

Chapter 7 – Agriculture and Food Management

Despite the difficulties created by COVID induced lockdowns adversely affected the performance of the non-agricultural sectors, the agriculture sector came up with a robust growth rate of 3.4 per cent at constant prices during 2020-21.

COVID induced lockdowns influenced the movement of farm inputs including farm machinery from one location to other. The national lockdown coincided with the commencement of the harvesting season for the Rabi crops. Against all adversities due to COVID-19, continuous supply of agriculture commodities, especially staples like rice, wheat, pulses and vegetables, has been maintained thereby enabling food security. In order to further strengthen and support the agricultural sector, several initiatives have been taken by the Government of India under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan

- A) **` 1 lakh crores Agri Infrastructure Fund**
Financing will be provided for funding agriculture infrastructure projects at farm-gate & at aggregation points and for financially viable post-harvest management infrastructure.
- B) **` 10,000 crores scheme for Formalisation of Micro Food Enterprises (MFE)**
Aiding 2 lakh MFEs who need technical upgradation to attain FSSAI food standards, build brands and support marketing.
- C) **`20,000 crores for fisherman through Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)**
It aims at integrated, sustainable and inclusive development of marine and inland fisheries by developing infrastructure such as fishing harbours, cold chain, markets, etc
- D) **National Animal Disease Control Programme**
It targets Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis by ensuring 100 per cent vaccination of cattle, buffalo, sheep, goat and pig population
- E) **Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund - ` 15,000 crores**
It is to support private investment in dairy processing, enable value addition and improved cattle feed infrastructure.
- F) **From ‘TOP’ to TOTAL, “Operation Greens” run by Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MOFPI) to be extended from tomatoes, onion and potatoes to ALL fruit and vegetables.**
- G) **Reforms in Essential Commodities Act, Agriculture Marketing and Agriculture Produce Pricing and Quality Assurance**
These legislative reforms seek to remove agricultural commodities such as cereals, pulses, oilseeds etc. from the list of essential commodities and aim to reform agricultural marketing.
- H) **PM Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana**
The scheme aimed at ensuring food and nutritional security to around 80 crores ration card holders who were affected due to the COVID-19 induced national lockdown.
- I) **One Nation One Ration Card Scheme**
This scheme will enable migrant workers and their family members to access PDS benefits from any fair price shop in the country

Challenges:

Agricultural Credit:

The regional distribution of the agricultural credit has, however, been skewed in favour of the Southern Region. The share of north-eastern states has been very low. The share of southern region in agricultural credit was more than 40 per cent while it was less than 2 per cent for the north-eastern region (NER). This low coverage of the agricultural credit in NER is because the total

cultivable area in North Eastern States is only about 2.74 per cent of the total GCA of the country. Moreover, community ownership of land is prevalent in most of the NE States. These two factors affected the intake of Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loans in NER as these loans are given against land documents.

International Trade in Agricultural Commodities:

The major export destinations were USA, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Nepal and Bangladesh. The top agriculture and related products exported from India were marine products, basmati rice, buffalo meat, spices, non-basmati rice, cotton raw, oil meals, sugar, castor oil and tea. While India occupies a leading position in global trade of aforementioned agri-products, its total agri-export basket accounts for a little over 2.5 per cent of world agri-trade.

Crop Insurance: PM Fasal Bima Yojana scheme extends coverage for the entire cropping cycle from pre-sowing to post-harvest including coverage for losses arising out of prevented sowing and mid-season adversities. Individual farm level losses arising out of localized calamities and post-harvest losses are also covered due to perils such as inundation, cloudburst and natural fire

PM-KISAN: The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) Scheme was launched in 2019 to provide income support to all landholder farmer families across the country with cultivable land, subject to certain exclusion

ALLIED SECTORS: ANIMAL HUSBANDRY, DAIRYING & FISHERIES:

India continues to be the largest producer of milk in the world. Several measures have been initiated by the Government to increase the productivity of livestock, which has resulted in increasing the milk production significantly.

