



भारतीय कृषि एवं खाद्य परिषद्
INDIAN COUNCIL OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

National Round Table Conference

on

Farmers Issues and Agricultural Policies

24th December 2018

India International Centre | New Delhi



DELIBERATIONS

ICFA organized a consultation meeting on farmers' issues and Agricultural Policies to finalize farmers' National agenda which is to be taken up with different political parties for their 2019 election manifesto. On this occasion, a report titled "*Farmers issues and Agricultural Policies*" was released. The session was organized at India International Centre, New Delhi on 24th December, 2018.

Dr. MJ Khan, Chairman, ICFA welcomed Dr. Ashok Bajpai, Former Agriculture Minister, UP; Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, Shri. Rapolu Ananda Bhaskar, Member of Rajya Sabha and Mr. Rakesh Tikait, Chief Spokesperson, Bhartiya Kisan Union. He updated the house about major issues and bridging gaps and upgrading skills of farmers', farm & wage workers, self-employed and extension workers engaged in organized / unorganized segments of Agriculture and Allied Sectors like Dairy, Poultry & Fishery through regulatory authorities. "Comprehensive view must be taken with focus on the gainful employment that can be generated at rural level in agriculture by value addition activities and making Smart Villages with Doubling farmers' income agenda, minimizing the post-harvest losses, market linkages for direct farm produce to consumers to minimize the involvement of middlemen," said Dr. Khan.

Sh Rapolu Ananda Bhaskar, Member of Rajya Sabha He focused on the resourceful outcome of the discussion which should be represented in the manifesto of each political party for the upcoming elections. He said, "We should address the farmer issues and how agriculture policies can be linked with flagship programs of government. Also, there is a need to analyse the impact and address the existing infrastructural and market linkage gap which is yet to be implemented for the benefit of the rural community.

Dr. Ashok Bajpai, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha

"We should address the major problems of the farmers. Getting right price for the produce and fixing MSP prices in consultation with farmer leaders and checking on its transfer directly to farmers, setting up organized market for selling farm produce, undertaking price stabilization measure for producers and consumers, reining in input cost in agriculture have a significant bearing on farming community.

Sh Yudhvir Singh, Asia Director, International Farmer Alliance insisted on focused approach toward planned agriculture cultivation practices. "Every State and Central Government, despite being aware of total crop under cultivation and crop to be harvested, proper arrangement for the procurement of agro-commodities lags behind due

to which farmers have to forcefully sellout the produce to the middlemen. Prices of the commodity being the primary issues, procurement of those commodities at right time after the harvest should be taken into consideration. Farmers would be happier if they get right prices instead of C2 plus formulae's. Procurement rate were defined by the Government in 2018 i.e., MSP, but those were not the practical prices which farmers recovered in the Mandi. These are minimum support price, not the fair support prices. Government agencies should be very much active at the ground level, especially before the procurement season starts, so that farmers don't face any challenges or distress. There are many Government schemes which are made for farmers' without their involvement and opinions. Farmers' representation is most important to know the grass-root level reality and make the scheme work more efficiently. Crop Insurance companies are existing and Government has insisted farmers on getting PMFBY crop insurance from particular company in district not other, which again is against farmers' interests. Farmers have full right to point out loop holes in scheme and should be free to get their crop insured from any company rather than the specified ones by the Government in their district. Company should be clear with its guidelines on how it will survey the farm plot, provide the insurance cover. According to Government survey, market of spurious pesticides is around 80%, but no action yet is being taken. I request the issue be addressed and must be taken to the concerned authorities," remarked Mr. Singh.

