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**AGRO BASED INDUSTRY: A WAY OF BALANCING INDIAN ECONOMY**

**DR. BANESWAR KAPASI**  
**ASST. PROFESSOR**  
**NETAJI MAHAVIDYALAYA**  
**ARAMBAGH**

**ABSTRACT**

India is a developing country with slow growth of agriculture and medium growth of industrial and high growth of tertiary sector. Although the growth of Indian agriculture is slow, but the contribution in total gross state domestic product (GDP) and in employment generation among rural economy are not insignificant. The growth rate of Indian agriculture is slow as there is a less interdependency between agriculture and industry. As still now, Indian agriculture is heavily dependent on monsoon, the market of industrial product indirectly influenced by such natural element. A direct link between agriculture and industry in the means of agro-based industry is urgent in India and which is regarded as an extended wing of agriculture and reaches to the industrial sector. This linking between agriculture and industry will make a complementary relation in employment generation and demand supply relation in total economy. The raw materials produced from agriculture are to be consumed by household and to be used as industrial inputs. The production plan in agriculture is to be supported by industrial demand and export requirement. The major problems of Indian agriculture and unemployment issue may be solved if we can make our lands as our factory premises. Without industrialization of agriculture, the basic Indian economic problems cannot be solved.

**KEYWORDS**

agro-based industry, agriculture, India.

**INTRODUCTION**

Agriculture is the largest and most important sector of the Indian Economy. More than fifty percent of the Indian people depend on agriculture for employment and means and way of living. The growth rate of gross domestic product (GSDP) depends heavily on agricultural production. So agriculture plays an important role in the economic development of India.

On the other hand, the role of industry is equally important in India. The employment generation capacity of the agricultural sector tends to be saturated as a result of mechanization and law of diminishing return. The contribution of the industrial sector in GDP is increasing over the years.

The importance of industry and agriculture cannot be ignored in sustainable development of a country. The demand-supply relation between agriculture and industry is crucial for the economic development of the country like India. In fact, the whole process of development can be understood in the context of the relationship between agriculture, industry and its evolution. This is primarily because agriculture and industry are usually the biggest and primary material production sectors in the economy; they provide physical goods for a society's survival and the foundation for any further development. Second, it becomes more and more clear that one sector cannot develop properly without the other. In this backdrop we should think of the prospects of growth of agro-based industry in India

**WHAT IS AGRO-BASED INDUSTRY?**

Agro- Based Industry makes the bridge between industry and agriculture. The agro industry is regarded as an extended arm of agriculture which reaches to the industrial sector. It could cover a variety of industrial, manufacturing and processing activities based on agriculture raw materials as also activities and services that go as inputs to agriculture. Agro-based industry may be defined as the industry which procures raw material from the agricultural sector and produces goods for the society. Such industries are those which add value to agricultural products. Agro industry also includes high-tech agriculture and bio-technology based agriculture. The development of the agro-industry can help stabilize and make agriculture more lucrative and create employment opportunities both at the production and marketing stages. The broad-based development of the agro-industry will improve both the social and physical infrastructure of India. Since it would cause diversification and commercialization of agriculture, it will thus enhance the income of farmers and create food surpluses. The agro-industry is broadly categorized as follows-

- 1 Village industries owned and run by rural households with very little capital investment and a high level of manual labour, products include pickles, papad etc.
- 2 Small scale industry characterized by investment and semi-automation, products include edible oil, rice mills etc.
- 3 Large scale industry involving large investment and a high level of automation, products include sugar, jute, cotton mills etc.

The development of agro-based industries commenced during pre-independence days. Cotton mills, sugar mills, jute mills were fostered in the corporate sector. During the post- Independence days, with a view to rendering more employment and using local resources, small scale and village industries were favoured.

Agro-based industry basically procures core raw material from the agricultural sector and other materials from industrial and service sector. So the important features of the agro-based Industry are—

- (1) Procurement of basic raw material from agricultural sector.
- (2) Producing alternatives product from the agricultural input.

**RATIONALITY OF AGRO-BASED INDUSTRY IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA**

To cope with the problems of poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment in rural areas, the agro-based industry may be a third area in addition to traditional agriculture and manufacturing industries for the Indian economy. This area does not make agriculture and industry competitors to each other. Rather, they can promote agriculture and industry simultaneously for a total development of our country. The increasing environmental concerns will give further stimulus to agro-based industries. Jute and Cotton bags, which have begun to be replaced by plastic bags, have made a comeback. We should start mass production of low cost jute/cotton bags to replace plastic bags.

