



Sustained growth in horticulture made India a Global Leader in Micro Irrigation, besides substantially improving nutritional requirement of its population

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Abstract:

Indian green revolution in early seventies of the last century made India not only a self-sufficient nation in food grains but also enabled it to export to other countries. But soon after realization started that in the interest of maximizing food grain production we have over stressed our natural resources of soil and water. Also horticulture sector was progressively ignored resulting in increased nutritional supply to a predominantly vegetarian society. This opened up a new thought process of sustainability of use of natural resources. Increase in efficiency of utilization of natural resources became the favorite topic for researchers, policy makers and other stake holders in early eighties. Diversification of agriculture particularly encouragement to increasing horticultural production to meet the nutritional requirements of the largely vegetarian population in the country came to the focus of the policy makers. Government of India through its different initiatives supported by appropriate need based dynamic policies for promoting horticulture in general and micro irrigation in particular resulted in quantum jump in horticulture production, surpassing the food grain production in the country, during the last year. Government of India followed a multi-pronged strategy for promotion of micro irrigation in the country. It included policy guidelines, offsetting its high initial cost partly by Government funding, developing research base and encouraging industry for production of quality micro irrigation equipments locally. The real cause of success was the dynamism in Government policies to match the need of the time for promoting water saving strategies and simultaneously enhancing production of fruits and vegetables through National Horticulture Mission, Horticulture Board and Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture. The article presents a detailed firsthand account of the progress of micro irrigation in the country from its inception to the point of India becoming the country with the largest micro irrigated area in the world. Consequent to increased horticulture production supplemented significantly the nutritional requirement of the population.



Biography:

Thakur Bahadur Singh Rajput is an Adjunct Professor at Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, Professor JayShamkar Telangana State Agricultural University, Hyderabad and a visiting Professor at Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand. He has over forty years of experience of research and post graduate teaching in the field of Soil and Water Conservation Engineering. He is a former Project Director and a scientist of national repute. He has published ten books and more than 200 research articles. He has developed seven computer softwares on different aspects of agricultural water management. Besides research, he has supervised more than twenty post graduate researches. He was adjudged as the Best teacher by Indian Agricultural Research Institute and was awarded the best teacher by Indian Council of Agricultural Research. He has received many honors and awards for research including the prestigious Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Award, the highest award an Agricultural Scientist can get in India. He is widely travelled and is a Fellow of National Academy of Agricultural Sciences and six other National Scientific Societies in India.

Publication of speakers:

1. Impact of municipal wastewater reuse through micro-irrigation system on the incidence of coliforms in selected vegetable crops

[9th European Food and Nutrition Webinar | November 27, 2020 | London, UK](#)

Citation: Thakur Bahadur Singh Rajput; Sustained growth in horticulture made India a Global Leader in Micro Irrigation, besides substantially improving nutritional requirement of its population; Food Science 2020; November 06; Dubai, UAE