



SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE – CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES



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EMERGING TRENDS IN INDIAN AGRICULTURE AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

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Abstract

Agriculture has always been called the backbone of Indian economy, supporting the livelihoods of the majority of the population. Although India has a significant presence internationally in terms of production of key cereals, pulses, fruits, vegetables and animal products, at the same time, productivity is fairly low. Despite a conducive policy environment and strong demand pull for the sector, key challenges plaguing the sector involve smaller holding size, dismal primary and secondary processing infrastructure, a convoluted supply chain with multiple levels and intermediaries, and limited last mile delivery of services, to name a few. Agriculture has always been called the backbone of Indian economy, supporting the livelihoods of the majority of the population. Although India has a significant presence internationally in terms of production of key cereals, pulses, fruits, vegetables and animal products, at the same time, productivity is fairly low. Despite a conducive policy environment and strong demand pull for the sector, key challenges plaguing the sector involve smaller holding size, dismal primary and secondary processing infrastructure, a convoluted supply chain with multiple levels and intermediaries, and limited last mile delivery of services, to name a few. As per estimates from the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR), the demand for food grains would increase from 192 million tonnes in 2000 to 345 million tonnes in 2030 and hence in the next 20 years, production of food grains needs to be increased at the rate of 5.5 million tonnes annually.

Keywords: Agriculture, population, Indian economy, consumption and food grain.

Introduction

Agriculture plays a vital role in India's economy. Over 58% of the rural households depend on agriculture as their principal means of livelihood. Gross value added (GVA) by agriculture, forestry and fishing is estimated at 17.67 trillion INR (274.23 billion USD) in FY18.1 The GVA of the agriculture and allied sector at constant 2011-12 prices grew at a CAGR of 2.75% between FY12-18. Union Budget 2018-19 allocated 57,600 crore INR (8.9 billion USD) for the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, signifying its immense importance in the national socio-economic context.

Looking at the current status and a few projections, it is evident that India stands at the threshold of emerging domestic agri output and input demand, backed by higher disposable incomes across the socioeconomic classes (SECs) and significant technological upgrade in farm practices.

Existing Status and Some Projections for the Indian Agriculture and Allied Sector

Current Global Position

- India is the largest producer of spices, pulses, milk, tea, cashew and jute; and the second largest producer of wheat, rice, fruits and vegetables, sugarcane, cotton and oilseed.
- India is currently the world's fourth biggest producer of agrochemicals.
- India has the leading livestock population of around 512 million.

ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Mount Carmel College Autonomous, Bengaluru is a reputed educational institution dedicated to the cause of "Empowerment of Women through Education" since 1948. The college is owned and managed by Carmelite Sisters of St. Teresa (CSST) and over the decades has set the benchmark in quality education. Generations of women have passed through their corridors as empowered agents of change in society.

Mount Carmel College is affiliated to Bangalore University and Bengaluru Central University, and is recognised under 2(f) and 12(b) of the UGC Act. The college was granted autonomous status in 2005. MCC has successfully completed 4 rounds of Accreditation by NAAC and was awarded 'A+' grade in the last round of accreditation in 2019. The Research Centres are recognised by IGNOU and Bangalore University.

The college offers undergraduate and postgraduate programs in Arts, Science and Commerce. It offers 36 UG programs and 12 PG programs. With a student strength of nearly 5,000, Mount Carmel College is ranked among the top 20 colleges at the all India level in all the streams.

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