सत्यमेव परमो धर्मः

40TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

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University of Delhi Enclave (North Campus), Delhi – 110007

Jointly with

INDIAN SOCIETY OF AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

PJTAU Campus, Rajendra Nagar, Hyderabad – 500030



The 40th National Conference on Agricultural Markerting is being organised by the Indian Society of Agricultural Marketing, Hyderabad, and the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi. **Prof. J.V. Meenakshi, Professor, Head, Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, New Delhi,** is the Conference President.

The conference will discuss the following three themes:

1. **Agricultural Market Integration, Digital Technologies and Commodity Futures in India**
2. **International Trade in Indian Agricultural Commodities- Issues and Challenges**
3. **Farm Economy, Agricultural Markets and Rural Development**

GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTION

THEME 1. AGRICULTURAL MARKET INTEGRATION, DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND COMMODITY FUTURES IN INDIA

The issue of agricultural market integration is central to many contemporary debates on trade liberalization, price policy, and reform of state trading agencies in India. There are increasing arguments in favor of allowing a liberal role for the market and greater participation of the private sector in the food grain trade in India. In India, markets are segmented and separated; thus, we often find different prices for commodities of the same grade across regions. Integration across value chains, which are often fragmented and inefficient, is another problem. Consequently, there are several constraints in achieving vertical, horizontal, and regional integration that dampen the prices farmers can legitimately get for their produce, while traders gain higher margins and arbitrage. For instance, we all witnessed how the ban on interstate movement of food grains restricted farmers in one state from getting very low prices, while prices were quite high in another state across the border.

Recent government policy initiatives, such as the electronic National Agricultural Market (e-NAM), Agmarknet, Kisan Suvidha, and digital payment systems, have facilitated better market access for farmers across the country. Some private agritech start-ups (such as Ninja Cart, DeHaat, and CropIn) are attempting to bridge the gaps in input markets, output market access, and credit through the application of digital tools, artificial intelligence, and supply chain logistics. The promotion of agri-value chains by various private entities and farmer producer organizations (FPOs) has also helped to integrate markets while linking farmers to them. Agricultural commodity futures markets offer a platform for managing price risks and aiding price discovery.



Futures, options, and agricultural derivative markets are expected to help farmers and FPOs. Beyond risk management, efficient futures markets can improve price discovery, strengthen market integration, and provide reliable signals for production and marketing decisions. However, there are issues such as the periodic suspension of futures trading in sensitive commodities due to inflationary concerns, speculation, and the low participation of small farmers in the markets.

In this background, the following issues emerge for the authors

i. Extent (breadth) and degree (depth) of market integration: Issues may be analysed with respect to trade flows as well as prices at several levels of disaggregation, viz., commodity level, state, regional, or national; and study the implications of better market integration (or the lack thereof) for trade, price, direct income transfers, and other policies? What should be the role of the Central and State governments?

ii. Role of digital technologies (e-NAM, Digital Public Infrastructure, AI, blockchain, warehouse receipts, traceability) in market integration, price discovery, supply chain efficiency, and farmers' market access.

iii. Effect of Agmarknet, Kisan Suvidha and other policies on market integration and efficiency

iv. Effect of Futures markets and instruments in price discovery and risk management

v. Effect of frequent government bans on exports of sensitive food items on price discovery, hedging, and its implications on price and other policies.

vi. Ways to improve the market participation of individual smallholder farmers through FPOs and other mechanisms

vii. Implications of APMC reforms, market liberalization, MSP, public procurement, FPOs, contract farming, and public-private partnerships for market integration, price transmission, efficiency, and agricultural marketing.

viii. How the farm operations of big corporates help build value chains, link farmers and achieve market integration. The role of grocery delivery companies such as Big Basket, Blinkit, Instamart, and Country Delight in linking farmers and consumers for mutual benefit and thereby integrating market functions can also be examined.

Research manuscripts covering any of the issues may be sent by the authors with a theoretical/analytical approach supported by empirical analysis using



secondary or primary data, including policy analyses. This theme also welcomes contributions employing both conventional and advanced analytical methods, including price transmission and market integration analysis, impact evaluation, forecasting, machine learning and causal inference techniques.

