

Agriculture Shines

Dear Readers!

The agricultural/horticultural wastes can be made good source of income by converting them in to useful products. For instance the stem of banana may be used in manufacturing industrial paper or fabric and can also be placed at the gate of banquets during marriages. Similarly coir waste, coconut shells, bamboo wastes and leftover in the field after harvest may also be used in different forms, which would fetch good revenue to the farmers.

In 2018-19 budget the Government of India launched a new 'Govardhan Yojana' that would not only help in increasing the rural hygiene but also fetch good income for the farmers engaged in animal husbandry with the use of biogas in the villages. This will not be only by-product that can be turned into wealth but also the main crop growing components which can be used differently to increase the income of farmers. The Government of India has made a major change in chemical (Ethanol-which is produced from sugarcane crop) policy and has now approved 10% of the ethanol blending in petrol. It shows that the surplus sugarcane after meeting the demand of making sugar can be used in ethanol production which would improve the condition of the sugarcane farmers. There is a need to understand the basic issues of the farmers and if possible we could bridge the communication gap between farmers and scientists. This is a new revolution that would prosper every India villager. The government has opted intermediate and appropriate technologies to achieve the same.

Establishment of soil-testing laboratories in every village or in Krishi Vigyan Kendra/Science Center, would help curing ailed element of the soil leading to a bumper production. The cereal crops and pulses seed banks may bring a new start and through that farmers may be attached with entrepreneurs. If farmers are linked with entrepreneurs in the supervision of Krishi Vigyan Kendra under MUDRA Yojana, they will act as a positive catalyst in growing agri-economy through agricultural activities with scientific temperament. Using digital animation in the mobile app in phone, the farmer can be guided to use information about purchase of seeds, soil-testing, water quality testing etc. Through this digital connectivity and our farmers may usher new revolution. There is a need to implement Operational Research Project and organize such programmes in the states to benefit the farmers. The farmers working in the fields should be our target audience, because climate in our country differs from state-to-state. As a result one variety gives good result in one state whereas fails in another state. If we focus on Gujarat Model, there was 'Jyoti Gram Yojana' in which 24 hour electricity was supplied. It helped villagers in running farm-machines etc. In a study it was found that there is a village close to Gandhinagar where chilies are cultivated. Whenever one farmer starts cultivation of a crop and gets benefit from it, then every other farmer in that area would cultivate the same crop, resulting in fall in sale prices. Villagers formed a platform of producers after purchasing a packaging machine. The chilies that were to be sold in ₹ 3 lakh fetched ₹ 18 lakh of income to them after a planning of 3-4 months. Export and import in the world are going on at a rapid pace. There is need to explain to our farmers that there is a strong demand in the international market but for that we have to standardize our system and processes globally. Our Prime Minister lauded 'Zero defect, zero effect' concept in manufacturing sector from the ramparts of the Red Fort. The global standards are needed for packaging agricultural product. If we don't from labs and institutions for certifying organic farming, our organic products will not be accepted in the international market. That is true for agro-products, animal husbandry, or fisheries. There is a need to traverse each and every paths that leads to the farmers' development.

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