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Book Reviews

Seetharaman, S.P. and Shingi, P.M. *Agribusiness Cooperatives*, **Oxford and IBH Publishing Co. Ltd., New Delhi. 1992. pp. v+210. Rs. 225.00.**

The book under review is a part of the continuing efforts of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) to bring out publications of topical interest in areas of cooperatives and management. The primary objective was to build up documentation and training materials based on experiences and management situations at grass roots level. The authors of the book belong to the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. Both have a long and rich experience in the field of cooperatives and management.

The book consists of eight case studies conducted in India, Bangladesh, Thailand and Indonesia. These cover important commodities like mushroom, asparagus, shrimps, prawn, ice cream and eucalyptus. The case studies are compiled with a view to draw lessons from good and bad policies to strengthen management of cooperatives in South East Asian countries. The case studies selected for this book are currently being used in the management training programmes organized by the ICA.

The eight cases illustrated in the book are based on the AMSAC model (Appropriate Management System for Agriculture Cooperatives). The model was earlier conceptualized by Professor V.K. Gupta and Professor V.R. Gaikwad. At the outset, a framework of all cases is introduced by adopting the concept of AMSAC. It is followed by eight cases studies based on the above mentioned important commodities. These studies precisely cover production, marketing and processing aspects. Each case has been initiated scholarly by citing the instance of an innovator. It further narrates how the commodities became popular amongst farming community. To make things more understandable, the authors have given the stream of costs and benefits of important processes. Each case presents the significance of initiating and strengthening horizontal, forward and backward linkages in different countries for production, marketing and processing of various commodities. The role of

cooperatives and the government finds important place in the text in respect of their contribution in improving the linkages and meeting the basic needs of farmers in all cases, and consumers in some specific cases. The cases also form comparative studies in view of leadership style and management traits. Each case also addresses the obstacles encountered by the innovator in mobilising farmers to convince them to do something collectively. This provides the reader an opportunity to realize that success was not so easy and is achieved after considerable effort and time. At the end of each case, a few relevant questions are listed to provoke further discussion.

The last chapter describes current trends in management of agribusiness. It is divided into three important parts : (i) theoretical framework to distinguish between agricultural cooperatives and agribusiness cooperatives, (ii) current trends in management of agribusiness cooperatives as they emerge from case studies and (iii) summary of the conditions necessary for successful operation and management of agribusiness cooperatives in South East Asian countries. The case studies clearly indicate the promise of agribusiness cooperatives in South East Asian countries to meet the multiple objectives of their societies.

In describing the case studies the authors demonstrate distinct skill and acumen. With their deep knowledge on the subject, the authors present a vivid profile of agribusiness cooperatives in selected Asian countries. The reader will find a wide range of issues related to agribusiness cooperatives. All case studies illustrated in the book will be essentially of great aid to the courses on cooperative marketing at various institutions and universities. A student of cooperative marketing must read the book.

In summary, the book is a valuable contribution in the field of agribusiness cooperatives. The price is affordable in view of the content.

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P.K. JOSHI

Gill, Khem Singh. *A Growing Agricultural Economy—Technological Changes, Constraints and Sustainability,* **Oxford and IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1993. Page xii+319. Rs. 295.00.**

The Agricultural Sector, which continues to remain the major primary economic activity in India, has witnessed a phenomenal growth since the mid-sixties. The growth in this sector gears up many backward and forward linkages with other sectors of the economy. The pattern of agricultural development in India, is, however, characterised by several serious distortions because of uneven distribution of developmental gains across States and regions.

The book under review is a splendid effort in assessing the agricultural development and the issues of its sustainability in Punjab, one of the most prosperous States in the country. There is wide spread belief that the development programme as it has worked out in a developing country like India has widened inter-personal and inter-regional disparities. These imbalances are undesirable for equitable and sustainable development of all the regions. It goes to the credit of the author that he has examined the different issues concerning the agricultural economy in perspective. The reader is able to get a fairly comprehensive view of a growing agricultural economy and implications for its sustainability with special reference to Punjab State.

After introducing the subject of a growing agricultural economy in Chapter 1, the author has examined various issues relating to the growth and development of agriculture and its allied activities in Punjab in Chapter 3 to 12. The growth in agricultural output has special significance in the context of overall development of the State economy in the past few decades. The author has tried to establish the fact that a vertical movement of agricultural production is an outcome of intensive use of modern inputs such as new seeds, chemical fertilizers, micronutrients, irrigation, farm machinery, etc. It is on this account that the Punjab has truly become the grain bowl of India. There are lessons to learn from the Punjab model of development for the other States in India which are lagging behind and wherever it is replicable.

There has been a good deal of discussion on present and future strategies of agricultural development in the Punjab. The major constraints to higher and sustainable growth in Punjab agriculture have also been discussed separately. To over come the problem of lopsided development of agriculture and to have a balanced growth, the author makes some suggestions with major emphasis on varietal development besides effective transfer of teehnology programmes.

This stimulating book with a mine of information focusses attention on the basic issues upon which the future development of agriculture and its associated sector in the State of Punjab depend. The emerging policy options would certainly appeal to the readers and policy makers and would also encourage further in-depth studies on the aspects related to growth and sustainability in agricultural production.

