

Impact of COVID-19 (Corona Virus) On Indian Agriculture

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Introduction

COVID-19 (China Originated Virus in December 2019) or Corona Virus has affected whole world to a great extent and has been turned out to be a pandemic and its cure has not been found yet. The whole economical activities of world have been put to break. It has caused a lot of damage to the life and economy of the whole world. If we talk about India, the country might have tackled the widespread of this virus quite effectively but it has caused lot of loss to the economy of the country especially to the agriculture. Due to this virus, farmers has faced many problems related to the sale of their produce of the rabi crops like Wheat and Mustard. The vegetable growers, dairy and poultry farmers have been worst affected by this pandemic because of the lack of demand and supply due to the problem of transportation, they are not getting the right prices for their produce and could be left with a debt after the season and pandemic comes to an end.

Effect of COVID-19 on Various Agricultural Enterprises

Effect on Agronomic Crops

The lockdown imposed due to corona virus has affected the purchasing process of the rabi crops like Wheat and Mustard. The worst affected farmers are from the states of Punjab and Haryana which are also said as 'food bowl of India' due to their bumper production of Wheat. The produce of farmers is not being purchased at all once instead it is being purchased in different terms and parts. Many farmers do not have proper storage facility to store their produce at home and thus the produce has to be kept in the field under the mighty Gods. It is also increasing

the other problems of farmers as like increased labor and cost in handling the produce i.e. unloading and loading of harvest and also affecting the sowing of cotton (delay in sowing).

Effect on Vegetable Growers

The vegetable growing farmers are one of the worst affected due to the Novel Corona Virus as the lockdown is imposed all over the country the price of vegetables has been lowered to a great extent due to the retardation in the demand and supply chain. The farmers has to feed the vegetables to their cattle as the markets are not either opening or if opening are offering a very low price. Due to this the farmers have been come to a stage where they could be left with a lot of debt after the season ends.

Effect on Dairy Farmers

Dairy farmers have been also hit worst due to the Novel Corona Virus because of the shortage or reduced transport facilities of their dairy products mostly milk. The transporters found it very difficult to get the pass to various districts and states of the country and due to this the supply has been reduced and the dairy farmers are unable to sale their produce and due to this the prices of milk also has been reduced.

Effect on Poultry Farmers

Poultry farmers are also affected badly due to the COVID-19 widespread and this has been mostly due to the rumours that consumption of chicken or egg could lead to the infection of the novel corona virus and the another major reason could be the lack of continuous and proper transportation facilities. All this has lead to the burial of living poultry animals under the soil in various parts of the country because the poultry owners are unable to feed those animals due to the financial crisis.



Migration of Labor

The agricultural labor and the laborers working in the agricultural markets have been migrated to their native place after the lockdown has been announced this has resulted in the hinder of agricultural operations and has also affected the working of the agricultural markets.



Policies Formed By Government

The government has announced various policies to ease the problems of the farmers during this pandemic which are:

1. The ministry of agriculture has launched a new mobile application named Kisan Rath which will help farmers to sell their produce at home by contacting registered traders and transporters on this mobile application.
2. The state government has announced to form new temporary purchase centers to ease the buying and selling process of the agricultural produce and also maintaining social distancing.
3. The government has announced an e platform named Meri Fasal Mera Byora for the farmers to register their produce online so that they could get details of the market and date of selling of their produce online or via SMS in Haryana.
4. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has also issued an agro-advisory to maintain hygiene and social distancing among farmers working on their fields.
5. Allowance of inter-state passes to the harvesting machines.
6. The Government of India has announced that the first installment of the PM-Kisan Yojana payment to farmers, i.e., Rs. 2,000 will be paid up front to farmers, benefitting over 8.7 crore Indian farmers.
7. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a moratorium on agricultural term loans (including crop loans) for a period of three months.
8. The central and state governments have done much to allay the fears in the minds of farmers by quickly announcing exemptions for the agriculture sector – seeds, labourers and farm related activities. States such as Telangana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh among others have been very proactive in this regard.