

AGRICULTURE ADVANCEMENT IN RURAL INDIA

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Abstract: In spite of many problems in Indian farming sector, Indian economy is based on agriculture sector where two third population of the country rely on income sources from farming and its related industries. Though there is a need to support agriculture sector with finance and technological advancement, enough attention to this sector is not provided by relevant administration to its growth and in addition lack of political and social support. It continuously suffered through natural calamities, deformity of climate changes, monsoon effects and human mess. The agriculture is also affected by poverty of the farmers, worker shortage, scarcity of fertilizers, pesticides, insecticides and quality seeds for maximum production. Due to infinite loss, the suicidal cases of farmers are increasing every year. The use of traditional methods of farming needs to be supported by technological advancement and advanced techniques of farming including use of machineries like tractors, crop cutters and superior spray methods for sowing of seeds, fertilizers and medicinal sprays to save the food grains from pests and insects. This paper discusses the measures to improve Indian agriculture to support rural India for its growth.

Keywords: Rural India, Indian Agriculture, Indian Farming Sector, Rural Development, Agriculture Development

Introduction

Indian economy is based on agriculture making rural India as the backbone of the country. On an average 70% of the people of the nation are residing in villages and agriculture is an important occupation and means of living for them. They use traditional methods of farming and take maximum production that serves the needs of the family. The excess production is utilized to earn financial benefits and sustain their livelihood. In addition farming allied services such as livestock and production of milk, leathers and products prepare with cow milk and cow dung are utilize to earn profits. They face many challenges like load shading of electricity, frequents floods in hilly regions whereas drought in other parts of the country. Sometimes, there is scarcity of pesticides or insecticides to save their crops or poor quality of seeds affecting production quality and quantity. The manpower is not

available as the males tend to migrate towards cities in search of secure jobs and women who are available in villages have to work for farming are the main workers for it. The women workers are the core of farming work but not paid equal to men for same work. Most of the time they are ill treated and harassed at work places. Under these circumstances, it is needed to use technological advancement for farming work to get maximum production with less labour and tools for farming.

Productive Agriculture

India has huge and productive agriculture with variety of crops. It has the god given gift with seasoned atmosphere, nowhere else in the world. It consists of 29 states and seven union territories with a diverse climate likely to grow variety of crops, vegetables and fruits. The availability of all kinds of crops, food-grains made India versatile converted it in one of the largest growing economies in the world. The 2/3 Indian population is survived on only and only agricultural sector and its raw material. The farmer working in the fields of India is one of the important citizens of India. On average 33,000 sq. kms of land has been brought under cultivation by farmers in Maharashtra which is the main economic source for the state. Though the farmers grow crops and making India proud in agricultural sector and moving Indian economy positively, it is really shocking to observe the ratio of suicide cases of farmers particularly in Maharashtra. The agricultural sector experiences highest rate of suicide not only in Maharashtra but in Punjab, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh also. The various studies revealed that every ten in one lakhs farmers are committing suicide in our country and so as in Maharashtra. Every day, one may find the newspapers covering the news of farmers attempting suicides in India.

Deformity of Climate Changes

Approximately 4.7 million farmers are active in farming in the state of Maharashtra. Though monsoon is very strong enough in most of the regions in Maharashtra, its intensity is very low in some of the regions of Maharashtra especially in Vidarbha which includes Akola, Amravati, Bhandara, Buldana, Chandrapur, Gondia, Gadchiroli, Nagpur, Washim, Wardha and Yavatmal, districts. Sometimes, the monsoon is active here beyond the farming schedule which is found unsuitable for farming. At one end, when the seeds are burnt due to over heat of summer and below average rainfall, it is also flooded due to overflow of monsoon at the other. The farmers are attempting seeding process as per farming schedule but most of the time they are unaware of deformity of climate changes and become victim of nature causes

repeated crops failure. Other problems included over load shedding, improper irrigation facilities, lack of other sources of income and subsequent trade facilities, poverty, rising cost of cultivation, improper medical facilities, lack of political and social support and so on.

