

Govt: 440 embryo transfers in cattle to be done in 9-day programme

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To conserve indigenous cattle breeds, the government has rolled out a nine-day programme to carry out 440 embryo transfer of higher genetic merit indigenous bovines into surrogate cows.

Embryo Transfer Technology (ETT) is a technique by which embryos are collected from a donor female of superior genetics and are transferred in recipient females, which serve as surrogate mothers.

"ETT has revolutionised the breeding strategies in bovines as a tool to optimise genetic improvement in cattle.

...It has been planned to carry out 440 embryo transfers during October 2-10, 2017 throughout the country," the agriculture ministry said in a statement on Thursday.

Embryos of indigenous breeds such as Sahiwal, Gir, Red Sindhi, Ongole, Deoni and Vechur have been proposed to be transferred under this programme.

Through the use of ETT, the ministry said: "A farmer can get a 5-6 fold increase in number of offsprings, the calves so born will be of high genetic merit and the offsprings born will be free from diseases."

On first day of ETT program held on October 2, 35 embryos were transferred into recipients.

"The technology now being taken up to the doorstep of farmers will result in rapid propagation of high genetic merit indigenous cattle," the ministry added.

The government in cooperation with 12 states has undertaken a Mass Embryo Transfer programme in indigenous breeds under the scheme 'National Mission on Bovine Productivity'.

The programme is implemented with the objective of conservation and development of indigenous breeds.