India is the second largest producer of food in the world. So the Indian agro-industry has a huge potential in various items like canned food, processed food, food grains, dairy products, frozen food, fish, meat, poultry goods etc. The significance and growth of these items will never cease. Sea fishing, aqua culture, milk and milk products, meat and poultry are some of the agro sectors that have shown marked growth over the years. Moreover, the agro industry helps in processing agricultural products such as field crops, tree crops, livestock and fisheries and converting them to edible and other usable forms. The private sector can utilize the full potential of the agro industry in India. The global market is vast for sugar, coffee tea and processed foods such as sauce, jelly, honey etc. the market for processed meat, spices and fruits are also enlarging. Only with mass production coupled with modern technology and intensive marketing can the domestic market as well as the export market be exploited to the fullest extent. Here it is imperative that food manufacturers understand changing consumer preferences, technology. With modernization, innovation and incorporation of latest trends and technology in the entire food chain as well as agro-production, the total production capacity of agro-product in India and the world is likely to increase in coming years.



**INDIAN SCENARIO OF AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIES**

The processing level of the agro industry can be at the primary, secondary or tertiary stage. In the case of hides and skins, India exports largely semi-processed items whereas in coffee/tea, the exports are mostly in secondary stage by way of full processed bulk shipments without branding/ packing. Exports at the tertiary stage mean branding and packaging the product that are ready for use by the consumer. Again the levels of processing and manufacturing can be classified into the process; the main considerations are the nature of the raw materials, technology of processing and packing.

Now for the agro-based companies it is enter the Indian market because of now taste pattern of younger population, higher income levels and a growing middle class, estimate at 50 million households. An average Indian spends around 53% of his/her income on food. The domestic market for processed foods is not only huge but is growing fast in tandem with the economy. It is estimated to be worth \$90 billion. Processed food Manufacturing companies are required to be persistent and must adapt products to the Indian cultural preferences. Many big companies like ITC, HLL, Nestle entered the Indian market a long time ago and have made a deep penetration in the market. From these success stories we can learn some lessons in order to capture the higher end of the local market and get a fair share of the export market. Dairy product is another area where there is enormous potential. No doubt the country has made tremendous strides in the last 20 years in production and processing of milk and milk products. But the facts remains that only 15% of all the milk produced is processed. Today, a large number of people suffer from diabetic or cardiac ailments and availability of fat free milk, fat free curd and sugar free food is poor. A simple product like soya milk is not produced in adequate quantity. Fish and shrimp have good export potential but there is an immense lack of cold storage and modern processing facilities. For instance fish production is around six million tones a year and the frozen storage capacity is only one lakh ton. Another area is herbal medicine. It is being increasingly realized all over the world that herbal drugs do not have any side effects. India has a good number of tested herbal products in use and what is required is quality control, proper packaging and a brand name. The government and modern retailers are addressing these issues with new laws on packaging and labeling as well as greater investment in the supply chain.

**CONCLUSION**

In conclusion it is to be admitted that for development of agro-based industries, agricultural sector should be strengthened. Without a strong base in agriculture, agro-based industries cannot persist in the long run. In industrial sector private investors are interested to invest for its low risk in profitability. But the agriculture is still now an unorganized sector and subject to various natural risks. To ensure a smooth growth of agriculture sector public investment in systematic ways required. The future growth in the agriculture sector in India must ensure the use of advanced technologies that are cost effective and in conformity with the natural climatic regime of the country. Sustained efforts are also essential in the fields of improving seeds and yields. Improvements are also needs in data for improvised research, results and sustainable activities in planning in order to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice. The nation must conduct surveys for judicious land use and evolve effective management practice besides ensuring sustainable use of all the available natural resources. Due to development of agricultural sector, demand for industrial goods increases and industrial development becomes easier. Development of agriculture sector would also open new scopes for developing agro-based industries which in turn, promote the development of agriculture sector. The agro-processing industries require agricultural raw materials as input, which, in turn, stimulates the demand for other industrial outputs such as chemical fertilizers, insecticides and improved seeds. The production of fertilizer requires a greater volume of inputs form other industries. This process continues for many rounds and cumulative process of development would emerge in the economy. Thus, a development of agro-processing industries generates greater degree of multiplier effects. As these activities are mainly take place in the rural areas and a significant level of linkage effects and value added by the agro-based industry stay within the rural areas.

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