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Challenges and opportunities for Indian agriculture

Indian Agriculture is facing several challenges. These include sustaining investment, climate change, high fluctuations in prices and production, undeveloped markets, relative profitability of Agriculture vis-a-vis other sectors, raising small holder productivity, providing livelihood to large numbers, containing the cost of production and retaining International Competitiveness.

Opportunities available for development include, diverse agro-climatic conditions, high domestic demand and large domestic market, fertile soils, capability for adoption of S&T for agriculture, access to global markets, enterprising farming community, well developed research and extension capabilities, scope for increasing cropping intensity.

Areas for focus include dry land farming, wasteland development, precision farming-horticulture development, supply chain- storage, processing, cold chain development, commodity exchanges/futures markets, food processing and value addition activities, grading and standardization of produce; focus on fisheries, livestock development, dairying and organic farming.

To face the challenges and realize the potential for development following policy areas need attention. These are Marketing Reforms particularly APMC reforms, development of competitive national market, encouraging contract farming, producer companies and cooperatives, modernization of seed farming, developing integrated food law, development of rural infrastructure and rural extension services, and agro-based food processing and cold chain development, modernizing credit markets. Additional policy measures should encompass risk reduction through insurance, adopting technology and organic farming.

Biography

B Gangaiah, currently Additional Director General (ADG), Centre for Good Governance (CGG). He is an Indian Economic Service (IES) Officer of 1980 batch with long experience in Government of India at Senior Management Level in Agriculture, Industries, Rural Development, Urban Development and Planning Commission. He has a PhD in Economics and an M.Phil in International Studies from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He also worked on deputation with Department for International Development (DFID) and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation funded health projects in India. Before joining CGG he was working as Senior Economic Adviser in the Ministry of Agriculture (GOI), New Delhi working on agriculture policy, G20 issues and was involved in preparation of flagship publications of Agricultural Outlook and Situation Analysis Reports and the State of Indian Agriculture reports of the Ministry. He has done several consultancy assignments with World Bank, UN Women, ILO, UNAIDS, DFID, NOVIB, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Deutsch Bank Asia Foundation, Humanist Association of Norway, Family Health International (FHI). Published papers on Agriculture, Health, HIV/AIDS, Gender, Livelihoods and Migration, Poverty and Social Reform.

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