

1. Agri-Preneurship and Its Challenges and Opportunities in India

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Abstract:

Agri-preneurship as generally sustainable, community oriented, directly marketed agriculture. Demanding global structure, India, in order to remain a front runner needs to primarily focus on the agriculture sector. There are a different opportunity in agripreneurship just like a agro produce processing units, agro produce manufacturing units, agro inputs manufacturing units, agro service centers and off farm vocations. Agripreneurship face various challenges during time of work and implementation serious threats from established corporate players, lack of knowledge/market awareness, lock of knowledge in branding management, accounting, lack of information source, required skill sets and training.

Keywords:

Agri-preneurship, Sustainable Agriculture, Entrepreneurs.

1.1 Introduction:

Agriculture remains one of the key sectors of the Indian economy, comprising overall 18-20 percentage share in the gross domestic product. Near about 70 percent of the rural population depends on agriculture and allied aspects for their livelihood. It is also an important source of raw material and demand for many industrial products, particularly fertilizers, pesticides, agricultural implements and a variety of consumer's goods. Relatively poor infrastructural facility is one of the key push factors, while better job opportunities in urban areas lead to rural-urban migrations. Amidst the changing paradigms and demanding global structure, India, in order to remain a front runner needs to primarily focus on the agriculture sector. This specialization will develop agri-preneurs with distinct traits and skills to exploits opportunities galore in the field of agriculture. In this backdrop, one of the option which mitigates the burden on agriculture is agripreneurship i.e. entrepreneurship in agriculture and its allied sectors which is known as cornerstone of self-reliance.

A. Agripreneurship:

Agripreneurship is the profitable confluence of agriculture and entrepreneurship brought in by the people with innovative ideas to develop the existing practices for better productivity as well as establishment of new ventures in agriculture and allied fields. Expressing it in a structural way we can define **“Agripreneurship as generally sustainable, community**

oriented, directly marketed agriculture”. Sustainable agriculture denotes a holistic systems oriented approach to farming that focuses on interrelationship of social, economic and environmental process.

B. Need for Agripreneurship:

- Increasing demand of organic and quality food both in India and abroad.
- Competitive advantages for many primary production activities in agriculture eg. Rainfed farming, livestock and wild craft production is through low cost production technologies only.
- Private sector is willing to enter in to agribusiness at levels of operations.
- To reduce malnutrition as majority of women and children in the country are malnourished.

In facts, developing entrepreneurs in agriculture can solve problems by –

- a. Reducing the burden of agriculture
- b. Generating employment opportunities for rural youth
- c. Controlling migration from rural to urban areas
- d. Increasing national income
- e. Supporting industrial development in rural areas
- f. Reducing the pressure on urban cities.

1.2 Opportunities in Agripreneurship:

In India, these days a combination of excess technology, emergence of micro financing, liberalized government rules, awareness and training programmes on agriculture and allied sectors and a growing tribe of open minded qualified professionals who are looking for independent and self employment opportunities are a sure shot recipe for the rise of agripreneurs.

Technologies those reduce the cost of production and increase the benefit of the farmers will open new opportunities for agri-entrepreneurship. New technologies that are simple and time saving and keep away farmers from drudgery of labour will also provide opportunity for entrepreneurship in agriculture.

Technologies that provide social and psychological benefits to farmers will also provide opportunity for entrepreneurship in agriculture.

The country offers an enviable array of choices for such entrepreneurs that include following activities:

A. On farm activities:

- a. **Argo produce processing units:** These units do not manufacture any new product. They merely process the agriculture produce e.g. Rice mills, Dal mills etc.

- b. **Agro produce manufacturing units:** These units produce entirely new products based on the agricultural produce as the raw material e.g. Sugar factories, Bakery etc.
- c. **Agro inputs manufacturing units:** These units produce goods either for mechanization of agriculture or for increasing productivity e.g. Fertilizer manufacturing plants, insecticides production units, food processing units, agriculture implements etc.
- d. **Agro service centers:** These include the workshops and service centers for repairing and serving the agricultural implements used in agriculture.

B. Off farm Vocations:

Entrepreneurship development is also profitable in different off farm activities like cloth stitching, knitting, embroidery, cloth printing [tie and dye] carpet making, dori making, envelope and plastic bag making, agarbati, candle, rope, basket making, bamboo work, distilled water, oil extraction, chalk making, biogas mechanic, solar machine & other rural crafts.

The possible areas of Entrepreneurship in allied activities of agriculture:

This includes the activities like, Dairying, Sericulture, Goat rearing, Rabbit rearing, floriculture, fisheries, shrimp farming, poultry farming, sheep rearing, vegetable cultivation, nursery farming, grafting/budding farm forestry etc...

Agripreneurship thus transforms agriculture into an attractive and profitable ventures as it is evident that there is a tremendous opportunity in agripreneurship in India.

1.3 Challenges in Agripreneurship:

Agripreneurship faces several challenges. One of the main challenges is lack of access of funding for agri enterprises, particularly in early stage. Although the government has launched various funding schemes, accessing funding is still a challenge. Another challenge is the lack of skilled manpower. Many enterprises struggle to find skilled employees with relevant expertise and experience.

Even though the agripreneurship are using their creativity, ability and hard work to prove their skills and competencies in current day of competition and volatility, they are facing more challenges and problems while starting agri enterprises and also during their management and growth phases. Agripreneurs face various challenges during time of work and implementation, serious threats from established corporate players, lack of knowledge/market awareness, lack of knowledge in branding, management, accounting, lack of information source, required skill sets and training. In addition to this, the fear of failure, low risk taking capacity also act as deterrent to their growth.

The infrastructural challenges including storage, warehousing, electricity and credit facility and finance, especially formal finance [for both investment credit and working capital financing] continue to daunt the agripreneurs. As it is known, the dependency on money lenders leads top exploitation, when the institutional credit is not forthcoming for managing their business enterprises.

However next challenge agripreneurs face is legal challenge. The regulatory framework for enterprises in India is complex and often cumbersome, making it difficult for agripreneurs to comply the regulations. There is a lack of clarity which creates confusion and ambiguity in the regulatory framework.

1.4 Reference:

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