



## PROBLEMS AND MEASURES OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SUPPLY IN NATIONWIDE LOCKDOWN

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The government of India has taken preliminary action to limit the spread of corona virus to the population of 135 crore by ordering nationwide lockdown of 40 days starting from 25 march. Recently, the abnormal corona virus is spreading widely in India than other countries but the number of confirmed infections cases is far less. However, as the cases of corona virus are increasing rapidly, the food and health concerns for such a large population are increasing rapidly.



Strengthening the food supply may help to limit the health crisis to some extent, but all types of activities, except other essential services, will have to be stopped completely, causing widespread nationwide captivity of this virus. Country wide captivity have led to an economic crisis for poverty, with massive job losses and rising food insecurity.

### Agriculture production and food supply

Due to the global pandemic, some activities are currently being disrupted in agricultural production and food supply. Where on the other hand, due to unavailability of labours, there is a disruption in the harvesting of food crops like wheat, oilseeds and pulses



in nationwide lockdown situation. Despite, the some availability of food grain, there is disruption in food supply due to inconvenience of transportation. While prices have come down due to lack of market for fruits, vegetables and other crops, consumers are often forced to buy goods by paying higher price due to the closure of the market and resulting the farmers are not able to sell grains, pulses, vegetables, fruits, milk, egg, fish, etc. Till now the government has no any suitable option to solve this problem.

Like an ordinary days, instead of farmers, people have to buy things like fruits, vegetables, milk, grains etc. from the market, but due to lack of access to the market these things are not being supplied to the people. There is no special storage facility in our country mainly after harvesting of fruits and vegetables so that these products can be stored for a few days. Some special measures are required for the agriculture sector to function smoothly and supply of food grains:

### 1. Food grain distribution and purchase by the government

The government does not have a shortage of food grains, but there is also a need to purchase food grains on the farming place of the farmers, because the farmers are suffering huge losses due to lack of it along with frequent distribution of food grains during the nationwide shutdown.

### 2. Health security guarantee

Health security of the people should be ensured during nationwide lockdown situation. While, the corona virus has severely affected the health of the general public, on the other hand, children, elderly and pregnant women are not getting nutritious food, which has increased the risk of serious diseases other than corona. From this, it appears that after winning the war against the global pandemic like Corona disease in the country, everyone has to be ready to fight against malnutrition and other fatal disease because, on one hand, according to the government, Indian health institutions or the World Health Organization, to increase the immunity and resistance power of the body and the prevention of coronavirus infection people must take fruits, vegetables, egg, milk and milk products in their food, on the other hand, thousand tonnes of vegetables rotting in the field of farmers due to lack of market.



The government should make appropriate to reduce the loss of perishable and valuable items such as fruits, vegetables, milk, eggs etc. and made it easy to reach the common people in the houses.

### 3. Ease of food supply

Due to immense success in the agriculture of the country, there is no decrease in the availability of food, yet due to disruption in the food supply, there has been confusion of starvation among the people. Therefore, maintaining food supply chains is important for food security. It should be noted that having equal distribution of all types of food items is a must.



### 4. Strict monitoring of food distribution

Under the guise of distributing ration for the poor, things like ration theft and overcharging are coming up every day, due to which strict action has been taken against some, and some have been left with a stern warning. Therefore, strict monitoring is required at the village head and block level for the benefit of welfare schemes for the poor directly by the government.

### 5. Access to farmer's market is necessary

It is very necessary to bring the products grown by the farmers to an orderly market. Therefore, it should be continued by following the rules of social distance. It can be a mixture of private markets and government procurement so that food can be easily made accessible to the people.

### 6. Special relaxation to the small farmers

Farmers producing milk, poultry and fish needs more help as it is necessary for the goods to reach the market for supplying their produce.

### 7. Essentiality of purchasing cash crops

It is necessary to give up for the purchase of industrial crops grown by farmers such as various types of flowers and medicinal plants, as the trade of flower and medicinal plants, it has been most affected so far due to the lockdown. Flowers are commonly used in social religious or other ceremonies, but all things are closed due to lockdown and the produce of farmers is spoiling in the field itself. For this, special discounts should be given to private companies for purchasing these





crops for making different types of medicinal, scented or cosmetic products.

### 8. Discount on E-commerce for essential goods

In the event of lockdown, e-commerce purchases of essential commodities like groceries, milk bread biscuits or other everyday items and demand for home delivery have increased with a strict social distancing rules. Therefore, this trend should be encouraged and increased.

### 9. Extensive banking system

In the country where people have left their business and become unemployed, the family has also got shortage of money to eat and drink. Therefore, under the scheme "Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana" money has been transferred by the government to every poor family directly to their bank account for living. For its withdrawal, banks should provide facilities like "Mobile Van banking" in rural areas to make it easier for people to withdraw money.



### 10. Success of government schemes

Government of India has announced a relief package of more than 22 billion under the "Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana" which includes food and cash transfers. Many state governments have announced their own support separately and have implemented various schemes for the welfare of the people in the every area, but all these schemes will also be considered a success until each poor family gets it. For this, there is a need to connect each poor family with the government schemes on a war footing.

### 11. Special rebate for agriculture and its related works

India is an agricultural country with more than 65 percent of its population dependent on agriculture. Therefore, farming is very important for the food of the people. It is in the interest of farmers and country to give exemption for the purchase of seeds, fertilizers, agricultural equipment, etc. for sowing new crop at the time of lockdown.



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