



Announcement

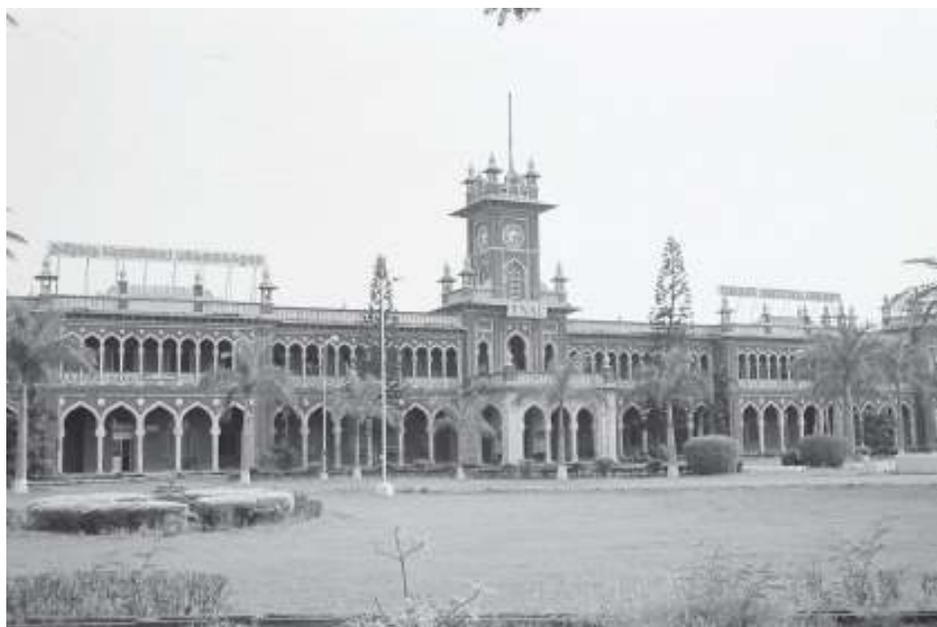


AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (INDIA)

17th Annual AERA Conference

Technology, Environment and Livelihood Security

19-21 November, 2009



Organisers

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University

Coimbatore-641 003, Tamil Nadu

About the Association

Agricultural Economics Research Association (India), a registered society which came into being in 1987, has on date more than 600 life members, 100 ordinary members, 90 institutional members and 15 honorary life members from all over the country and abroad. The mandate of the Association is to promote the study of agricultural economics in particular and socio-economic problems in general. The Association has been regularly publishing a six-monthly research Journal "*Agricultural Economics Research Review*" since 1988. Besides refereed research articles, abstracts of M.Sc. and Ph.D. theses in agricultural economics are also published in the Journal. The Association has been successfully organizing national conferences regularly on topical policy issues, the proceedings of which are published. The Association undertakes sponsored research studies also. Over the years, the Association has attained a wide visibility and professional credibility. The official journal of the Association, namely, *Agricultural Economics Research Review* has been highly rated (3 points out of maximum 4) by National Academy of Agricultural Sciences, New Delhi.

Address for Correspondence:

Secretary
Agricultural Economics Research Association (India)
National Centre for Agricultural Economics and Policy Research
Dev Prakash Shastri Marg
Pusa, New Delhi 110012, India
Email: aeraindia@gmail.com

Executive Committee

President	:	Dr Mruthyunjaya
Vice Presidents	:	Dr C. Ramasamy, Dr K.C. Hiremath and Dr R. P. Singh
Secretary	:	Dr P. K. Joshi
Treasurer	:	Dr P. Kumar
Joint Secretary	:	Dr B. C. Barah and Dr V. C. Mathur
Members	:	Dr T. Alagumami, Dr K.V. Deshmukh, Dr R.S. Sidhu, Dr Virendar Kumar, Dr Chandra Sen, Dr V. A. Thorat, Dr R. P. Singh, Dr R.N. Pandey

Editorial Board

Agricultural Economics Research Review

Chief Editor	:	Dr S.S. Acharya
Managing Editor	:	Dr Praduman Kumar
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Foreign Members	:	Dr R. C. Agarwal, Dr Suresh Babu, Dr. M. Gopinath and Dr. S. Mohanty

About the Conference

Agricultural growth in India during the late-1970s and early-1980s was propelled by the green revolution technologies. But, the productivity gains from green revolution technologies in India have essentially ended. A declining growth rate of investment in agriculture, declining efficiency in input-use, no major technological breakthrough and falling prices, all have contributed to the lower agricultural growth in the country. Agricultural growth, during the Tenth Five-Year Plan was 2.5 per cent compared to 9 per cent in the manufacturing sector and 15 per cent in the transport and communication sector. The secular decline in the share of agricultural sector in GDP has continued, with a decline from 24 per cent in 2001-02 to 17.5 per cent in 2007-08. These figures indicate that a smaller share of GDP is getting distributed among a larger number of people who depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Growth in agriculture contributes to poverty alleviation and employment generation in the rural areas and achievement of higher rates of economic growth. As the globalization process makes inroads into the agricultural sector, there is an increasing debate on the opportunities and vulnerabilities, especially for the small and marginal farmers, agricultural laborers and other disadvantaged rural communities.

