

## Covid-19 and Indian Agriculture: Impact and Strategy

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Agriculture is an important part of the Indian economy. The sector meets the food needs of the entire country while also ranking among the highest agricultural exporters in the world. COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on industries all over the world. The steps put in place to try to stop the virus's spread have affected enterprise processes and schedules. Globally, these strategies include social distancing and lockdowns. Since the agriculture sector is not immune to the challenges that the global business market is currently facing, here are some of the ways that COVID-19 has affected the agricultural industry:

➤ **Unemployment**

- A large number of employees were dismissed from their job during this pandemic. The widespread dismissal of workers is a result of low demand for goods and services, resulting in massive losses for companies. Maintaining a workforce when the money spent exceeds the money earned leads to worker displacement. This situation is same in agriculture sector also.

➤ **Product Access Restrictions**

- Border closures caused by lockdowns in various countries have made cross-border trade impossible for the agricultural industry. For example, if a country depended on its neighbour for organic fertiliser, the lockdown makes it difficult to export and import such fertilisers. This has a break effect, causing crops to wilt and die as a result of not being fertilized.

➤ **Production shortage**

- Depending on the lockdown measures in place in a specific geographic region, Agricultural workers may be forced to stay at home except when purchasing necessities. A full stay-at-home order indicates that crop production is minimal or non-existent. Lower-rate production results in commodity

shortages, affecting the ability to meet current demands. If the demand for a product increases or remains unchanged, but the supply only lessens, there is bound to be an increase in its price such is the law of supply and demand.

➤ **Income Loss**

- When there is no production or less production than requirement, there is no income. The income is directly proportional to level of production. This means that workers need to find alternative ways to have a source of income in order to meet their needs at a difficult time like this. But this is also difficult during such type of condition, when people have been advised to stay at home.

➤ **Wastage**

- Low demand or restriction in exports resulted in a lot of produce going to waste. Wastage results in loss of income and revenue, which is difficult to negate or minimize due to the ongoing pandemic. This wastage is high in agriculture sector because of the perishable nature of agricultural commodities.

➤ **Unpredictability**

- The pandemic casts doubt on the future. Agriculturalists are unsure when the borders will be reopened for trade. And when these doors open, they can only hope that everything will be in the same way that they have in the past.



Strategy to strengthen the agricultural sector post COVID-19

