

Denmark to help Maharashtra farmers 'milk' unique 'ATMs'

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For the last ten years, Babytai Wagh, a farmer from Malegaon village in the Washim district of drought-prone Vidarbha region, has survived all the agrarian crises and faced life with courage, thanks to her "ATM".

Her husband Mukund ended his life in 2012 as he was unable to pay the debt after consisted crop failures. Babytai shouldered the responsibility of the family. She educated her kids and settled them in their lives.

"This is because of ATM. We call our cattle an ATM. In my case, goat rearing and dairy has helped me face all the crisis. My goats are my ATM," she says.

Dairy is a supplementary activity to agriculture but has the potential to generate additional income and



SUPPORT SYSTEM. A woman farmer from SavitriBaj Phule Goat Farming Producer Company Ltd, Nashik

employment opportunities for the rural households. It has helped to curb farmer suicides, say experts.

DENMARK SUPPORT

Taking the cue from dairy farmers, the State government now plans to expand the dairy sector with support from the Denmark government.

Ambassador of the Royal Danish Embassy in India Freddy Svane has said Denmark will be setting up a

Centre of Excellence in Dairy in Maharashtra. The State has over 13,235 co-operative dairy societies and 79 co-operative dairy unions.

"Denmark is a leading country when it comes to the milk industry. State's dairy business will get help and farmers would be able to earn more income if experts from Denmark guide them," said Vikhe Patil while talking to the Copenhagen delegation.