Ch. Pushpender Singh, President, Kisan Shakti Sangh gave the insightful data analysis on agriculture status. "As the industrial (modern) sector expands in importance, there is a concomitant reduction in the percentage contribution to gross output by the agricultural sector to only 15 % from 50% since Independence. While as discussed it is established that as a country develops, its agriculture sector is expected to decline, in recent times, this decline has been rapid rather than gradual, but still the dependency of rural employment is on agriculture. In 2004 Swaminathan Commission was tasked with finding solutions to problems faced by farmers and in 2006 they suggested to give a minimum support price at 50 per cent profit above the cost of production classified as C2 by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP). The Government did not give benefits to farmers instead of written promises in their manifesto. From past 5 years, farmers have faced a loss of around Rs.1 lakh crore for not getting promised C2+50% price, moreover if total crop season are taken into consideration, it totals to Rs 10 lakh crores, and if we add Swaminathan report suggestion then again grand total comes to be around Rs.20 lakh crores. If neighboring countries like China, Thailand, and Philippines can be give Rs 2500- 5000 MSP, then why not India. We had a surplus production of Dal of around 230 lakh tonnes from 180 lakh tonnes which can feed our country, but again Government imported 66 lakh tonnes last year and 55 lakh tonnes this year, which is very wrong again done to farmers and they are getting right prices. In spite of the bumper

production of Dal by the farmers, India was capable of exporting but with their undefined rules and regulations, export came down from \$44b to \$33b and import of Dals increased. This was the major reason for which farmers were not able to get the right MSP. In the recent years, crude oil prices crashed to \$30/barrel, but diesel price didn't come down. Focus should be majorly on sectors like Sugar prices and existing stocks, promoting export. Milk has become a more expensive commodity as compared to wheat and rice. Prices of cow and buffalo milk have drastically declined in recent years. Problems are faced by dairy farmers due to overproduction of SMP (Skimmed milk powder) which the Govt. should procure and promote in Mid-Day meal. Further, it can also be exported to foreign countries from where it was first being imported. In today's scenario, farmers have become an agenda for the political parties. Hardly a fraction of amount reaches the farmer pocket as compared to the price paid by the consumer on that product. Agriculture growth rate of last 4.5 years has declined to 2.5% which makes Doubling Farmers Income by 2022 a constraint," said Mr. Singh.

Dr. Dinesh Chauhan, CEO, International Agriculture Consulting Group exclaimed that India is capable of exporting raw as well as processed goods. He said, "There are many agricultural crops having huge demand in foreign markets, but cultivation in India is limited to fulfil the requirements/parameters like quality and quantity. Primary and/or Secondary Processing Support function must be established by the

Government at rural level to provide Level I and Level II processing to raw agro commodity; farmer can then package and label it. This would thereby help him establish a brand in market. APEDA must be robust enough to help out farmers in their quality maintenance, packaging and branding, marketing and export. Loan waiver is not a solution. Why would the farmer even require a loan if he has an established and structured market. Direct partnership with Processing Industries providing effective procurement and value addition is to be considered".

Mr. Rakesh Gambhir, Future Group acknowledged the house with farmers - market linkages. "Farmer dares to experiment with new crop and activities, if he's assured about the market and the prices he get. Agriculture sector can definitely get a boom and reach the breakeven if farmers and private companies partner together. ICFA is a platform which should be used to rejuvenate the agriculture sector by bring in technology, finance, partnership and value addition of agro commodities", remarked Mr. Gambhir.

Dr. Soumitra Das, Director, South Asia - Zinc Nutrient Initiative illustrated the figure that 80% children below the age of 7 are suffering from malnourishment. He explained that micronutrients are equally important in agriculture and our body. "Intensified and imbalanced use of NPK fertilizers are due to subsidies prevalent in different states. Policies formulated for NPK must also consider the importance of micronutrients in agriculture and its impact on human health. Urea, DAP, MOP etc. and

macro-fertilizers are available on 5% GST, while micronutrients adds on to 12-18% GST,” pointed out Dr. Das.