India ranks 3rd in egg production in the world. India ranks 5th in meat production in the world.

Covid-19 lockdown caused a drop in the market demand due to closure of the outlets selling livestock products. With closure of sweet shops and tea stalls, a large number of private dairies were impacted and they stopped milk procurement from the farmers. This resulted in the farmers diverting their milk to the cooperatives. As a result, milk procurement in the cooperative sector increased because, as per their mandate, they could not reject milk supplied by the farmers.

Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF): The AHIDF will incentivize investments by individual entrepreneurs, private companies including MSME, farmers producers organizations (FPOs) and Section 8 companies to establish (i) dairy processing and value addition infrastructure (ii) meat processing and value addition infrastructure, and (iii) animal feed plant.

India is the second largest fish producing country in the world. The centrally sponsored scheme – Blue Revolution (CSS-BR),

The Government of India in October 2018 approved the establishment of a dedicated Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF)

National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP): It provides for control of Foot & Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis” for vaccinating all cattle, buffalo, sheep, goat and pig population against FMD and all bovine female calves of 4-8 months of age against brucellosis.

Fisheries:

The Government of India has taken several initiatives to harness the untapped potential of the fisheries sector,

The centrally sponsored scheme - **Blue Revolution (CSS-BR)** aimed for “Integrated, Responsible and Holistic Development and Management of the Fisheries Sector”.

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) intends to increase aquaculture productivity, enhance domestic fish consumption and attract investments in fisheries sector from other sources. The scheme will result in improving export earnings and generate direct and indirect employment opportunities

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), is a premier research organization for coordinating, guiding and managing agriculture research and education including in horticulture, fisheries and animal sciences in the entire country

New Initiatives in Food Processing Sector

- 1) Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises
- 2) MoFPI is implementing a central sector scheme “Operation Greens - A scheme for integrated development of Tomato, Onion and Potato (TOP) value chain” to provide support to farmers when prices of agri produce is low
- 3) Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY): Under the umbrella scheme Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana, the Ministry is implementing various component schemes which, inter-alia, includes (i) Mega Food Parks, (ii) Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure, (iii) Infrastructure for Agro-processing Clusters, (iv) Creation of Backward and Forward Linkages (v) Creation/ Expansion of Food Processing & Preservation Capacities, and (vi) Operation Greens.

Food Security

To address the issue of anaemia and micro-nutrient deficiency and to promote nutrition security in the country, a centrally sponsored pilot scheme on “Fortification of Rice & its Distribution under Public Distribution System

One nation one Ration Card

The Department of Food & Public Distribution in collaboration with all States/UTs is implementing a central sector scheme namely “Integrated Management of Public Distribution System (IM-PDS)” the validity of which is extended up to 31.03.2022. The main objective of the scheme is to introduce nation-wide portability of ration card under National Food Security Act (NFSA) through ‘One Nation One Ration Card’ System. This system will enable the ration card holders to lift their entitled foodgrains from any fair price shop (FPS) of their choice anywhere in the country by using their same/existing ration card.

Agricultural Reform:

The Farmers’ Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020

It seeks to create an ecosystem where the farmers and traders enjoy the freedom of choice relating to sale and purchase of farmers’ produce. The reform grants freedom to farmers and buyers to transact in agricultural commodities even outside notified APMC mandis ensuring competitive alternative trading channels to promote efficient, transparent and barrier-free interstate and intra-state trade.

The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020

It seeks to provide for a national framework on contract farming that protects and empowers farmers in their engagement with agri-business firms, processors, wholesalers, exporters or large retailers for farm services and sale of future farming produce at a mutually agreed remunerative price in a fair and transparent manner.

The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020

It seeks to remove commodities like cereals, pulses, oilseeds, edible oils, onion and potatoes from the list of essential commodities. The reform ends the era of frequent imposition of stock-holding limits except under extraordinary circumstances.

