



Announcement



Agricultural Economics Research Association (India)

18th Annual AERA Conference

**Value Chains of Agricultural Commodities
and their Role in Food Security
and Poverty Alleviation**

18-20 November, 2010



Organisers

**National Academy of Agricultural Research Management
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad-500 407**

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, 50 ordinary members, more than 100 institutional members and 15 honorary life members from India 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, comprehensive review articles in the area of agricultural economics (including horticulture and fisheries), conference/symposia proceedings and book reviews are also published in the Journal. To encourage the young researchers, 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 have been published. The Association undertakes sponsored research studies. 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 by National Academy of Agricultural Science, 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 - 110 012, India
Email: aeraindia@gmail.com

Executive Committee

President	:	Dr Mruthyunjaya
Vice Presidents	:	Dr C. Ramasamy, Dr V.P.S. Arora, Dr M. Chandrasekaran
Secretary	:	Dr P. K. Joshi
Treasurer	:	Dr P. Kumar
Joint Secretaries	:	Dr B. C. Barah, Dr V. C. Mathur
Members	:	Dr T. Alagumami, Dr K.V. Deshmukh, Dr R.S. Sidhu, Dr Jyoti Kachroo, Dr Chandra Sen, Dr S.B. Nahatkar, Dr L.K. Barooah, Dr R.N. Pandey

Editorial Board

Agricultural Economics Research Review

Chief Editor	:	Dr S.S. Acharya
Managing Editor	:	Dr Praduman Kumar
Members	:	Dr K.C. Hiremath, Dr D. K. Marothia, Dr M.G. Chandrakanth Dr R. L. Shiyani, Dr Suresh Pal, Dr Karam Singh, Dr H.S. Vijaykumar, Dr K. Palanisami, Dr B.C. Bhowmick, Dr Surabhi Mittal
Foreign Members	:	Dr Suresh Babu, Dr M. Gopinath, Dr S. Mohanty

About the Conference

Stagnating productivity, rising costs, declining farm incomes, and high price volatility of agri-commodities, are making farming un-remunerative and risky, leading to distress among the farming community. Climate change has added further problems to agriculture. Simultaneously, a significant revolution in food habits across the country is encouraging diversification towards high-value commodities (horticulture, livestock, fishery, dairy, etc.) post-harvest processing and value addition to agricultural produce. These developments broadly reflect the growing importance of the market in the context of Indian agriculture. To raise income, employment, profitability, global competitiveness and social welfare in the market context, a holistic approach with emphasis in value chain has become imminent. This will also address food security and poverty in the country.

In this context, marketing is becoming as important as production. The challenge lies in developing a holistic approach, addressing production to consumption system (value chain) with a higher priority among others, to post-harvest processing, quality management, nutrition issues, etc. Such a system will also have backward linkage with input-supply system and forward linkages with food-chain aspect, covering food consumption by human beings as well as animal with focus on quality, safety, etc. Such a system requires collective action of the public and private sectors, farmers, and all other stakeholders.

Conceptually, a value chain involves a series of value-generating activities through which a farm / firm develops a competitive advantage and creates value. The goal of these activities is to offer everyone involved a value of level that exceeds the cost, thereby resulting in a reasonable profit margin. A fully commercial value chain is comprised of primary activities and support activities. The primary activities include inbound logistics (receiving and distribution of inputs); operations (transforming inputs into products); outbound logistics (storage and distribution of products); marketing and sales promotion (customer surveys and sales); and services (after-sale services). The support activities include infrastructure (organization, control, business culture, finance, legal, ethical, quality management, etc.); human resource management (employee recruitment, hiring, training, compensation, etc.); technology development (technologies to support value-adding activities); and procurement (purchasing inputs, equipment, supplies, etc.). The primary activities are directly concerned with producing and delivering a product and the support activities may increase effectiveness or efficiency of the value chain. The competitive advantage to the farm/firm is achieved through cost drivers such as economies of scale, technological innovations, capacity development and utilization, linkage among activities, inter-relationships among business units, degree of vertical integration, timing of market entry, firm's policy of cost or differentiation, geographical location and institutional factors (regulation, union activities, taxes, etc.).

The sequential steps in business value chains include: (a) break down a market / organization into its key activities under each of the major components of the chain, (b) assess the potential for adding value via cost advantage or differentiation, and (c) determine strategies built around focusing on activities where competitive advantage could be sustained.

Unfortunately, value chains for most of the agricultural commodities in India exist in a rudimentary form and they are generally inefficient, distorted and disintegrated. There are a number of intermediaries between producers and consumers. The losses and wastages are enormous and the value addition is as low as 7-8 %, as compared to 70-80% in the developed countries or even in some of the developing countries like

Brazil, Mexico, Thailand, etc. Rather than adding value, the innumerable middle men add costs. In some cases, value addition may take place at 1 or 2 points/levels/activities of value chain, but not across all the activities. However, some profitable value chains also exist in the case of dairy and poultry sectors. In some horticultural commodities like, mangoes, grapes, mushrooms, gherkins, etc., the value chains are somewhat strong and effective. An effective value chain, as stated earlier, should reduce cost, minimize losses, add value and share the gains with producers and consumers.