THEME 2. INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN INDIAN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

India's agricultural sector has gradually integrated with the world market through a progressive reduction in tariff and non-tariff measures, cross-border investment flows, innovations in logistics, the entry of transnational food companies, and the emergence of the modern retail sector. These developments have led to a significant increase in the volume of trade in agricultural products. It is encouraging to note that India's agricultural exports have increased considerably from 6.4 billion USD in 2001 to 52.2 billion USD in 2024 (United Nations, 2026). The import of agricultural products to India has also increased from 3.4 billion USD to 38.0 billion USD between 2001 and 2024. Thus, the agricultural trade surplus has always remained positive as the value of exports has consistently been higher than that of imports. This implies that agriculture remains an important contributor to India's foreign exchange earnings despite the recent structural transformation of the economy.

India's agricultural trade has evolved from being a net importer of foodgrains to a net exporter of certain commodities, such as rice, marine products, bovine meat, and spices. Trends in agricultural exports indicate that the country has attained some specialization in the export of semi-milled or wholly milled rice and frozen shrimp and prawn over time. These two commodities accounted for about 30 percent of agricultural exports during 2022-2024 (United Nations, 2026). The sustained increase in agricultural exports can be attributed to consistent trade policies that have been directed towards the reorientation of agricultural production to generate an export surplus since the 1990s. Notwithstanding, the basic domestic agricultural policy approach has remained focused on maintaining self-sufficiency in foodgrain production (Hoda and Gulati, 2013). As a result, India maintains a relatively high level of agricultural trade protection compared to other developing economies. Therefore, there is a need to examine the evolving trade patterns, comparative advantages, and changes in the protection structure of India's agricultural commodities.

When trade liberalization began in the 1990s, the global value chain (GVC) transformed the agricultural production structure of countries worldwide. The



GVC integrates dispersed production, processing, marketing, and distribution activities through multiple national supply chains, adding value to the final product at each step. The global value chain facilitates the flow of foreign direct investment, improved technology, and international trade. However, there is a lack of empirical evidence on the extent of participation of India's agribusiness firms in agricultural GVCs and their economy-wide impact, including income, price, and employment.

The WTO was established in 1995 to promote a multilateral trading system focused on ensuring the smooth and free flow of trade across countries worldwide. WTO members have been negotiating issues related to domestic subsidies, market access, export subsidies, food security, and the environment. Unfortunately, consensus on many of these issues remains elusive among member countries. Developed countries often find ways to provide massive subsidies to domestic producers and exporters, thwarting the reform of international trade rules in agriculture. This puts the products of less developed countries at a price disadvantage in the world market. Alongside the multilateral trading system, regional trade agreements (RTAs) have emerged significantly. India has signed free trade agreements (FTAs) with many countries, where agriculture plays an important role in negotiations. There is a need to critically examine the implications of current agricultural negotiations of the WTO and their effects on FTAs on Indian agriculture.

In recent times, global agricultural markets have witnessed a series of shocks, leading to a sharp rise in the prices of food products, fertilizer, energy, and logistics due to disruptions in maritime routes. India is not an exception to these shocks and has faced challenges in sustaining its agricultural exports to its destination markets. Studies have shown that the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, which began in 2022, led to a dramatic increase in food grain and fertilizer prices. Although the prices of food and fertilizers have moderated recently, they remain abnormally high. The USA and Middle Eastern countries are important destination markets for India's agricultural exports. Unfortunately, the USA has arbitrarily imposed tariffs on India and has subsequently escalated tariffs on various commodities since August 2025. This appears to have eroded the price competitiveness of India's agricultural exports. Similarly, the current Middle East crisis involving the USA and Iran has severely affected agricultural input markets, leading to a sharp rise in the prices of crude oil, fertilizer, and natural gas. Exports from India to the Middle East countries are also affected by disruptions in the maritime route. However, apart from anecdotal evidence, no systematic research has been conducted to gauge the effects of these shocks on India's agricultural trade.



In light of the above background, the research contributions are encouraged to focus on the following issues.

