



Mains Practice Question

Q. In pursuit of doubling farmer's income, Indian agricultural policy must emphasize converting farmers to agripreneurs. Comment. (250 words).

13 May, 2020 GS Paper 3 Economy

Approach

- In the introduction briefly explain the context, why doubling the farmers' income is necessary and introduce and define agripreneurs as one of the viable options.
- In the body, write about ways in which agripreneurs could help in doubling the farmers' income.
- Mention some of the important policy-level interventions required to enable agripreneurs to increase their income.
- Give a valid conclusion as per your answer.

Introduction

The green revolution was successful in securing food security in India. However, agricultural income remain subdued over the decades. To address this mismatch the Government of India envisioned doubling farmers' income by the year 2022. Converting farmers into agripreneurs is one of the most viable strategies to achieve this target.

Agripreneurs are entrepreneurs whose main business is agriculture or agriculture allied activities. These agripreneurs could be aggregated as a corporate entity to manage the risks and attract long term capital.

Body

Some of the ways through which the agripreneurs can help in doubling the farmers' income are as follows:

- Treating agriculture as business which includes changing the outlook of inputs like capital and output as profit could directly increase the income of farmers.
- Facilitate pooling of resources like the landholdings can be pooled together to facilitate mechanised farming.
- They could become the service providers to cater to the requisite services at the village level. These include the input borrowing and distribution, hiring of agricultural equipment like tractors, threshers and harvesters.
- Related opportunities existing in the livestock husbandry sector for providing breeding, immunization, disease diagnostic and treatment services could be availed.
- Agripreneurs can also become input producers. These home entrepreneurs can produce biopesticides, soil amendments, biofertilizers and vermicompost at the village level

Policy level interventions to convert farmers into agripreneurs requires

- Promoting scientific agriculture micro-irrigation along with the nutrient application on a very large scale
- Facilitating timely and adequate and timely loans through Kisan Credit Card (KCC) and from institutional sources like co-operatives, commercial banks and NABARD itself.

- Providing greater market access by replacing the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act with the Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing (APLM) Act. and by overcoming deficiencies in agricultural marketing through e-NAM.
- Agriculture export policy should facilitate farmers to compete in the global market too.
- Farm Income Insurance Programme should cover all the cropping season to provide these entrepreneurs with financial and social security.
- Promoting more agricultural research to improve varieties of seeds, agricultural tools and equipment to enhance production and hence increase farmers' income.
- Providing better industrial and entrepreneurial education discipline will enable entrepreneurs to naturally take advantage of the vast human resource availability.
- The creation of a freer export regime and abolition of the Essential Commodities Act.
- Other such interventions may include establishing Special Agriculture Zones (SAZ), promoting agri-tourism, generation of rural non-farm employment and leveraging the flagship programmes of the government.

Conclusion

Thus, if National agriculture policy facilitates converting farmers into agripreneurs, it has adequate potential to not only double the farmers' income but also contribute significantly to the national income.

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