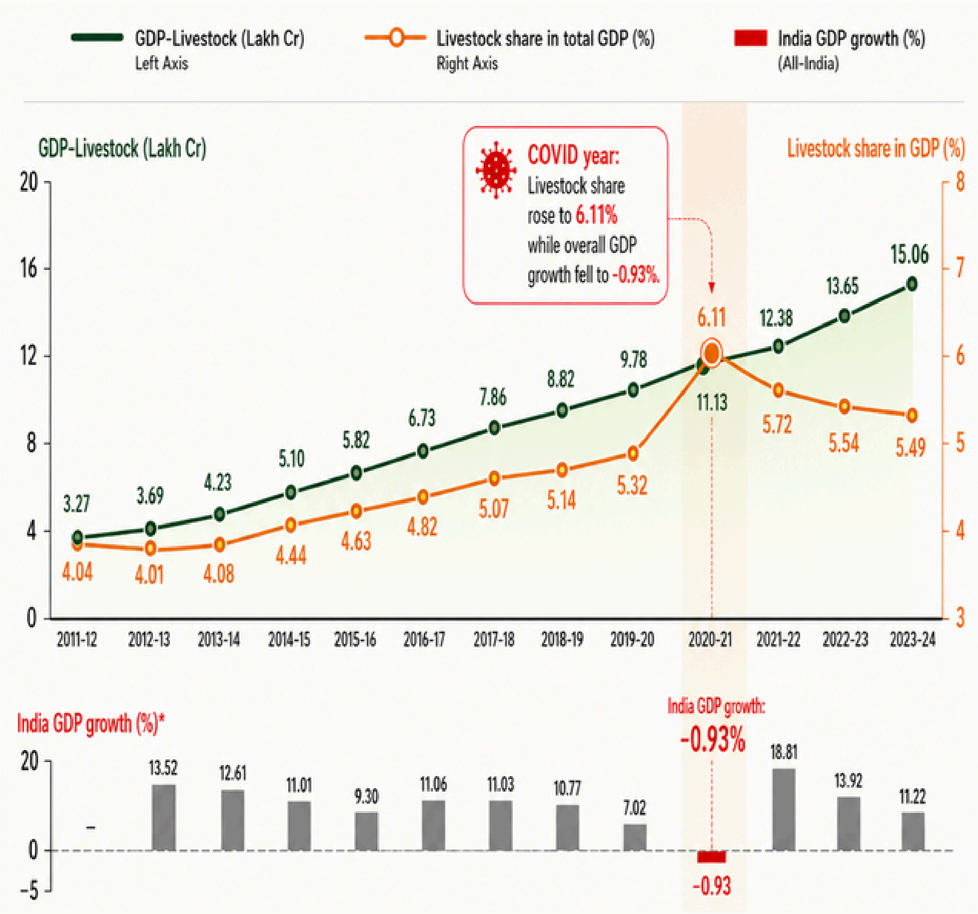
Livestock: A Recession-Resilient Growth Engine

03

In 2020-21, India's overall GDP growth stalled to -0.9%; livestock still grew 13.8%, a gap of nearly 14.7 percentage points in the pandemic year, India's only near-contraction year on record.

13.8%	-0.93%	14.7pts	8 of 12	0
LIVESTOCK GROWTH 2020-21, Current Prices - the Pandemic Year	**INDIA'S GDP GROWTH** 2020-21 - the only near-contraction year on record	**GROWTH GAP** Widest livestock-vs-GDP swing on record	**YEARS OUTGREW GDP** 2012-13 to 2023-24, current prices	**CONTRACTION YEARS** Livestock GVA, even through 2020-21



- Livestock share of total GVA rose from 5.32% (2019-20) to 6.11% (2020-21) - the peak of the series - before easing back as the broader economy recovered.

CONNECTS TO DATA STORY # 01

Livestock's actual growth in its single worst year (13.8%) matches Data Story #01's own "Accelerated Growth" Scenario (13.8% CAGR) exactly - the $1 Trillion projection is not built on an optimistic assumption alone, it's grounded in a rate the sector has already demonstrated under real stress.

Livestock: The Economy's Floor, Not Its Ceiling

03

Data Story # 01 introduced this same GVA series. Data Story # 02 showed India's aggregate growth is remarkably stable. This story asks a related but distinct question : when the wider economy actually broke, did livestock break with it?

Livestock's share of GVA peaked exactly when it mattered most — rising from 5.32% (2019–20) to 6.11% (2020–21) as the rest of the economy contracted. This is the same underlying series introduced in Data Story #00's ₹15.06 lakh crore figure.

Stability (Story #02) and resilience (this story) are related but not identical — Story #02 measured whether growth swings consistently year to year. This story asks a sharper question: specifically in the one year everything else broke, did livestock hold? It did — and by the widest margin on record.

The honest second half of this story: GDP outgrew livestock in every year since the pandemic — 2021–22 (18.8% vs 11.2%), 2022–23 (13.9% vs 10.3%), 2023–24 (11.2% vs 10.3%). Livestock isn't the fastest mover in either direction — it's the floor, not the ceiling.

That floor is exactly what Story #02's stability finding predicts — a sector with genuinely low volatility should neither collapse in the bad years nor sprint away in the good ones. The post-pandemic data confirms it: livestock's growth compressed into a narrow 10–12% band while GDP swung from -0.9% to +18.8%.

Why this matters for policy, precisely: a sector that neither contracts in a downturn nor overheats in a boom is a genuine counter-cyclical buffer for rural incomes — the kind of asset worth weighting explicitly in state-level economic planning, not just celebrating in a good year.

Data Table

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Year	Livestock GVA Growth	India's GDP Growth	Gap (pts)
2012-13	12.68%	13.52%	-0.84
2013-14	14.61%	12.61%	+2.00
2014-15	20.75%	11.01%	+9.74
2015-16	14.11%	9.30%	+4.80
2016-17	15.49%	11.06%	+4.43
2017-18	16.82%	11.03%	+5.78
2018-19	12.26%	10.77%	+1.49
2019-20	10.87%	7.02%	+3.85
2020-21	**13.83%**	**-0.93%**	**+14.75**
2021-22	11.26%	18.81%	-7.55
2022-23	10.21%	13.92%	-3.71
2023-24	10.32%	11.22%	-0.91

Source: GFST Statistical Analysis. Livestock GVA: BAHS 2025, DAHD, GoI. India GDP Growth: MoSPI National Accounts, current prices.