

Role of Cattle Fairs (*Mela*) in Sustaining Animal Husbandry in India: A Case Study of Sonepur *Mela* in Bihar

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ABSTRACT Animals and birds an important role in national economy. Keeping in view their importance a study was conducted at Sonepur animal fair in November, 1989 where apparently the largest number as well as variety of animals are sold/purchased every year. The purpose of the study was to make inventories of all the animals (including birds), domestic as well as wild, that had arrived in the *mela* together with number, catchment area, and profile of the buyers and sellers, Altogether 12 different animals – elephant camel, horse, monkey, cow, bull, buffalo, goat, dog, pig, rabbit, guinea-pig and 7 type of birds – lalmunia, parrot, pigeon, desi maina, tittil hen, peacock and duck were brought to the *mela*. Animals/birds purchased from this fair are taken to different parts of Bihar State as well as other States of India.