Dr. VV Sadamate, Former Advance Agriculture Planning Commission, GoI briefly explained the increase in agricultural technology and investment but no systematic improvement in public extension services and private extension services. He said, “Every states’ district has irregularity in development scale. Block Agriculture Plan with 40-50 villages can be initiated to take directed and baby steps towards development and advancement of the district and then the complete state. Farmers’ empowerment and farmer organizations are progressing in few states like Maharashtra. Segregated agri and horti commodity interest groups or organizations can be formed and helped out for markets. Absence of technological mapping for Micro-Agro-Climatic Areas and proper Feedback Mechanism from marginal, small and big farmers which should be documented and forwarded to Agriculture Universities, Extension Departments and Research Institutes”.

Mr. Kamal Kumar, Sr. General Manager, Dhanuka Agritech Limited gave a focus on the average consumption of pesticides which is 600gm, while it is 5-8 times in Taiwan and Japan. “In the recent years chemical pesticides are now being added-on with GST, excise duties and other state taxes due to which agriculture input cost have elevated. There are increased incidences of spurious pesticides. Regulatory Chemical Commission must be stringent on these activities.

Yearly Rs. 4000-5000 crore fake pesticides and chemicals are marketed. Pesticides and other agri inputs must be kept away from GST,” recommended Mr. Kumar.

Mr. Indranil Das, Executive Vice President, Agrinos India Pvt. Ltd emphasized on soil contamination and its survival. Without soil there is no existence of agriculture. He informed that GoI and Niti Aayog are encouraging construction of NADAP pits and Vermicomposting at district levels. Mr. Das opined that lack of effective implementation and technology dissemination are some weak areas. “The cost of water and power is not factored in C2+50% promised MSP to the farmers. Either the cost is borne by the state Government or given to the farmers. Every penny of subsidies should be directed towards marginal farmers. Big farmers should be market dependent rather Government dependent, which will in-turn boost up the small farmers. Farmer capable of growing quality food should look towards the market. To push India as a whole towards organic farming, farmers need to be paid more. India has the capability to become “Organic Bowl of the World. MSP driven production must stop. Farm level Assessment and Claim Settlement by Insurance Companies must be technological driven,” said Mr. Das.

Mr. Rupender, Startup Agriculture Machinery showcased the importance of customized agricultural machineries according to the farmers’ requirement depending on the dimensions, power

and usage. Feedback mechanism from farmers helps in digging out the root cause of the problem.

Mr. Ravindra Shukla, Ayurved Ltd. highlighted the concern from a youth perspective that agricultural policies must be designed in such a way that it encourages the younger generation. He said that family involvement in agriculture have decreased over the years, since no youth wants to become a farmer and if young bloods see agriculture as a profitable source of income, path of development and modernization will open.

Dr. R.P. Singh observed that farming system used earlier was destroyed. “Due to Green Revolution, Cropping System has come up. Farmers have got used to the ease of growing Rice and Wheat year round since Government is into procurement. Still in few states like Punjab, soyabean, maize, mustard and horticultural crops, are now given some importance. Thereby change is required in the cultivation system so as to protect the environment and soil. In China soils are well Carbon maintained giving out double yield with 3 times the usage of chemicals. Mandis, Processing and Value Addition plants must be opened in the villages itself” said Dr. Singh.

Mr. Sunil Kumar, Director, Bagmati Educational and Social Trust discussed about Farmer independence, social security and social prestige for farmers.

Mr. Ami Lal Meena, Managing Director, Grow Well Organics promoted the upcoming trends and advantages of adoption of organic agriculture.

“Agriculture Policies should also interpose Insurance on production loss of farmers. There is a need for a Regulatory body and smart villages so that people migrate back to villages. Many schemes were and are being launched by the state and central Government. But are those schemes being implemented? A proper check and Implementing Regulatory Agencies should be established,” he suggested.

