



Agripreneurship: The Long Needed Answer to Farming Woes

(*Prof. Vaishali Dhingra¹ and Prof. Manish Dhingra²)

¹Dean, Faculty of Commerce & Management, Rama University, Kanpur

²Dean, Research & Development, Rama University, Kanpur

* vaishalidhingra.vd@gmail.com

Agriculture is said to be the spine of Indian economy and since ages India is known as an Agrarian economy. The total share of agriculture in India's GDP is 22 percent. It provides employment to 65 percent of the total work force of the country and also it contributes a significant 14 percent to the total export of the nation. The 10th Five Year Plan laid due emphasis on the agriculture saying that it can contribute significantly to the country's development. Off late a sea change and drastic transformation is taking place in the Indian agricultural scenario.

Agripreneurship is fine blend of Agriculture and Entrepreneurship. The process of agripreneurship involves deploying innovative techniques and processes in the field of agriculture and allied sectors for improving the output and also adding value to the agricultural produce. Agripreneurship involves various areas like animal husbandry, agriculture, agribusiness, agro-based industries, rural & allied sectors as well as export of agricultural products. Agripreneurship plays a vital role in the growth and development of national economy through entrepreneurship development which increases the income level and employment opportunities in rural as well as urban areas.

During COVID-19 pandemic, agriculture was the only sector which flourished and also generated a number of employment and career opportunities. It helps in inducing productivity gains by smallholder farmers and integrating them into local, national and international markets. It helps in reducing food costs, supply uncertainties and improving the diets of the rural and urban poor in the country. It also generates growth, increasing and diversifying income, and providing entrepreneurial opportunities in both rural and urban areas.

Thorough analysis is required to assess whether it is possible to increase farmers' income without introducing innovative practices in agriculture. Fact of the matter is that innovation has become the buzz word in agricultural sector. A number of agripreneurs who have initiated innovative ventures in agripreneurship have taken a lead head on. The entrepreneurs who are offering viable solutions to the problems hovering around food sector are successful.

Recently an entrepreneur from Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh started selling millet idlis which are considered to be far more healthy and nutritious. Various varieties of millets are grown by him in his own fields. If we want to improve upon farmer's income, we must train them to do some kind of forward integration so that they can add value to their agricultural produce by processing it and packaging it and marketing it. COVID-19 has proved that the food industry flourished while other sectors of the economy saw a downturn.

Undoubtly, entrepreneurship in the agriculture sector is one of the most important sectors of the economy.

Increasing Indian farmers' income wouldn't be possible without an innovative and vibrant food and agriculture industrial complex. Entrepreneurs solving for problems that both farmers and consumers face are critical in realizing India's potential as a dominant food and agri player globally.

The fact that agriculture has developed over the years is reflected by various indicators such as increasing productivity, cropping intensity, high-yielding variety seeds, diversification, mechanization, and modernization of agriculture, and also a variety of activities related to production, processing and marketing of crops, livestock, propagation, and distribution of products and services relating to agriculture, floriculture, horticulture, sericulture, aquiculture, and animal husbandry and forest products. Innovative practices and creativity in agriculture will lead to further upgradation.

It's high time for the farmers to generate a thought process that it's not the time to sell their land and invest it in some other avenue; rather the time is ripe for generating an innovative idea in agriculture and employ it instantly to reap optimum benefits.