Schultz has suggested that agricultural development policies should adopt an approach that expands the smallholders' production frontiers through technological change, as it would be the most cost-effective means to increase welfare level of these low-income farmers. Expansion of the production frontier of Indian agriculture, particularly in the vast rainfed areas at present depends on technological breakthroughs, which scientists and policymakers often refer to as 'second green revolution' or 'ever green revolution'. As green revolution had largely by-passed the rainfed areas, several attempts have been made in the past to increase the productivity and profitability of rainfed crops. A major challenge in rainfed areas is the low average productivity of crops along with their vulnerability to high risks. In the absence of technologies that will ensure successful cultivation with extremely limited moisture availability and appropriate institutional arrangements to insure the risks associated with rainfed production, agricultural development in the rainfed areas will remain a challenge. In view of the stagnation in the growth rate of yield of irrigated crops in recent times, new efforts are necessary to sustain the overall agricultural growth.

The recent advances in biotechnology and agronomical practices like precision farming, System of Rice Intensification (SRI), etc. are part of the renewed scientific efforts to break the yield barrier and increase productivity in agriculture. Biotechnology offers powerful new tools for improving agricultural productivity, environmental quality, and the nutritional quality of staple foods. At the same time, some applications of biotechnology raise concerns of safety, access, and equity in benefits. Development of biotechnology as a component of our strategy to increase agricultural productivity and economic growth needs to be further explored. Precision farming is an integrated agricultural management system which incorporates several technologies. The technological tools often include the global positioning system, geographical information system, yield monitoring, and remote sensing. At the farm level, precision farming techniques need to be popularized to increase input-use efficiency and reduce environmental pollution from agrochemicals.

Bringing in a technological breakthrough should be viewed in the context of changing behaviour of research funding, institutions and priorities among different stakeholders. Apart from the efforts of NARS, the international spillovers of R&D efforts in agriculture have significantly contributed to the gains in productivity in the past. But, such international spillovers are less likely in future. Research agendas of the developed countries are shifting from simple productivity enhancement to other crop characteristics and

even to non-agricultural production concerns like health, nutrition and the environment. Applicable technologies developed in the richer countries may not be as readily accessible because of intellectual-property protection of privately-owned technologies. Those technologies that are applicable and available are likely to require substantial local development and adaptation, which call for more sophisticated and more extensive forms of scientific research and development today than in the past. This situation calls for new approaches and strategies in agricultural research management and in international cooperation in research and development.

The emerging agricultural scenario warrants balancing of multiple research objectives for technology generation. The range of objectives varies from increasing productivity of agriculture, ensuring livelihood security, technology generation and management, to meeting the demands of a growing economy and preserving the natural environment and biological diversity. The public sector is under increasing pressure to provide public-good technologies that may address market failures and various social and environmental objectives. This demand puts further pressure on scarce research resources and hence public research investment in India needs to redress its large shortfall against the global average investment of 1 per cent of agricultural GDP. Agricultural research expenditure as a percentage of AgGDP remained around 0.3 percent during the 1990s. There appears to be a clear case of underinvestment in agriculture in India. But, questions are often raised (especially in recent years) about the effectiveness and impact of the research system, despite its success in leading technological innovation in the agricultural sector. The modern concept of a NARS emphasizes a pluralistic system of research that recognizes the comparative advantages of different providers and the complementarities that can be achieved by forging close linkages among different actors. Private research is stimulated by strategic research support from the public sector, and there are many areas where public-private partnership could enhance the effectiveness of both sectors. Enabling institutional mechanisms, especially intellectual property rights (IPRs) protection can help develop and sustain these linkages. Besides, the research focus should be on finding out the comparative advantage of the crops, technologies/varieties/hybrids in the era of globalization. Therefore, a policy assessment, say after a period of 10 or 15 years of research is essential to ensure efficient utilization of human, material and monetary resources.

Other than technology, agricultural growth depends on factors like quality of natural resources, infrastructure and institutions among other things. Most of the productivity measurement framework treats the natural resource stock as static without accounting for the changes in the quality of the resource stock. Erosion and degradation of soils and loss of fertility due to mining of soil nutrients are taking place at faster pace in some of the highly productive regions of the country. Lack of erosion control measures and drainage facilities, inadequate investments in soil and moisture conservation, imbalanced fertilizer-use and inadequate use of micro-nutrients are some of the important factors contributing to low productivity and poor soil health. Nearly 175 million hectares have been estimated to be affected by different types of degradation. Watertables are going down and irrigation sources are being increasingly polluted and subjected to salinization. Policies and institutions need to support the uptake of technologies and practices that will improve resource productivity and reduce degradation of agro-ecosystems. Conservation strategies should be built in right from the individual farm level to the national level policies.