Mr. Rakesh Tikait, Chief Spokesperson, Bhartiya Kisan Union acknowledged the house that agriculture has been affected a lot by GST. He said, “Farmer has to pay 18% GST on tractor tires and variable GST on agriculture implements and inputs. GST on Agricultural equipment should be 0% in order to reduce the input cost and for better income for farmers. Government recently announced to ban the operations of tractors which are older than 10 years. Agriculture Committee need to be formulated in order to take opinions from the farmers and regulate the Agriculture Sector in India. Kisan Credit Card has to pay a lot on interest rate which needs a major policy amendment. Farmers should be regulated by a steering body which shall inform, assist them and guide them for when to grow, what to grow, how to grow and where to “.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE

- a) Formulation of **National Agriculture Policy** from **State Specific Core Agriculture Committee** should be formed comprising of Govt. officials(MoA, MOFPI, MoC etc.), Farmer Leaders and economists for leading **cluster based farming and advisory system** for assisting them and guiding for when to grow, what to grow, how to grow and where to sell.
- b) **Ban on usage of 10 yr. old tractor** to be removed as farmers cannot buy a new tractor after every 10 yr.; this will encourage more debt on them. Some kind of rural or urban area specific applicability can be adopted.
- c) **Kisan Credit Card** interest rates are hurting the farmers pocket which should be **slashed down** to an acceptable percentage which thereby needs a policy reform.
- d) Mini Food processing industries to be established in the reach of the farmer for immediate value addition and primary processing thus reducing the post-harvest losses.
- e) The PMFBY scheme insurance premiums should be rationalized and all insurance companies should be allowed to operate countrywide to induce competition. The policy guidelines should be made very clear to the farmers before issuing of the policy.
- f) The government procurement centers should start functioning prior to the beginning of crop harvesting season begins so that farmers do not face any challenge in selling their produce otherwise they have no option other than selling it to the middle man at lower price.
- g) There is a need to shift focus to the gainful employment that can be generated at rural level in agriculture by value addition activities and making Smart Villages with doubling farmers' income agenda, minimizing the post-harvest losses, market linkages for direct farm produce to consumers to minimize the involvement of middlemen.
- h) MSP for agricultural commodities should be decided in consultation with farmer leaders and giving due consideration to input cost in agriculture as it is increasing in spite of government subsidies.
- i) Problems are faced by dairy farmers due to overproduction of SMP (Skimmed milk powder), hence government should come up with a mechanism to procure the milk and promote its utilization in Mid-Day meal.
- j) Technological mapping for Micro-Agro-Climatic Areas and proper Feedback Mechanism from marginal, small and big farmers need to be put in place which should also be documented and forwarded to Agriculture Universities, Extension Departments and Research Institutes.
- k) The government should reduce the GST i.e. 18% to 5% for the farmers on agriculture equipment and farm machineries.

Glimpses of RTC Farmers issues and Agriculture Policies



List of Participants

1. **Sh Imran Hussain**, Hon'ble Environment Minister – Government of Delhi
2. **Dr Anwar Ali Khan**, OSD to Environment Minister – Government of Delhi
3. **Shri Ashok Bajpai**, Member of Parliament
4. **Shri Anand Bhaskar Rapolu**, Member of Parliament
5. **Dr MH Mehta, Chairman** – Gujarat Life Sciences
6. **Dr PVSM Gouri, Technival Assessor** – NABCB Quality Council of India
7. **Prof AC Vashney**, Former Vice-Chancellor DUVASU
8. **Dr MJ Saxena**, Managing Director – Ayurved
9. **Dr Deepti Rai**, Manager R&D – Ayurved
10. **Mr PK Shukla**, Manager CSR – Ayurved
11. **Mr Tarun Upadhyay**, Executive – Ayurved
12. **Mr Ami Lal Meena**, Co-Founder & Director – Grow Well Organic & Eco Products
13. **Mr Indranil Das**, Vice President, Asia – Agrinos India
14. **Dr RP Singh**, Executive Secretary – Indian Agricultural Universities Association
15. **Dr Dinesh Chauhan**, CEO – IACG
16. **Dr Soumitra Das**, Director- South Asia – International Zinc Association
17. **Dr (Ms.) Lopamudra Priyadarshini**, Head CSR-PR – Sonalika Group
18. **Mr Arvind Saini**, GM Marketing – Sonalika Group
19. **Mr Tushar Pandey**, Advisor – IPE-CKD
20. **Mr Jitendra Mandrah**, India Manager – FoodPLUS GmbH
21. **Mr Pradeep Bharti**, Technical Key Account Manager India – Global GAP
22. **Mr Japinder Wadhawan**, Managing Director – Raftaar Engineering
23. **Mr Surat Singh**, Managing Director – Krishak Bharti Producer
24. **Mr Amit**, CEO – Krishak Bharti Producer
25. **Dr Prija Ponnann**, International Registration – Crystal Crop Protection
26. **Dr Harinder S**, Director – Excellent Enterprise
27. **Mr DS Rana**, Chairman – Rana Group
28. **Mr Aditya Khanna**, Managing Director – Yog Capital
29. **Mr NP Singh**, General Manager – Gomselmash
30. **Mr Dhananjay Dave**, President – BVG
31. **Shri Chand Sharma**, Horticulture Unit, Environment Department – GNCTD
32. **Dr VV Sadamate**, Former Adv Planning Commission – Government of India
33. **Dr IV Ramanuja Rao**, CEO – Centre for Indian Bamboo Resource and Technology

