

Agricultural Policy of India

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BACKGROUND

Agriculture is one of the important backbones of Indian economy. Agriculture has special significance for low income, poor and vulnerable sections of rural society. India's agriculture policy stabs to ensure that agriculture is profitable and farm prices are stable through assured minimum support prices (MSP) to farmers and confirming subsidized food access to underprivileged consumers through the Public Distribution System (PDS) [Pingali et al., 2017]. Rapid sustainable growth in the agricultural sector remains dynamic for creating of jobs, enhancing incomes, and ensuring food security. Therefore, proper policy for agriculture sector is essential to improve the living standards and the welfare of the people as a whole [Anon, 2018].

Agricultural policy of India is generally designed by the Government to raise agricultural production and productivity and also to upgrade the level of income and standard of living of farmers within a definite time frame [Anon, 2018]. This policy is formulated for all round and

Evolution of Agricultural Policies has remained a highly structured sector in India with government organizations and parastatals exercising a pervasive influence over it. These regulatory controls are imposed by both central and state governments. The main policy measures in the agriculture sector were adopted in the mid-1960s [Chand, 2018]. India pursued a policy of food self-sufficiency in staple foods such as rice and wheat. The policies were initially focused on the expansion of cultivated area, introduction of land reforms, community development, minimum support prices, public storage, procurement and distribution of foodgrains, trade protection measures and restructuring of rural credit institutions [Arora, 2013; Chand, 2018].

In India, the principal aims of agricultural policy is to remove the major problems of agriculture and improve the complications related to improper and inefficient uses of natural resources, predominance of low-value agricultural product, poor cost-benefit ratio of the sectoral activities, insignificant progress of cooperative farming and other self-help institutions [Arora, 2013].

National Agricultural Policy with important Objectives:

(i) Raising the productivity of inputs:

One of the significant objectives of India's agricultural policy is to improve the productivity of inputs purchased, that is, HYV seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation projects etc.

(ii) Protecting the interest of underprivileged agriculturalists:

Protecting the interest of poor and marginal farmers by abolishing arbitrators through land reforms and expanding institutional credit support to poor farmers.

(iii) Modernizing agricultural Sector:

Introducing of modern technology in agricultural operation and application in order to improve the agricultural input products [Pingali et al., 2017; Anon, 2018; Chand, 2018].

(iv) Enhancing yield of major commodities:

Since major crops yield and livestock is much lower than that of other parts of the world, the future increase in food production is necessary in order to meet the country's population demand from increasing the yield [Dantwala, 2018].

(v) Checking environmental degradation:

Agricultural policy of India has set another objective to check environmental degradation of natural base of Indian agriculture.

(vi) Agricultural research and training:

Promoting agricultural research and training facilities in order to saturate the outcome of such research among the farmers by establishing a close linkage between research institutions and farmers [Pingali et al., 2017].

Measures taken to accomplish the suggested objectives:

1. To utilize the barren wasteland for agricultural purposes and afforestation [Grossman and Carlson, 2018];
2. To control indiscriminate division of agricultural lands for non-agricultural uses.
3. Enhance cropping through multi-cropping and inter-cropping;
4. To emphasize rational use of ground and surface water so that over-exploitation of ground water resources can be checked [Dantwala, 2018; Grossman and Carlson, 2018]; and
5. Supporting farmers and landless laborers by providing adequate financial incentives and entitlement of trees and pastures.

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