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Srivastava, Roli and G.C. Srivastava, Agricultural Research Through International Cooperation, Oxford and IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1993. Page xii+199, Rs. 195.00.

Nobody can deny the fact that adoption of modern technology in agriculture has not only made India near self sufficient in food but also accorded self respect. The contribution of technological change to output growth is no less important than that of growth in input use. The contribution of technological change to output growth is estimated at around 45 per cent in case of wheat and 20 per cent in case of rice. One of the important factors that induces technological change is research.

It is creditable achievement that India has achieved a high agricultural research capability not only through the vast network of agricultural research institutions but also through international cooperation. India had realised well that quicker benefit will accure by forging strong links with international research programmes. The present book is a study of the nature and extent of benefits to India through international cooperation in agricultural research. Specifically the book attempts to : (1) delineate the structure of the agricultural research system in India, (2) have an overview of various foreign and international organisations participating in global agricultural research, (3) explore the relationship of the Indian agricultural research system with other countries and international orga-

nisations, (4) assess the impact of international agreements on various aspects of agricultural research, specially institution building, manpower development, sharing of new technology and implementation of research programmes, (5) make an assessment of the future prospects of the form and nature of international collaborative programmes, and (6) arrive at the necessary conditions for the success of international collaborative efforts.

The book is divided into seven chapters. After specifying the scope and objectives in chapter 1 on introduction, the authors describe the history and development of national agricultural research system (both public and private including voluntary) in chapter 2. Chapter 3 describes international agricultural research resources followed by presentation on collaborative modes in chapter 4. India's links with external agencies are discussed in chapter 5. Impact evaluation is attempted in chapter 6 followed by a look at the posterity in chapter 7.

The second chapter gives an excellent account of the historical details of national agricultural system in India. The information of ICAR set up is given in a lucid way along with SAUs and general universities which impart education and conduct research in agricultural sciences including scientific institutions like CSIR, ICMR and BARC, other government departments and voluntary agencies and private institutions (numbering 35) and scientific societies (numbering 104). It is important to note that national agricultural research system consisting of ICAR and SAUs employs about 24,000 people in the country.

Chapter three deals with international agricultural research resources. The chapter starts with the beginnings of international cooperation in agricultural research and dwells at length on the emergence of an international agricultural research system with main focus on Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) followed by other international assistance (financial/technical) sources. It is aptly concluded that international agricultural research resources are permanent component of the global agricultural support system.

The fourth chapter, through a review of past studies, provides the conceptual framework for generation and dissemination of agricultural knowledge from inside and outside India. The importance of development of capabilities for successful adaptation of imported technology and collaboration for continuous flow of updated technology is also highlighted. The evaluation of the global agricultural research system and how it has helped the partners is explained. India's links with external agencies are listed in chapter five. Chapter six deals with a review of studies on

impact evaluation. Largely the authors' observations are based on the results of impact evaluation of others. The comments such as pre-green revolution agricultural research and higher education as bookish (p. 90), considering the IRR of 22 per cent as not respectable for agricultural research programmes and attributing this to largely indigenous staff, lack of leadership at ICAR to focus research on pressing problems or promising opportunities, overemphasis on theoretical overapplied research mainly based on contemporary literature seem to be unfair to the tradition of wise agriculture practised in India.

The authors discuss the results of analysis of primary data from a survey of scientists and research managers in various national and international organisations collaborating in the field of agricultural research. The responses were limited and the survey is not based on representative sample. The analysis is only through subjective judgements/optimism of these individuals as to how the institutes could/would not achieve the targetted objective of the collaboration. One of the conclusions of this survey was that the participants felt that India can collaborate as an equal partner in terms of technical competance. The authors talk about the visible impact of India's international collaborative agricultural research programmes on food production.

By listing the achievements in Indian agriculture from 1941-50 to 1988-89, in terms of new varieties and technology, spread of new technology, productivity, etc. they conclude that the achievements of international collaborative research programmes, in general, can be close to extraordinary. While the conclusions may be a fact but the analytical framework does not render such conclusions. Further, the part played by Indian farmers in immediately accepting the technology and converting it to their own practices is left out of discussion.

The authors talk of growing perception of some scientists that the agricultural research system is losing some of its former vigour and is not responding quickly enough to new and emerging challenges. The authors suggest taking full advantage of collaborative research. But the problem lies not in making use of collaborative researches, particularly in biotechnology, but the management of agricultural research in India. It is the deteriorating work culture that is responsible which in turn reflects the negligence towards human resources in the agricultural research system.

The book is a review of literature on agricultural research through international cooperation. When it comes to making specific observations, the authors quote the studies verbatim. The authors being senior civil

servants, how innovations in bureaucracy, keeping in mind the nature of organisation and its mandate, have changed its style of working and thus helped to achieve targets would have been welcome. At least I don't find anything in the book which reflects an in-depth, vigorous analysis and an incisive study of the problem. But the effort is successful in listing down at one place information on Indian agricultural research system through international cooperation and opinions of studies on how effective were those efforts.

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