

India's animal resources are substantial when measured in terms of numbers. However, most animals are not reared for meat. Cattle are mainly reared for milk and as draught animals. Sheep are reared for wool. Goats are reared for both milk and meat. While pigs and poultry are reared for purposes of meat, they are not generally bred along organized or scientific lines. Current production of meat and poultry products (excluding eggs) in India is estimated to be almost 4 million tonnes per annum. India's domestic poultry industry is growing at an annual rate of 15% (current per capita consumption is 0.6 kg/year). Egg production has increased steadily over the past decade to about 23,000 million, and this momentum is expected to continue in the future. Exports of meat and meat preparations to neighbouring countries, especially the Middle East, have increased steadily over the last few years.

Indians generally eat fresh, rather than processed meats, although ham, salami, sausages and bacon are gaining in popularity. Goat meat, pork products, chicken and eggs are most popular, although the meats of other cattle (like buffaloes), sheep, other animals and birds are also consumed. Beef is consumed by only a small portion of the population. Buffalo meat is soft, has low cholesterol and a high hemoglobin content. A large potential market can therefore be tapped if these properties can be successfully exploited in the marketing of buffalo meat. Poultry meat is accepted by most of the Indian population, and even vegetarians are starting to accept eggs as an important part of their diet. With growing urbanization and an increasing consumer demand for a variety of quality products including ready-to-eat and semi-processed poultry and meat products, this sector is expected to grow rapidly.

The poultry and meat producing industry in India has traditionally been confined to the unorganized sector, with many small rural farms supplying the bulk of production. Consequently, there have been limited investments in technology. There are about 3600 licensed slaughter houses in the country, but many animals continue to be slaughtered in small cottage establishments. The licensed slaughter houses are outdated and use primitive technologies for the production of meat. There are very few modern facilities, although a few exist for bacon and pork processing. Recently, the poultry industry has become established in the organized sector, although much remains to be done to improve yields and quality. The establishment of efficiently organized processing facilities for both poultry and meat products are areas worth exploring.

## **SNACK FOODS**

### **Confectionery, chocolates and other cocoa products**

India produces a wide range of cocoa and non-cocoa based confectionery items. Various other cocoa based products are also manufactured and marketed as consumer products. 12,769 tonnes of chocolates was produced in 1992. Several confectionery companies with established brands and market presence are active in India, including Cadbury India, Nutrine Confectionery, Parke Davis (India), Procter and Gamble India, Nestlé India, Campco and Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation. Production of confectionery items, other than chocolates, is reserved for the small scale sector. The organized sector chiefly caters to urban areas and the export market, while the small scale and cottage sectors cater to the semi-urban and rural segments. The market for these products is buoyant and expected to develop steadily in the future. About 260 tonnes