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Emerging problems and remedies before the agriculture sector in Maharashtra

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Abstract

The agriculture sector are the back bone of the Indian Economy. Agriculture development is a kernal of economic development of nation and the state. Agriculture is the main source of income to the most of the people in the Maharashtra state. Maharashtra is a one of the developed state in India. But, the current era the agriculture sector of Maharashtra are facing the several challenges. But, there are several opportunities before the agriculture sector of the Maharashtra. This study investigates the rising challenges and opportunities within the agricultural sector of Maharashtra, the decrease in interest in farming among the young, and the migration of small and marginal farmers to urban areas. The agriculture sector is facing the problem of rising input costs, dependence on mediators for marketing of products, and inadequate storehouse infrastructure, all while facing danger from natural disasters, climate change, and policy changes that have led to reduced grants. Major issues include the proper use of water resources, the disregard of natural resources resulting in reduced agricultural diversity, income instability due to price volatility, and land degradation driven by environmental factors. This study aim to comprehensively analyze these challenges before the agriculture sector of the Maharashtra and find out some opportunities to develop the agriculture sector of the Maharashtra.

KeyWords: Agricultural crisis, youth interest in farming, rural-urban migration, input costs. Fertilizers and pesticides, Natural calamities, Climate change, Soil erosion

Introduction

Maharashtra is known as one of the economically developed state in India. But, in the current day, the agriculture sector of Maharashtra has facing significant changes. This sector is currently navigating a period of transition and is facing a crisis. There is a detectable decline in interest in farming among the younger generations. Many small and marginal farmers are sell their land and move to urban areas to search for better opportunities for living. The migration of men from rural to urban areas has placed additional responsibility on women and small children within the agricultural sector. The agriculture sector is increasingly leaning towards commercialization, by increasing input costs. Farmers are required to invest considerable amount in various agricultural processes, such as land development, seed sowing, and the acquisition of fertilizers and pesticides. Furthermore, they often depend on intermediaries to market of their products. There is a notable deficiency in adequate storage facilities for agricultural goods, and farmers lack assurance to safeguard their crops against natural calamities. Additionally, the agricultural sector in Maharashtra face numerous challenges, including natural disasters, droughts, floods, climate change, soil erosion, and deforestation. This reviews studies that illustrate the state of the agricultural sector in Maharashtra.

Research Methodology

The methodology of the study is a simple discussion of the Emerging problems and remedies before the agriculture sector in Maharashtra. This study highlights the several challenges before the agriculture sector of Maharashtra and find out the opportunities for agriculture sector of the Maharashtra. It was difficult to find the farming enterprises working long time in Maharashtra. Therefore it was decided to use the secondary data for the carry out the research.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the various challenges face by the agricultural sector in Maharashtra and to determine possible plan of action to effectively address these issues.

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A. The excessive and irresponsible use of water resources. :-

Maharashtra is recognized as one of the states facing severe groundwater stress, where the demand for water surpasses the available supply. The Uncontrolled use of groundwater for both agricultural and urban needs has led to a notable decline in groundwater levels. Currently, the agricultural sector in Maharashtra currently faces significant water problems. exacerbated by factors such as climate change, industrial development, and urban areas. The main challenge is to manage and save water resources within Maharashtra's agricultural landscape, including the rising demand. Unreasonable aquifers decrease and the consequent slow rates of recharge. All of these factors contribute to the persistent water scarcity issues affecting the agricultural sector in Maharashtra.

B. The Neglect of Natural Resources and the Decrease of Agricultural Diversity:

Neglecting natural resources is a serious challenge to the sustainability of the agricultural sector. It is important to save and develop biodiversity in farming ecosystems to secure a practicable future. The decrease in biodiversity negatively affects the health of the soil and the overall properties of the agriculture sector. Increased dependence on a limited range of cropping patterns can result in a loss of genetic diversity, increasing the probability of significant crop failures. Such conditions may lead to lower crop yields and quality, increased pest pressure, and increased use of pesticides, ultimately resulting in considerable economic setbacks for the agricultural sector.

C. Price Fluctuations:

The prices of agricultural products, especially cash crops, frequently change, leading to uncertainty in farmers' incomes. This price change can directly affect farmer's capacity to maintain their standard of living. In addition, farmers face challenges in transporting their products to the market, as mediators typically play a role in this procedure. These intermediaries purchase crops from farmers at low rate and sell them to other buyers at high rate. As a result, farmers may receive less benefits that do not adequately reflect the effort they invest in their farm, Which is very low and cannot support their families or reinvest in future crops. This inequitable pricing can lead to broader issues for both farmers and the local economies in which they operate.

D. Land Degradation:

The continuous decline in land quality, is evident in various problems, and poses a significant risk to the sustainability of the agricultural sector. For example in mountainous regions, landslides frequently occur because of heavy rainfall and the dynamics of flowing water. which several weakens the soil stability. Moreover, the harmful effects of deforestation make the soil more vulnerable to erosion, a process that is further intensified by water and wind forces. This complex degradation of land not only threatens agricultural output but also presents

enduring challenges to food security and environmental sustainability.

E. New changes:

The gradual deterioration of land, manifest in various forms, constitutes a considerable threat to the sustainability of agricultural practices. In hilly regions, the occurrence of landslides, which are often triggered by excessive rainfall and movement of flowing water, significantly compromise the integrity of the soil. Additionally, the detrimental effects of deforestation and overgrazing in both forested and flat terrains exacerbate this situation by rendering the soil increasingly susceptible to erosion, which is further accelerated by water and wind forces. This varied degradation of land not only affects agricultural productivity but also create long-term challenges to food security and environmental sustainability.

Remedies:

1. To Use water-saving techniques:

Efficient water management systems are important for farmers aiming to increase the water ratio and to support sustainable agricultural activities. Water plays a important role in agriculture, and its accessibility, quality and management have a significant impact on crop growth. It is important to ensure that plants obtain satisfactory moisture to support their growth and productivity. to use new and water-saving irrigation methods such drip irrigation and sprinkler irrigation.

2. To Save Natural Resources:

Neglecting natural resources poses a significant threat to the sustainability of agricultural businesses. Precaution and increased biodiversity within farming ecosystems are important for securing a sustainable future. Less application of chemical fertilizers is essential because it can interrupt soil pH levels, hurt healthy microorganisms, and lead to water contamination. Additionally, it is important to encourage the reforestation of areas that have experience deforestation.

3. To reduce price fluctuation: -

Government play an important role in addressing the issue of price volatility in agricultural products. Imports are prohibited to provide a planned minimum import price, This strategy aims to deter imports, thereby allowing domestic products to achieve more favorable prices. In addition, increasing the use of modern farming tools, has helped decrease the cost of production. Subsidies are useful for stabilizing prices. Lastly, the development of an effective storage facility is critical, as it helps farmers conserve their surplus production and price stability throughout the agricultural period.

Summary:

The agricultural business in Maharashtra is encountering a complex situation noticeable by issues such as water shortage, land degradation, and economic uncertainty, all of which endanger the sustainability and well-being of farmers. To

regenerate this important sector and secure a stable future for agriculture business, it is imperative to tackle these challenges through efficient water management, the preservation of biodiversity, and proactive government measures aimed at stabilizing prices.

Conclusion:

The agriculture sector in Maharashtra facing several challenges including water shortages, soil degradation, and economic volatility, It is possible to tackle these problems through efficient water management, the preservation of biodiversity, and governmental measures for price stabilization to rejuvenate this essential sector and secure food availability for the future.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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