

Agricultural Advisory (Extension) Services

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Introduction:

Advisory Services is a term commonly used as an alternate for “extension services”. These systems involve a broad spectrum of market and non-market entities, and agents are expected to provide useful technical information about new technologies that can improve the income and welfare of farmers and other rural people.

Agricultural advisory (extension) services are a vital element of the array of market and nonmarket entities and agents that provide critical flows of information that can improve farmers’ and other rural peoples’ welfare. After a period of neglect, agricultural advisory services have returned strongly to the international development agenda. Apart from their conventional function of providing knowledge for improved agricultural productivity, agricultural advisory services are expected to fulfil a variety of new functions, such as linking smallholder farmers to high-value and export markets, promoting environmentally sustainable production techniques, and coping with the effects of diseases and other health challenges that affect agriculture.

Role of ICAR in Advisory Services:

1. Initiatives of ICAR:

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) took up number of extension programmes over the years. The first programme was National Demonstration Scheme (1964) initiated during 1964-65 to demonstrate the production potentiality of major crops in the farmers’ field. The Operational Research Projects (ORPs) was started during 1975 to identify technological as well as socio-economic constraints and to formulate and implement the problem-solving technology modules on area/watershed/ target group basis in operational area. Lab-to-Land programme was launched during 1979 to transfer low-cost technologies in agriculture and allied enterprises. As part of technology mission on oilseeds and pulses, the council started Frontline demonstration in 1990-91. Institution –Village Linkage Programme was launched during 1995 which was funded under National Agricultural Technology Project



(NATP) during 1998-2004. Under innovation technology demonstration component of NATP, the ICAR established Agriculture-Technology Information Centre (ATIC) in State Agricultural Universities to work as single window support system linking the various units of research institution with intermediary users and farmers in decision making and problem-solving exercise through availability of technology inputs, products, information and advisory services under one roof. Since 2006-07, ICAR is implementing National Agricultural Innovation Project (NAIP), in a consortium mode.

2. Krsihi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)

The Knowledge Hub Krishi Vigyan Kendra (Farm Science Centre) is an innovative institution of ICAR established at district level. The first KVK was established during 1974 and has grown as a largest network in the country with 722 KVKs during 2020-2021. KVKs are funded by ICAR and administered by ICAR institutes / SAUs /Deemed Universities / Non-government Organizations or State Department of Agriculture. KVKs play a vital role in conducting on farm testing to identify location specific agricultural technologies and demonstrating the production potential of crops at farmers' fields through frontline demonstrations. They also conduct need-based training programmes for the benefit of farmers and farm women, rural youths and extension personnel to update their knowledge and skills and to orient them in the frontier areas of technology development. KVKs are creating awareness about improved agricultural technologies through large number of extension programmes. Critical and quality inputs like seeds, planting materials, organic products, bio fertilizers and livestock, piglet and poultry strains are produced by the KVKs and made available to the farmers. Agricultural Knowledge and Resource Centres are set up at KVK to support the initiatives of public, private and voluntary sectors at district level. A number of successful case studies have emerged out of effective implementation of various technological and institutional interventions by KVKs. The KVKs are evolving as the future grass root level institutions for empowering the farming community. KVKs have made dent and has become part of decentralized planning and implementation instrument to achieve desired level of growth in agriculture and allied sector. Studies were conducted from both internal and external agencies on performance of KVKs at different point of times have indicated that the KVKs have significantly contributed in educating farmers in improved practices and enhancing productivity levels.

3. Role of SAUs in Advisory Services:

State Agricultural Universities apart from lending support in implementing ICAR sponsored extension programmes, have evolved several innovative extension models to effectively reach the farming community. The type of extension activities undertaken by SAUs vary from state to state. SAUs are undertaking transfer of technologies to farmers and others through Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Extension Education Units, Farmers Training Institute, Bakery Training Unit, Staff Training Unit, Agriculture Technology Information Centre by organizing diversified extension educational activities viz., farm trials, demonstration, meetings, discussion, conventions, training programme, farmers field school, field days, krishi mela, exhibition, agricultural campaign, educational tours, exposure visits, diagnostics visits, farm advisory services etc. The SAUs publish agriculture literature (books, package of practices, booklets, folders, and leaflets) in local languages for dissemination of agricultural technologies to the farmers and extension personnel. Expert Centres and Village Resources Centres are established in collaboration with Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for interaction of farmers with experts on a variety of agricultural information. Mobile message services and Kissan Call Centre (established at ATIC) as well as KVKs are providing timely information to the farming community regarding agricultural technologies, weather data and market information.

4. Role of SVUs in Advisory Services:

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Agricultural Universities (AUs) including Veterinary and Animal Science/Fisheries Science Universities, spread over different agro-ecological zones of the country, have played a key role in transforming livestock production scenario of the country through sustained animal health research, teaching and extension services backed by competent human resource generated from these institutions. With the diversification of livestock sector, the role of veterinarians is becoming ever challenging.

State Veterinary University is responsible for imparting education in different branches of Veterinary, Animal and Fishery sciences. It also undertakes Research and extension of such Sciences to the rural people of the respective state. It promotes research, field and extension programmes, production and post-harvest technology including processing and marketing in Veterinary, Animal and Fishery Sciences.



Mission:

- To develop adequate skilled manpower in Veterinary, Animal, Poultry, Dairy and Fishery Sciences.
- To undertake basic research in frontier areas of Animal and Veterinary Science with an aim to develop high performing animals, modern diagnostics and prophylactic tools.
- To serve farmers of the state by updating the knowledge on livestock and livestock products to develop entrepreneurial capabilities among livestock farmers of the state in particular and of the nation in general.