United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) states that the average temperature of the earth's surface will increase by about 3 degrees Celcius, on average, over the next century, at current rates of greenhouse gas emissions. Some of the most profound and direct impacts of climate change over the next few decades will be on agricultural and food systems. More scientific evidences claim that the

climate change is already affecting agriculture in developing countries negatively and this situation is likely to worsen. Increasing temperatures and declining precipitation over semiarid regions are likely to reduce yields for corn, wheat, rice, and other primary crops in the next two decades. For this reason, any effort to increase the resilience of Indian agriculture must evolve stress-resistant varieties and other management practices to adapt to climate change. Particularly technologies and methods, which can lessen the vulnerability of small and marginal farmers, are needed for sustainable agricultural development. In this context, regional level studies are important as adaptation depends on characteristics of local hydrology, precipitation, topography, crop type, climate system, and so forth.

With these issues and facts in the background, researchers may address, among other things, the following key areas in their papers to be submitted for the XVII AERA Conference:

- There are about 85 million agricultural holdings with less than one ha in size in the country. Studies may address the role of technology in increasing the productivity and profitability of these small farms, ensuring livelihood security to the millions of small and marginal farmers.
- Farmers in the rainfed areas face extremely high risks to their farm income; thus making them vulnerable to frequent losses. Limited breakthroughs in the development of input-responsive and drought-tolerant crop varieties and technologies for dryland agriculture are partly responsible for low productivity growth. Studies may evaluate the impact of dryland technologies, including livestock, horticulture, agro-forestry etc. in improving the productivity, profitability, natural resource-use efficiency in these less-favoured areas.
- Land degradation in the form of soil erosion, salinity/alkalinity and waterlogging are posing serious threats to the sustainable agricultural development. How technological interventions can reverse this trend? Studies may concentrate on successful case studies and specific success stories.
- More scientific evidences are coming up on climate change and vulnerability of agriculture to the impacts of climate change. These include increased likelihood of crop failure, changes in pest and diseases complexes, increased livelihood insecurity, etc. How technology can mitigate and adapt to climate change would be an interesting and contemporary social science research agenda. More specifically, research on quantification of the impact of climate change, vulnerability of the agro-ecological regions, adaptation mechanisms should be given priority.
- Water and irrigation sectors need more focused interventions to improve the water productivity and income per unit of water. Water productivity enhancement strategies in both irrigated and rainfed agriculture should be studied through interdisciplinary research.
- Our profession has contributed very little to advance the idea of sustainability in terms of developing credible indicators, methodologies, quantification, etc. This may partly be due to the non-availability of time series data on the status of natural resources and partly due to conceptualization issues. Any contribution in this topic will definitely make the profession richer.
- Researchers may also contribute on the socio-economic dimensions of emerging technological options like, biotechnology, SRI, precision farming, green house production technologies, etc.
- Institutional and organizational issues relating to technology generation, protection, and dissemination can also be an area of investigation, particularly the role of public sector and private sector in the emerging IPR regime

- Little attention is given to technology assessment and outreach activities. Many technologies have non-adopters. Analysis of constraints in technology adoption, transaction costs, sustainability, etc. are needed for framing intervention policies.
- Agricultural economists also need to develop appropriate evaluation strategies for technological interventions. Such evaluation mechanism should be incorporated in the guidelines of the program implementation. Impact of watershed project evaluation will be a good start in this direction.

The delineation of sub-themes is indicative and suggestive rather than restrictive. The contributors can focus on any one or a combination of more than one group of issues listed so long as the paper remains within the prescribed size limit of 15 pages.

Last Date and Mode of Submission of Papers: 16 August, 2009

Research papers (in duplicate) typed in double space and accompanied invariably by a summary not exceeding 200 words along with a floppy (MS Word) may be sent to the *Secretary, National Centre for Agricultural Economics and Policy Research (NCAP), Dev Prakash Shastri Marg, Pusa, New Delhi-110012 before 16 August, 2009*. The soft copies should also be sent at **aeraindia@gmail.com**. The length of the paper should not exceed 15 pages in double space 12 point font, including tables, annexures, etc. Selected papers in full and Abstracts of all other recommended papers will be published in the Conference Issue of the Journal, *Agricultural Economics Research Review*.