34. **Mr Barjinderjit Singh**, DY. General Manager – CNH Industrial (Farmer Network Holland Fiat)
35. **Ms Namrata Malik** – Advocate
36. **Col (Rtd) Ajay Purohit**, CLO – Superkisan
37. **Mr Rajiv Kumar**, CTO – Superkisan
38. **Dr Subimal Bhattacharya**, Managing Director – JOOKTO
39. **Mr Sandeep Vats**, Vice President – JOOKTO
40. **Mr Eakpreet Singh**, Student – Thapar Institute
41. **Dr Ashwini Kumar Singh**, Joint Director, CCS – National Institute of Animal Health, Baghpat
42. **Dr Amresh Pandey**, Scientist – Birsa Agriculture University, Ranchi
43. **Dr Jagjit Singh Kochar**, Director – Fishbiotech (P) Ltd.
44. **Dr Khushnood Ali**, Head, Research Division – AARDO
45. **Mr Rakesh Tikait**, President – Bhartiya Kisan Union
46. **Mr Yudhvir Singh**, General Secretary – Bhartiya Kisan Union
47. **Sh Krishan Bir Chaudhary**, Chairman – Bharat Krishak Samaj
48. **Chaudhary Pushpendra Singh**, President – Kisan Shakti Sangh
49. **Mr Bijender Singh Dalal**, Farmer Leader – Pragatisheel Kisan Club
50. **Mr Prem Singh Gehlawat**, Farmer Leader – All India Kisan Mahasabha
51. **Mr Abhijeet Thakur**, Reporter/Copy Editor – E TV
52. **Mr Maha Singh Chauhan**, Progressive Farmer
53. **Mr Surat Singh Janghu**, Farmer Leader
54. **Mr Ranbir Singh**, Progressive Farmer
55. **Mr Satish Kumar**, Progressive Farmer
56. **Mr Harsh Chand Verma**, Farmer Leader
57. **Mr Rishi Vajpayee**, Progressive Farmer
58. **Mr Ram Kumar Solanki**, Progressive Farmer
59. **Mr Sunil Solanki**, Progressive Farmer
60. **Mr Ramesh Chauhan**, Progressive Farmer
61. **Mr Harakh Chand**, Progressive Farmer
62. **Mr Mohit Tomar**, Progressive Farmer
63. **Mr CP Shoran**, Executive Director – ICFA
64. **Mrs Mamta Jain**, Director – Government Affairs ICFA
65. **Dr Sucheta Arora**, Director - Knowledge Management – ICFA
66. **Mr Ankit Kumar**, Assistant Manager- IT – ICFA
67. **Ms Jasmeet Kaur**, Assistant Manager - Events & Communications – ICFA



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