THE NEW BHARAT

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UNDERSTANDING RAINED AGRICULTURE CONUNDRUM IN INDIA: A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE NATIONAL RAINED AREA AUTHORITY (NRAA)

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The agriculture and its associated sectors continue to be pivotal to the sustained growth and development of the Indian economy. Not only does it meet the food and nutritional requirements of 1.3 billion people, it also contributes significantly to production, employment and livelihood of a majority of Indians. Indian agriculture is dependent on rain for more than 50 percent of its cultivated area. Historically, people in the rained areas under predominantly dry land conditions have evolved a unique niche for managing land, and more crucially the scarce water underneath, for deriving their livelihoods on a sustainable basis. The inhabitants of these areas are highly vulnerable to distress migration. Integrated Farming System (IFS) based on a combination of several activities including animal husbandry has served them well.

For a rained farmer preparing for agriculture is a tenous soil-water balance, where timeliness and precision decide the returns. Even a week’s delay of rainfall can spoil the harvest, for most of the rains are received within 100 hours, spread over five months. Thus, rained agriculture follows a complete cycle based on the moisture content of soil. This precipitous context warrants a robust platform that can bring in innovative policies, knowledge and technologies to create opportunities for holistic and sustainable development of rained areas. There was a time, when it was said that the Indian budget was a gamble on the monsoons. Though with changing structure of Indian economy wherein industry and service sectors have pushed down the share of agricultural GDP it continues to be important in terms of the large number who depend on it for their livelihood. Taking this logic forward, the status of rained farmers who constitute the majority of the farming community, hold key to the nation’s welfare.

Realising the importance of rained agriculture, the recent policies and programmes have increasingly emphasized on enhancing agriculture growth in rained areas by catalyzing the focal point on four major dimensions viz. ecological restoration; productivity enhancement; drought mitigation; and poverty reduction. This has triggered attention in favour of conservation agriculture, integrated farming, total factor productivity of agricultural inputs, protective irrigation, sustainability and higher farm income, an integral to development agenda. Some of the major initiatives in this direction are National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), National Mission on Agriculture Extension & Technology (NMAET), Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (NIDH), National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) including its ‘Per Drop More Crop’ (PDMC) component, National Gulal Mission etc.

In order to improve productivity of agricultural system in rained areas on a sustainable basis and improve the incomes and welfare of rained farmers, National Rained Area Authority (NRAA) was constituted as an attached office on 3rd November, 2006. Since its inception, this organization has been actively working to conserve, sustain and promote suitable technologies and practices for the country’s rained areas at both ground and policy formulation levels. The broad contours of the Authority’s amongst others are to identify best practices for rained agriculture available across different research organizations and academic institutions; suggest area-specific farming systems for critically vulnerable districts; pilot best practices in these districts to demonstrate their efficacy and lay a roadmap for scaling up across all vulnerable districts making use of the developmental programmes in the right prospective. The Authority is keen to acquire, collate and disseminate knowledge, expertise and experience from across the country, in the service of the rained farming community and contribute to the nation’s food and nutrition security, as also livelihood opportunities. Besides, the Authority would play an important role in operationalising the Doubling Farmers Income (DFI) Committee recommendations for achieving the Government’s vision to double the farmers income by 2022. This is important from the perspective of a development model that is egalitarian and equitable in its outcome. NRAA is working on preparing comprehensive development plans for the 150 most vulnerable rained districts across the country so that the recommendations of DFI Committee are appropriately integrat-ed into the programmes and schemes of Government.

Areas requiring attention:
- Small land holdings are a major challenge to driving of the development agenda in rained areas. Co-operative or group farming by way of farmer mobilization may bring desired economy of scale to agricultural operation by enabling efficient input and output management.
- Higher focus and investment towards improved technology including biotechnology, water productivity, agricultural credit, primary storage and processing, crop diversification, land reforms & cultivation rights, corporatization of agriculture, horticulture and food processing etc.
- Soil degradation and loss of soil fertility have been a serious concern in the agriculture sector. Appropriate would be a long term policy for soil to revitalise the soil health.
- Livestock is an integral component of rained farming system. The risks of rained agriculture can be mitigated by giving due importance to dairy and livestock (both large and small ruminants).
- Sustainable development strategy in agriculture sector cannot be practised in isolation. There is need for synergy and coordination of agriculture development programmes with programmes of other sectors as well, like rural development, industries, trade & marketing, health & sanitation, energy & power environment & forest, education etc.

Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare
Government of India
एडवरीय राष्ट्रीय वर्ष सिविल क्षेत्र प्राधिकरण के दृष्टिकोण
से भारत में वर्षा सिविल क्षेत्र की जुगलकर्ना

अ. अशोक दवादाय
सी.ई.डी.एफ. राष्ट्रीय वर्ष सिविल क्षेत्र प्राधिकरण

कृपया जानिए कि एडवरीय राष्ट्रीय वर्ष सिविल क्षेत्र प्राधिकरण के दृष्टिकोण से भारत में वर्षा सिविल क्षेत्र की जुगलकर्ना है। यह अशोक दवादाय ने लिखा है।

इस निबंध में वर्षा सिविल क्षेत्र की उपयोगिता के लिए विभिन्न उदाहरणों के द्वारा वर्णित किया है। इसका लक्ष्य है कि वर्षा सिविल क्षेत्र की उपयोगिता के विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में विकास हेतु भारत में वर्षा सिविल क्षेत्र की जुगलकर्ना की जाए।

इसके लिए आपके प्रति बच्चों को अवसर प्रदान किया जा सकता है। यह उदाहरणों में से कुछ मुख्य उदाहरण हैं:

- वर्षा सिविल क्षेत्र की उपयोगिता के लिए विभिन्न उदाहरणों के द्वारा वर्णित किया है।

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