1. Structural changes in trade protection for India's agricultural commodities
2. Implications of current negotiations of WTO on India's agricultural trade
3. Effects of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) on India's agricultural trade
4. Sources of agricultural export growth and effectiveness of agricultural export policy
5. Comparative advantage of diversification in agricultural export basket and markets
6. India's participation in agricultural global value chain (AGVC) and its exports, income, employment effects
7. Effects of regional conflicts (Russia-Ukraine war; Middle-East crisis) on India's agricultural production, prices and trade
8. Effects of USA's tariff escalation on India's agricultural exports

THEME 3. FARM ECONOMY, AGRICULTURAL MARKETS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

India has a vast network of 7,506 agricultural produce markets, known as regulated markets (RMs). These markets have been established by the states under their respective agricultural marketing laws and administered by Agricultural Produce Market Committees. The principal objective of these markets is to facilitate efficient trading of agricultural produce and ensure remunerative prices for farmers. Increased buyer concentration boosts competition and enables farmers to obtain better prices for their products. This translates into higher farm income, allowing farmers to invest in improved agricultural practices, leading to higher productivity and greater marketable surplus. A stronger farm economy also encourages farmers to add value to their products and participate more effectively in agricultural value chains. This can stimulate the demand for farm machinery, automobiles, electronic goods, fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), and other allied products and services. This increased demand can generate employment in rural areas through repair shops, service centers, and small-scale manufacturing units.

However, most small and marginal farmers do not sell their produce in regulated markets due to their limited marketable surplus. Additionally, markets are not conveniently located. Currently, there is approximately one regulated market for every 478 square kilometers of area. As a result, farmers are bound to travel about 40–50 km to reach a market; hence, nearly 50% of the farm produce



generated by small and marginal farmers does not reach the regulated markets. It is estimated that if a network of 42,000 regulated markets is established, the distance traveled by farmers to reach markets could be reduced to about 5–6 km. The managerial and functional efficiency of regulated markets is equally important for safeguarding the interests of buyers and sellers. Efficiently managed markets can attract greater market arrivals and enhance trade volume. Greater participation of small and marginal farmers in regulated markets is crucial for strengthening the farm economy and promoting agricultural development.

A stronger farm economy ensures a sustained supply of raw materials to agro-based industries that depend on commodities such as cotton, jute, spices, dairy products, tea, coffee, tobacco etc. Thus, higher farm income can have a direct impact on agricultural and rural development and an indirect impact on industrial development. Increased farm income also enables rural households to invest in agricultural infrastructure, children education, improved sanitation, and consuming nutritious food. These improvements contribute to better health and higher living standards. Over time, increased agricultural productivity by small and marginal farmers will help in reducing rural poverty, income inequality, and migration from rural to urban areas. Therefore, improvements in farm income contribute to an overall rural development.

In conclusion, an efficient agricultural marketing system and better market access can provide stronger price incentives for farmers. These incentives can contribute to higher farm income, increased investment in agriculture, greater agricultural productivity, and improved rural livelihoods. Therefore, strengthening the farm economy can contribute not only to agricultural development but also to rural employment and industrial development.

Broad areas for the contributors include

i. Impact of market networks and marketing efficiency on farmers' participation in regulated markets.

ii. Significance of farm income in promoting overall agricultural and rural development.

iii. Extent to which agricultural development supports agro-based industries.

iv. Impact of farm income on the living standards of rural households.

v. Impact of the farm economy on rural employment, income inequalities, and urban migration.

vi. Policy support required to strengthen the farm economy and increase the contribution of agriculture to GDP.



INSTRUCTION FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PAPERS

a. Papers should be original in their findings and prepared exclusively for the conference in accordance with the guidelines provided under each theme.

b. Papers should not normally exceed ten A4 size pages. All papers should have the summary, **strictly not more than in 300 words.**

c. Papers should bear name and affiliations of the authors below the title of the paper.

d. All text/figures/graphs in the papers should in **black and white.**

e. Papers should be sent in word file through email: **secretary.isam.ngp@gmail.com**

f. Last date for the receipt of papers **10th November 2026.**

g. Only **one paper will be accepted** from each author, **either as lead or as co-author**, on any one of the themes.

h. Papers written within the given frame of the themes and supported by data will only be considered.

i. Communication of acceptance of papers will be sent to the respective senior authors by **20th November 2026.**

j. All correspondence regarding the **submission of the papers** should be addressed to the Secretary and Managing Editor of Indian Society of Agricultural Marketing, Hyderabad.

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p.s.: Please bring this information to the notice of all your collegues and other known scholars