



भारतीय कृषि एवं खाद्य परिषद्
INDIAN COUNCIL OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

2016

ICFA Meeting on Food safety and GAP



IIC, New Delhi

14 April 2016

ICFA MEETING ON FOOD SAFETY AND GAP

Agriculture is the mainstay of Indian economy. While World Trade Organization (WTO) poses some challenges, it also offers tremendous worldwide market opportunities for Indian agriculture produce. This market potential can be realized by reforming agriculture and making its produce internationally competitive in quality and food safety. Thus, innovative farming practices need to be incorporated along with the concept of globally accepted Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) within the framework of commercial agricultural production for long term improvement and sustainability. GAP in addition to improving the yield and quality of the products, also has environmental and social dimensions. In recent years, the concept of GAP has evolved to address the concerns of different stakeholders about food production and security, food safety and quality, and the environmental sustainability of agriculture. These stakeholders include governments, food retailing industries, farmers and consumers who seek to meet specific objectives of food safety, food production, production efficiency, livelihood and environmental benefits.

In this context a meeting was held at **IIC New Delhi on 14 April 2016 regarding role of ICFA** in food certification and GAP and various dimensions of implementing GAP.

The highlights of the meet are as follows:

Mr Anil Johri; CEO NABCL:

Mr Johri opened the session by listing two types of GAP i.e the Global GAP and the Ind GAP. India should start thinking about implementing international standards and that too in a time frame. It should not be open ended. Global GAP is the most accepted standard and India has an MOU with global GAP. He said we have national technical working group in India for global GAP working. This is a local stakeholder consultation group chaired by Dr.Mangla Rai earlier which laid down a National Interpretation Guideline. Every certification agency now needs to read global GAP standards as well as this national interpretation guideline before certifying a product. Since implementing Global GAP is difficult so intermediate standards can be adopted therefore Basic gap standard and Ind GAP standard are prevalent in our country.

ICFA could become a certification body for Ind GAP as well as for medicinal plant certification under available schemes. He proposed that Ind GAP should be benchmarked with global GAP standards. The challenge is to incentivise GAP certification in India. Benchmark scheme will bring down the cost of compliance.

Mr. Sachin Raj CEO Green Initiative Certification & Inspection Agency opined that a lot of issues exist in certification mechanism and a system needs to be developed in India addressing the issues. A step wise approach should be adopted with a middle level of operations. He quoted an example that if a producer wants his produce to be certified for organic; a step wise approach should be adopted starting from pesticide free produce to an organically certified one. He also prioritizes the need of stakeholder mapping and identification of objectives.

Dr. KL Chadha President Horticulture Society of India

He specified 6 steps that ICFA should follow which are Identification of crops, Emphasise on standards, Rationalise the standards, Advocacy , Actual certification, Train people for auditing – to verify implementation is going on or not and the Technological growth.

Sh. V.S. Govindarajan, Head - Regulatory Affairs, Adani Agri Fresh Limited

He emphasised on the fact that India should create its own standards for each product separately. He gave example of Indonesia and Malaysia. India imports a lot of oil from Indonesia and Malasia. These countries have creatd a RSPO certification (Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil). Every country which import oil from these nation are forced to take RSPO certification. Similarly separate certification mechanism for each product is needed.” One product should be taken up at a time. One domestic and one international product can be taken up or one GMO or Non GMO.” he said.

He emphasised on making our own standards and justifying tht our products are better in quality and have passed the standards. 90% of our products are non GMO and a premium needs to be fixed on non GMO. He also quoted the example of Dr Kurien of how he transformed unorganised dairy sector into highly organised one and the same needs to be done in certification too.

Sachin Raj, CEO, Green Initiative Certification & Inspection Agency:

He spoke about ITC model of cotton farmers in which timber stands were grown between the cotton crop so as to add value. To address issues related to agriculture, a holistic approach is needed. Same GAP cannot be implement to every crop so for every crop GAP needs to be fixed.

In FSA audit, forest management, KBR national park – 33% of standard was applicable still certification was given. The forest manager has to identify the social issue like Elephant menace, leopard menace, and monkey menace – grow more fruit trees and they will not come out for menace.

S.K Saxena Director, EIC Ministry of Commerce & Industry, G.O.I:

He spoke about the variation in quality of products. There are states like the North Eastern states where most of the products are organic but no certification mechanism exists. Some regions have extra use of chemicals so such regions and sectors need to be taken into consideration before laying down guidelines. He gave example of dairy sector in which milk from indigenous cows have no separate collecting system and no certification. Therefore there is need of market chain to be introduced and demand needs to be created and that should be done by ICFA.

