

TEXTBOOK ON DIMENSIONS OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION

Sunil Kumar
Mustfa Hussain
Akanksha Singh
Jagatpal
Ashish Singh



Textbook on Dimensions of Agricultural Extension

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MARKET-LED EXTENSION

– Sunil Kumar, Mustfa Hussain

ABSTRACT

India's agricultural extension system is globally recognized as the largest, serving the technology and information needs of approximately 100 million farm families. Historically, the focus on production technologies has yielded significant results, leading India to achieve self-reliance in food production. The extension system has played a pivotal role in bridging the gap between laboratory innovations and on-ground implementation, alongside the collaborative efforts of agricultural scientists, farmers, and marketing networks. Extension efforts were directed towards transfer of production technologies and almost no or very little attention was paid for higher price realizations for the farmer's produce. This has made no substantial impact on increasing farm incomes over decades. However, the advent of globalization and emergence of new market mechanisms has opened new opportunities for the farmers of the country across crop categories and agricultural regions. This calls for transfer of new extension approaches involving productivity to profitability, subsistence to commercial agriculture, commodity oriented to farming systems orientation, local market to export market, mono cropping to crop diversity and so on. In the present scenario, Market led Extension is the perfect blend for reaching at the door steps of our farmers. With globalization of the market, farmers need to transform themselves from mere producers-sellers in the domestic market to producers cum sellers in a wider market sense to best realize the returns on their investments, risks and efforts. Besides the production technologies, the extension workers now have to get equipped with market information which requires imparting new training skills to the Extensionist. This emphasizes the wider role of extension agency ranging from SWOT analysis of market to the organization of farmers interest groups. The Government in this regard is providing much of the infrastructure required for efficient marketing along with the other information and extension services.

Keywords: Extension approach; Market driven and farming.