

DONKEY AND MULE REARING IN RAJASTHAN**Shyam Lal Garg¹, Saraswat Sahoo² and Subha Ganguly^{3*}**

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Donkey and mule are draught animals and reared in almost all areas of Rajasthan. In old times only the Kumhar community domesticated donkey for purpose of lifting sand from riverbed to make earthen pot. Raika and Dewasi communities also reared donkey for transportation and migration. In Sikar, Jhunjunu, Alwar and Dausa districts of Rajasthan donkey rearing is common practice in urban area for carrying goods. Mostly donkey and mule rear on zero grazing basis. Donkey keeper offer wheat straw, Barseem, Rijka, Guar straw for feed. Donkey and mule also use for collect garbage. Prize of donkey and mule depend upon their health and weight. Rearing of donkey and mule are source of income for poor people.

In urban area where street is narrow donkey cart use for transfer sand, cement, stone for construction. Donkey and mule cart cheap then other. Donkeys vary considerably in size, depending on breed and management. Donkeys have large ears, which may pick up more distant sounds. Donkeys can defend themselves by biting, striking with the front hooves or kicking with the hind legs. Pregnancy period for Jenney is about 12 months, though the gestation period may varies from 11 to 14 months. The Jenney usually gives birth to a single foal. Births of twins are rare, although Jennies come to heat within 9 or 10 days of giving birth known as "Foal Heat" but conception rate remains low, as the reproductive tract has not returned to normalcy. Thus it is usual to wait one or two further estrous cycles before rebreeding, unlike the practice with mares. Jennies are usually very protective of their foals.

The donkey has been used as a working animal for at least 5000 years. Of the more than 40 million donkeys in the world, about 96% are found in developing countries, where they are used principally as pack animals or for draught and draft work in transport or agriculture. The donkey is used all over the world for an infinite variety of jobs. Here in this country, some common uses are recreational riding, recreational driving and packing. Many backpackers use a donkey (which they often call a burro), to carry the heavy load since the animals walk at about a human's foot pace and are such enjoyable companions on the trail. Skidding or pulling things on the homestead such as firewood, trash, etc. or pulling a sledge, travois or wheeled cart to carry things for the small farm such as barbed wire for fencing, trash, or anything that needs to be moved.