



Challenges and Opportunities for Doubling Farmers' Income

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The average annual income of a farmer in India is less than Rs. 2 lakh now. The premise of the strategy for doubling farmers' income is based on increasing total output across the agricultural sub-sectors through higher productivity. Double farmers' income to promote farmers welfare, reduce agrarian distress and bring the income gap between farmers and those working in non-agricultural professions. Doubling farmers' real income by 2022 is a goal established by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, who is challenging the status of all involved stakeholders. There is a need to diversify the sources of income of a farmer to realize the goal of doubling income. Depending on yield increases alone is not necessarily going to achieve the goal. The gross income for a farmer depends on the yield and price realized for this produce. Farming in India is characterized by small and fragmented land holdings that rely on monsoon rain. Operating small holdings is often unviable and in this situation, farming is not a propitious business or enterprise (NCAER 2017). Farmers earn income from various sources, like crop cultivation, dairy products, fisheries and other allied sectors. Doubling of the farmers' income some strong strategies need to be adopted considering the basic requirement of the farmers.

Major challenges and issues

- ✓ High cost and less availability of hybrid seed.
- ✓ Occurrence of natural calamities (frequent floods, droughts and hail storm etc.)
- ✓ Less use of rice fallow land.
- ✓ High cost of production
- ✓ Delay sowing of crops
- ✓ Very low level of farm mechanization.
- ✓ Lack of knowledge about the new technologies, marketing and transport infrastructure.

Double farming system and its components

Farming system is defined as a complex inter related matrix of soil, plants, animal, implements, power, labour and capital other inputs controlled in part by farming families and influenced to varying degrees by political, economic, institutional and social forces that operate at many levels.

Doubling of farmers income

- ✓ Increase in crop productivity
- ✓ Increase in livestock productivity.
- ✓ Resource use efficiency -reduction in cost of production.
- ✓ Diversification to high value agriculture

Some value added food products which can help in doubling the farmer's income

Value added products are raw agricultural products that have been modified or enhanced to have a higher market value and or a longer shelf life. There are some examples of value added product which can help in doubling the income like.

(1) Banana and its product: Bananas are a fair source of calcium and iron and a rich source of magnesium, sodium and potassium. Banana is cultivated in every part of the country. A small percentage of banana production is exported to the USSR, being lightly perishable in nature. There is a need to process this fruit by manufacturing products such as jams, flour, powder, banana pulp etc. The processed banana products also have a good export market.

(2) Mango pickles: Mango is one of the most important tropical and subtropical fruits in the world and is popular both in its fresh and processed form. There are a variety of products that are produced from mango, like mango juice, mango pulp, mango flavor, mango kernel oil, mango pickle, mango powder etc. There is a very huge market demand for mango pickles. Sour mango pickles, sweet mango pickles, dried mango pickles etc.

(3) Potato powder: Potato is an essential part of every breakfast, lunch, and dinner worldwide. Potatoes can be used to produce many value-added products. It can be roasted, boiled, fried, baked or steamed. Potato powder contains not only the same nutrition level as cereal flour but is also rich in vitamin C and lots of vitamin K.

(4) Drumstick leaf powder: Drumstick leaves are also known as moringa leaves. Moringa or drumstick leaves contain vital vitamins such as B₁, B₂ and many other nutrients. Drumstick leaf powder is freshly crushed and powdered in a hygienic environment to make it healthier for life.

Directions to use: (a) For skin

- Mix drumstick leaf powder with honey and olive oil and apply to the overall body and face.
- Apply as a pack by mixing the powder with rose water and leaving it for 15 to 25 minutes.

(b) For health

- Avoid cooking it to retain its nutrients; garnish your vegetable salad with a drumstick.
- Leaves powder or mix in your curd rice; add to your smoothie to enjoy the taste.

(5) Mushroom soup powder: Soups are commonly used as appetizers but also as main courses by the diet-conscious. Mushroom soup powder is prepared by mixing this powder with milk powder, corn flour and other ingredients.

(6) Mushroom biscuit: Delicious and crunchy mushroom biscuits can be prepared by using button or oyster mushroom powder and various ingredients. For making biscuits, the entire ingredients are finely ground using an electric mixer and cleaned with the help of a fine sieve separately.

The ingredients, like ghee and sugar, are well mixed for 5-7 minutes using a dough kneader to make the mixture. The ingredients like sugar give the biscuits their desired sweetness, ghee gives them smoothness and ammonium bicarbonate gives them crunchiness.

Conclusion

Value addition is the process of transforming the product from its original state to a more valuable state. There is a need to double farmers' income to promote farmers welfare, reduce agrarian distress and bring parity between the incomes of farmers and those working in non-agricultural professions.