Socio-Economic Conditions

Due to troublesome monsoon effect, the farmers earn nothing where they invest in agriculture in anticipation of good monsoon. The farmer who is the owner of more than 15 acres of land is generally termed as wealthy farmer but their sources of income i.e. pure farming is at stake due to below average rainfall in some parts of Maharashtra. They are categorized as landlord, so they may not avail the government privileges for lower class farmers. It affected the land owners where they do not find any other financial or socio-economic support. In addition, the banks are not ready to provide additional financial support and cooperate the farmers. Since, there is no other income source; they are prompted to take massive debt from local moneylenders who charged them heavy rate of interest. They have to repay their money lenders. They face socio-economic problems and face harassment by moneylenders. The earlier studies in this regard showed that nearly 30% of the farmers borrow loans from moneylenders while only 3.76% turned to land development banks. As reported by earlier studies in this regard, the reason behind the number of increase in suicide cases of farmers is only a substantial debt taken by farmers for farming and at the end their inability to repay it.

Safety Measures to Save Agriculture

Here comes the role of science and technology. India is well equipped enough to guide the farmers about the changes in climate. The Indian IT sector is highly developing and has seen a lot of growth in the last decade. It is one of the best sectors as compared to other developing countries giving superior performance for the development of the country. Though Urban India is utilizing its every service, rural India is still backward to make use of it. It is only because; we have not yet reached to the remote parts of India. Our transport system is still behind to give proper travelling facilities for common public; the roads are not yet developed to reach to the remotest part of our villages. We have schools in villages where students have to walk miles. The television sets have reached a lot and become very common. The mobile phones and computers are reached but internet connectivity is not accessible yet in rural areas.

The technology may help the farmers by guiding them about the climate changes in advance. The farming schedule can be planned as per the climate changes and arrival of monsoon. Day to day monsoon updates may be given to the farmers before sowing the seeds. It may help the farmers to save their seeds often burnt due to below average monsoon. The technology can help to find out the water reservoirs hidden underneath. The water purification plants can be developed for clean water supply for farming. It is also possible to study the quality of seeds and land. The farmers can be trained for advanced techniques of farming and made aware of improved practices for supplementary production in less labor so that they can save additional expenses. The risk-free pesticides and fertilizers can be developed with the help of science and technology and can be introduced to farmers for their utilization for maximum production. The guidance on mobile facility can be made available to farmers. 24 x 7 helpline should be made available for guidance to farmers.

The needs of farmers can be considered first while drafting the policy. They should be supplied whatever necessary for farming instead of supplying other commodities as a support through various schemes of government. The advanced banking facility should be made available so that the record of financial transactions can be kept to save them from harassment of moneylenders. Precautions can be taken to maintain mental health of the farmers. The counseling session may help them to save them from depression and alcoholism. The self help groups can be encouraged to work for the upliftment of the farmers. The seeds, pesticides, farming instruments and equipments may be made easily available to the farmers and in affordable cost. They should be given the surety of good prices for their production. Marketing and storage facilities should be made easily accessible. Farmers should be made aware of agricultural policies time to time. The committee of trained doctors, psychiatrics and social workers can be formed to develop hope and trust within the depressed farmers. It is now time to give serious and immediate attention to the problem of suicides.

The Government of India and State Governments as well are trying to support the agricultural sector by waiving off the loans. The policy makers are preparing the policies for its development. The Government is also trying to construct dams wherever necessary, develop water reservoirs and other supporting measures but the positive results are yet to be accomplished.

The dream of Mahatma Gandhi that gives the greatest position to farmers of India is still to be fulfilled. Gandhiji had advised us not to perish the village which means our country is going to perish. He found progress of the country lies in the development of villages in India as he wanted to bring villages at the central place of the country which are responsible

for Indian economic growth. He always believed ideal village should have intelligent human beings. He expected liberty and equality to Indian men and women.

Today, there is a need to adopt Gandhian philosophy and everyone should work hard for the development of Indian villages. Development is not that the mobiles are reached in the villages. The real development lies in the development of agricultural sector and its survivor that is Indian farmer. If the farmer lives, the country will survive.

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