Anonymous, 2019).

Banni Buffalo

- ❖ **Synonyms:** Kachchhi and Khundhi
- ❖ **Breeding tract:** The Name of this breed is evolved from its native tract Banni area of Kutchh District of Gujarat. The breeding tract is in and around Kutch district.
- ❖ **Age at First Parturition:** Average 38-45 Months.
- ❖ **Milk Production/ lactation:** 1800-2000 Kg.

- ❖ **Calving Interval:** 12-13 months.
- ❖ **Milk Fat percentage:** Average 7-8 %.
- ❖ **Colour:** Mostly black (95%) in colour as well as brown or Copper (5%).
- ❖ **Horn Shape & Size:** Horns are tightly coiled vertically with single to double coiling.
- ❖ **Weight:** Average 525-625 Kg in Males & 475-575 in females.
- ❖ **Special point:** Night Grazing and Once in a day milking are some of the unique features of this breed.



Jaffrabadi Buffalo

- ❖ **Synonyms:** Jaffari
- ❖ **Breeding tract:** It is named after the town of Jaffarabad, port of Amreli district of Saurashtra. Its breeding tract is in and around area of Gir Forest such as, Amreli, Junagadh, Bhavanagar, Rajkot district.
- ❖ **Age at First Parturition:** 41-55 Months with average of 45 months
- ❖ **Milk Production/ lactation:** 2150-2340 Kg with average of 2238 Kg
- ❖ **Calving Interval:** 14-15 months.
- ❖ **Milk Fat percentage:** Average ranges from 7-9%
- ❖ **Colour:** Generally Black in colour and also Copper coloured animals in small proportion.
- ❖ **Horn Shape & Size:** Horns exhibit wide variation, but usually emerge out by compressing the head, go downward sideways, then upward and inward finally forming a ring like structure. It makes eyes to look small - termed as study eye, especially in males. Horn Shape is peculiar in this breed.
- ❖ **Weight:** Average 1000 Kg in Males and 800 Kg in Females (that's why, also called as " Mini Elephant")
- ❖ **Special point:** Jaffrabadi is the heaviest of all the Indian breeds of Buffaloes.



Mehsana Buffalo

- ❖ **Synonyms:** Mehsani, Mehsana
- ❖ **Breeding tract:** It is named after the town of Mehsana. Breeding Tract is in and around Mehsana, Banaskantha and Sabarkantha districts of the northern part of Gujarat.
- ❖ **Age at First Parturition:**
Average 42-48 Months
- ❖ **Milk Production/ lactation:** 1800-2000 Kg.
- ❖ **Calving Interval:** 10-31 months with average of 16 months.
- ❖ **Milk Fat percentage:** Average 7-7.5 %
- ❖ **Colour:** Mostly black, a few animals are black brown or brown
- ❖ **Horn Shape & Size:** Horns are generally sickle shaped with the curve more upward than in the Surti breed and less curved than in the Murrah breed. They are generally bent downward and then take a curve like the horns of a ram.
- ❖ **Weight:** Average 484 Kg in Males and 565 Kg in Females.
- ❖ **Special point:** Mehsani is famous as persistent milker and regular breeder. The breed is considered to be a cross between Surti & Murrah. Eyes are very prominent, black and bright bulging from their sockets with folds of skin on upper lids.



Surti Buffalo

- ❖ **Synonyms:** Charotari
- ❖ **Breeding tract:** It is named after the town of Surat. Breeding Tract is in and around Kheda, Vadodara, Anand & Bharuch districts of the middle and southern part of Gujarat.





- ❖ **Age at First Parturition:** Average 40-55 Months
- ❖ **Milk Production/ lactation:** 800-1400 Kg
- ❖ **Calving Interval:** 14-19 months
- ❖ **Milk Fat percentage:** Average 7-7.5 %.
- ❖ **Colour:** Coat colour varies from rusty brown to silver- grey. Skin is black or brown.
- ❖ **Horn Shape & Size:** Horns are flat, sickle shaped and are directed down ward and backward, and then turn upward at the tip to form a hook. Medium in size.
- ❖ **Weight:** Average 430-440 Kg in Males and 400-410 Kg in Females (Smallest among all buffalo breed of India).
- ❖ **Special point:** The Surti buffalo is lighter in body weight, consume less feed, and produce milk with high fat and SNF content. It is popular with land, small and marginal farmers.