Mr. Jaime Gonzalez Counselor for Agricultural Affairs Embassy of Chile, New Delhi introduced that Certification is 100 % private and voluntary in Chile. Initially it was only for exports but later consumers demanded certification. Now there are sections for everything. Non certified are cheap. Some pay more to get certified but are very less and are increasing. Similar challenges in Chile.

Dr. P.K. Chakrabarty, ADG (PP&B), ICAR Hqrs., Indian Council Of Agriculture Research

He said WHO allows a standard of 1000 ppb i.e 1 milligram per kg of rice but codex fixing at 300 ppb arsenic content. These standards are required by EU which doesn't produce any rice. India is biggest rice exporter therefore standards should be fixed.

He quoted another example of spices. The values of pesticide residues are fixed by importers. They want not more than 10 ppm. Codex has fixed maximum residual limit (mrl) based on risk assessment. According to Jecfa 40 ppm has been accepted. Different standards for different countries are there. So standards need to be fixed

by us not others. Many firms are involved in accreditation of organic food. In many cases organic food is charged at a premium rate that also contained residues thus credibility needs to be fixed.

In a country like India where 54.6% of the total workforce depends on agriculture there is requirement of monitoring of the practices in order to ensure that farmers adhere to GAP. He also gave his opinion on GM crop. He said in 1996 GM cotton was released and today 28 countries are growing it. ICAR has several GM crops but none has come out in public due to stringent laws. In other countries laws are not that stringent. They stop on 1 point, but in our case it is open ended, we keep on entertaining public opinion.

Dr. HS Gupta, DG, BISA

He focused on the clarification of ICFA's role, responsibility and strength. There is need to stick to standards for domestic consumers. For export we already have standards set. Pesticide residues are cause of concern, vegetables at Yamuna bank are loaded with heavy metals and no certification is there so people are eating it. If produce is certified then producer can demand higher price. We need to prioritize the commodity. Which are the commodities where ICFA can make an intervention can be defined.

He also pointed out the fact that in hills consumption of fertilizer is very less, their produce is organic by default but they are not certified so producer doesn't get better price. He stated that Government of Uttarakhand has constituted an Organic Produce Certification Agency due to which cost of certification has come down and farmers can now afford it.

AK Srivastav, Director, CARD

He focused on the need to reorient the education and training and research development programme. Well laid components of education and research have to be incorporated on priority. He also said that "Addressing to the standards, harvest management is also important and the grower should be proficient."

Mr. S. Makhija, Jain Irrigation System:

He elaborated on the practices followed by his company. They have their own Jain GAP. They have made people accept their Jain GP instead of any other GAP. They have their own laboratory accredited by NABSL having best of the equipment to test every parameter like heavy metal, pesticide, taste, smell, pathogens and

every possible standard that their buyers require from them. Starting from backend, they produce, test, certify and export and have not faced any complaints or rejection so far. The planting material has to be very healthy and it does not require much of pesticide, so they started tissue culture of banana plant of special variety called Grand 9 or G9. They provide farmers with disease free planting material. Same is done for 2 varieties of pomegranate and mango. So when farmer gets a healthy disease free planting material, the need for pesticide and fertilizer is reduced. This builds up a value chain that is accepted by the customers. Clients like Coca-Cola have very high standards and mango pulp is provided by them for a popular mango drink.

He also gave example of how he developed a value chain of dehydrated onion. Their company imported white onion seed from USA and established a farm in India. This is disease free variety and farmer gets higher weight onions.

Jain irrigation is good example in what should be done in food processing and is self dependant. He said “We need to work with the client, gain their trust, set some standard within the organization and work with stakeholder and producers to ensure that they do the right things, provide them right planting material, correct advisory service.”

Vijay Sardana, Head – F&A, UPL Group:

He focused on commercial aspect of certification. According to him new dimensions and criteria for certification will keep on adding even if we meet one standard. Every country is facing the problem of rejection of product. Globally export market is shrinking therefore we need to identify the commodities in which we are interested. Then we need to check the availability of that product and what resources are needed to make that crop. Thus focusing on logical business negotiation he said that if there is no money at the end we should not waste our national resources. He also raised the issue of fictitious reports, wrong certificates and the need to fix the accountability of people to test and give the results. We should focus on the demand inside the country since everybody is coming to India.

P.K Chakraborty, ADG (PP&B), ICAR Hqrs. Indian Council Of Agriculture Research:

He summed up all the points and added that there is a need to define the objectives of the mechanism that we want. A lot of work has already been done for addressing the international issues. We need to be India centric



भारतीय कृषि एवं खाद्य परिषद्
INDIAN COUNCIL OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

now. He also stated that human health should also be taken into concern. Human health should be given priority especially in this country where there is adulteration in the milk, refined oil, pesticides in fruit and vegetables. So for each and every thing which is there for human consumption has to have some kind of standard before it comes to the market.