

Crop protection would be the most significant feature of the Second Green Revolution

Crop protection chemicals can increase crop productivity by 25-50%, by mitigating crop loss

New Delhi, 18 November 2015: With the rising population India is seeing a shift in the food consumption patterns. Shrinking arable land and loss of crops due to pests posing a critical challenge to ensuring food and nutritional security for the future.

At one hand, India wastes nearly a whopping 40 per cent part of its total food production in value terms and on the other the agricultural workforce in India is expected to reduce to nearly 50% in 2020s. Therefore, there is an increasing pressure on agro-sector of India to usher in the Second Green Revolution to ensure the future food security of the nation.

In this regard a report 'Ushering in the 2nd Green Revolution – Role of Crop Protection chemicals' released jointly by FICCI and TATA Strategic Management Group (TSMG) on 18th November 2015 at FICCI's National Conference on Agrochemicals at the Federation House, New Delhi.

Although agricultural yield per hectare has doubled due to increased use of hybrid seeds, fertilizer, crop protection chemical, etc. major challenges to increase our productivity in agro sector still exists. Crop protection chemicals (agrochemicals) will become increasingly important in achieving higher yields and increasing productivity. As per the report, a significant outcome of the prospective Second Green Revolution would be the focus on crop protection. Around 25% of the global crop output is lost due to attacks by pests, weeds and diseases which doesn't augur well for farming.

The Indian crop protection industry is estimated to be USD 4.25 billion in FY14 and is expected to grow at a CAGR of 12% to reach USD 7.5 billion by FY19. Exports currently constitute almost 50% of Indian crop protection industry and are expected to grow at a CAGR of 16% to reach USD 4.2 billion by FY19, resulting in 60% share in Indian crop protection industry. Domestic market on the other hand would grow at 8% CAGR, as it is predominantly monsoon dependent, to reach USD 3.3 billion by FY19. Globally, India is fourth largest producer of crop protection chemicals, after United States, Japan and China.

Use of crop protection chemicals can increase crop productivity by 25-50%, by mitigating crop loss due to pest attacks. It is estimated that almost 25% of world's agricultural production is lost due to postharvest pest attacks. The total number of pests attacking major crops has increased significantly from 1940s. For instance, the number of pests which are harmful for crops such as rice has increased from 10 to 17 whereas for wheat have increased from 2 to 19 respectively. This further underscores the importance of agrochemicals use.

The Crop Protection Chemicals industry is expected to grow at a CAGR of 12% between FY14 and FY19 to reach USD 7.5 Bn. In coming years agrochemical industry would require developing a collaborative platform in which the academia, government and regulatory bodies, farmers associations, manufacturers and farmers come together to promote safe and judicious usage of pesticides. It is critical for both the government and for Crop Protection Chemicals manufacturers to work closely with the farmers to educate them on judicious use of pesticides and new researches & developments. Focus on Green Chemistry will help in designing new products and processes with sustainability as the core principle.

Government should also look at curbing the menace of spurious pesticides on priority basis to ensure higher food production and nutrition security for the nation.

Weblink of the Report: <http://ficci.com/spdocument/20662/Agrochemicals-Knowledge-report.pdf>

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