Dr D.T. Doshi Awards

It may be noted that **two prizes (1st and 2nd)** instituted by Dr. D. T. Doshi Foundation, Pune, will be awarded to the best presentations of submitted papers (papers submitted only in abstract form are not eligible) during the annual conference. The presentations should preferably be in power point for the duration of 10 minutes. Dr. Doshi Foundation also awards **two prizes** every year to the best articles published in the *Agricultural Economics Research Review*. Members are advised to take advantage of these initiatives.

Venue and Date of Conference

Date: 19-21 November 2009.

Venue: Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore - 641 003, Tamil Nadu

Boarding & Lodging

Participants are requested to report at the Reception Counter located at the University Guest House. They will be provided accommodation in the University Hostel. Delegates will also be received at the airport/bus stand/railway station, if informed earlier. The reception camp will be functional during 18-21 November, 2009.

Registration Fee

Member	:	Rs. 1,000/-
Non-member	:	Rs. 1,300/-
P.G. student	:	Rs. 500/-
Accompanying Person	:	Rs. 1000/-

Members must send the Registration form along the Registration Fee through Demand Draft/Banker Cheque in favour of Organizing Secretary, AERA 2009 Conference, payable at Coimbatore, by the end of October, 2009 to make the necessary arrangements.

Correspondence may be addressed to:

Dr. M. Chandrasekaran

Organizing Secretary
17th AERA Conference &
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Director I/c-CARDS
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Membership Tariffs

Particulars	Print copy	E-publication	Print + Online (E-publication)
Institutional Membership	Rs 1000/-	Rs 1000/-	Rs 1500/-
Individual Membership	Rs 300/-	Rs 300/-	Rs 450/-
Student Membership	Rs 250/-	Rs 250/-	Rs 375/-
Life Membership	Rs 3000/-	Rs 3000/-	Rs 4500/-
Overseas (Institutional)	US \$ 100	US \$ 100	US \$ 200
Overseas (Individual)	US \$ 50	US \$ 50	US \$ 100
Overseas (Life membership other than institutions)	US \$ 500	US \$ 500	US \$ 1000

Revised Membership Tariffs w.e.f. January 2010

Particulars	Print copy	E-publication	Print + Online (E-publication)
Institutional Membership	Rs 2000/-	Rs 2000/-	Rs 3000/-
Individual Membership	Rs 500/-	Rs 500/-	Rs 750/-
Student Membership	Rs 400/-	Rs 400/-	Rs 600/-
Life Membership	Rs 4000/-	Rs 4000/-	Rs 4000/-
Overseas (Institutional)	US \$ 150	US \$ 150	US \$ 300
Overseas (Individual)	US \$ 75	US \$ 75	US \$ 75
Overseas (Life membership other than institutions)	US \$ 500	US \$ 500	US \$ 500

Programme

Day 1: 19 November, 2009

0900:1000	Registration
1000:1130	Inaugural Function
1130:1200	Inaugural Tea
1200:1330	Technical Sessions
1330:1430	Lunch
1430:1730	Technical Sessions
1800:1900	Editorial Board Meeting
1900:2000	Executive Committee Meeting
2100:2200	Dinner

Day 2: 20 November 2009

0900:1030	Technical Sessions
1030:1100	Tea
1100:1330	Technical Sessions
1330:1400	Lunch
1400:1600	Symposium
1600:1630	Tea

Day 3: 21 November 2009

0900:1030	Valedictory Session
1030:1200	General Body Meeting of AERA
1200	Tea
1400	Field Trip

AGENDA for General Body Meeting

1. To approve the minutes of the previous Annual General Body Meeting held on 23 November, 2008 at Amit University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
2. To approve the reports of the Secretary and the Treasurer of the Association for the Year 2008-2009, as approved by the Executive Committee.
3. To elect office bearers of the Association for the next year.
4. To finalize a new Editorial Board for the Journal.
5. To decide about honorary Life Membership of the Association.
6. To finalize topic for next year's AERA conference.
7. To decide the venue for the next AERA conference.
8. Any other item with the permission of the Chair.
9. Vote of thanks

17th Annual Conference
Agricultural Economics Research Association (India)
Theme: Technology, Environment and Livelihood Security
19-21 November, 2009
Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Designation: _____

Mailing Address

Office: _____

Residence: _____

Telephone (O): _____ (R) _____ (M) _____

Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Accommodation needed (Please Tick)

From Organizers _____ Your Own _____

No. of accompanying members _____

Name _____ Relation _____

Mode of Registration Fee Payment: _____

Arrival Information

Date _____ Expected time: _____

Departure Information

Date _____ Expected time: _____

Place:

Date:

Signature

Note: Members are requested to send their Registration Form along the Registration Fee by **31st October, 2009** to: **Dr. M. Chandrasekaran**, Organizing Secretary, 17th AERA (India) Conference & Professor and Head, Department of Agricultural Economics and Director I/c-CARDS, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore - 641 003 (Tamil Nadu)