The purpose of this Conference is to document, describe and analyze the existing efficient and effective value chains in agricultural, horticultural and fisheries and dairy products which are augmenting farm business income, employment and livelihood security to both farm and non-farm sectors. While several value chains initiated through individual or group effort are already in successful operation in the agricultural sector, their large scale implementation is not yet a reality. Realizing the need for effective replication of some of these success stories, the on-going National Agricultural Innovation Project (NAIP) of ICAR, has initiated 56 research value chains in consortium mode (12 under crops, 21 under horticulture, 4 under NRM, 6 under animal sciences, and 8 under fisheries) in priority areas to enhance agricultural productivity, profitability, income, employment, nutritional security and reduction in poverty (for details, see NAIP website: <http://www.naip.icar.org.in>). Highlighting the examples and experiences of NAIP or independent value chain sub-projects will provide promising/potential material for writing the papers for the Conference.

Topics

Two broad topics for contributing research papers to the Conference are:

- (1) Successful (effective and efficient) value chains in agricultural commodities for increasing profit, income, and improving livelihood security of farm and non-farm households, and
- (2) Best practices, innovative technologies, institutions and policies for successful value chains.

While contributing research papers, the paper writers may please keep in view,

Impact of value chains: Minimization of transaction costs, contribution to better product differentiation, agricultural diversification, access to finance, poverty reduction and ensuring food and nutritional security

Realization of competitive advantage: Through branding, customer care, new distribution channels and quality assurance

Exploiting market potential: Creation of response to match changing customer tastes and preferences, exploring newer market penetration options and enhancement of the marketing efficiency

Developing new linkages: Building partnerships with private sector and other agencies, who have special skills/services to add value to the value chains and foresight to maintain the product performance after the sale of produce

Sustainability of value chains: Focus on sustainable technology, production, processing and marketing of products

Use of ICT in evolving value chains of agriculture: (a) Case studies on application of ICTs in the value chains, and (b) Different agencies and / or stakeholders, attempts may be made on impact of ICT in value chains on reducing transaction cost and improving market efficiency.

Lessons learnt from case studies of value chains in agriculture: Issues, challenges, opportunities, and policy implications.

All these issues will be discussed during the 18th AERA Annual Conference to be held at National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM), Hyderabad, during 18 -20 November, 2010.

Last Date and Mode of Submission of Papers: 15th September 2010

Research papers (in duplicate) typed in double space and accompanied invariably by an Abstract of the paper in not more than 200 words may be sent to the Secretary, AERA, National Centre for Agricultural Economics and Policy Research (NCAP), Dev Prakash Shastri Marg, Pusa, New Delhi– 110 012 by **15th September, 2010**. The soft copies may also be sent at aeraindia@gmail.com. The length of the paper should not exceed 20 pages including tables, figures, annexures, etc. in double space. A few selected papers and abstracts of the recommended papers will be published in the Conference issue of the Journal, AERR.

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.

Date and Venue of Conference

Date: 18-20 November, 2010

Venue: National Academy of Agricultural Research Management, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad

Boarding and Lodging

Participants are requested to report at the Reception Counter located at NAARM Guest House. They will be provided accommodation in University Hostel. Delegates will also be received at airport/bus stand/ railway station, if informed earlier. The reception camp will be functional during 17-20 November, 2010.

Registration Fee for Delegates

	National	Foreign
AERA Member :	Rs 1,000/-	US\$ 100/-
Non-member :	Rs 1,500/-	US\$ 175/-
Student member :	Rs 600/-	
Student Non-Member :	Rs 1000/-	
Accompanying Person :	Rs 1000/-	

Contract for Conference

Dr. G.P. Reddy

Organising Secretary &
Principal Scientist

National Academy of Agricultural Research Management

Rajendranagar, Hyderabad-500 407

Phone : 040-24581340 (off), 040-24047994 (R)

E-mail : aera2010@naarm.ernet.in

Programme of the Conference

Day 1: 18 November, 2010

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: 19 November, 2010

0930: 1100	Technical Sessions
1100: 1115	Tea
1115: 1330	Technical Sessions
1330: 1430	Lunch
1430: 1630	Symposium
1630: 1645	Tea
1700: 1830	General Body Meeting of AERA
2100: 2200	Dinner

Day 3: 20 November, 2010

0930:1030	Valedictory Session
1030:1045	Tea
1100:1330	Symposium
1330: 1430	Lunch
1430: 1700	Field Trip

AGENDA for General Body Meeting

1. To approve the minutes of the previous Annual General Body Meeting held on 20 November, 2009 at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu
2. To approve the reports of the Secretary and the Treasurer of the Association for the Year 2009-2010, 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

18th Annual Conference

Agricultural Economics Research Association (India)

**Theme: Value Chains of Agricultural Commodities and their Role in Food
Security and Poverty Alleviation**

18-20 November, 2010

National Academy of Agricultural Research Management, Hyderabad

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Designation: _____

Mailing Address _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Accommodation needed (Please Tick)

From Organizers _____ Your Own _____

No. of accompanying members _____

Name _____ Relation _____

Registration Fee (a) Draft Particulars _____

(b) Cash at the time of registration _____

Arrival Information

Date _____ Expected time: _____

Mode & details _____

Departure Information

Date _____ Expected time: _____

Mode & details _____

Place:

Date:

Signature

Note: The Members must send their Registration Form for making necessary arrangements by **10th November, 2010** to: **Dr. G.P. Reddy**, Organizing Secretary, 18th AERA (India) Conference & Principal Scientist, NAARM, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad-500 407