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## **Concept and Strategies for Doubling Farmers Income: Focus on Horticulture**

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India's economic security continues to be predicated upon the agriculture sector, and the situation is not likely to change in the foreseeable future. Even now, agriculture supports 58% of the Indian population, as against about 75% at the time of independence. In the identical period, the contribution of agriculture and allied sector to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has fallen from 61 to 13%. As of today, India supports 16.8% of world's population on 4.2% of world's water resources and 2.3% of global land resources. Also per caput availability of resources is about 4 to 6 times less than that of world average. This will further decrease due to increasing demographic pressure and consequent diversion of the land for non-agricultural uses. Around 51% of India's geographical area is already under cultivation as compared to 11% of the world average. The present cropping intensity is 136% and it has been registered an increase of only 25% since independence. Further, rainfed and dry-lands area constitute approximately 65% of the total net sown area. There is also an unprecedented degradation of land (107 million ha) and groundwater resource, and also fall in the rate of growth of total factor productivity. This deceleration needs to be arrested and agricultural productivity has to be doubled to meet growing demands of the population by 2050. Efficiency-mediated improvement in productivity is the most viable option to raise production of various commodities including horticulture.

The country has made tremendous achievements in agriculture during five decades since the onset of green revolution in late sixties. This enabled the country to overcome prevalent hunger and starvation; achieve self-sufficiency in food; reduce poverty and bring economic transformation in millions of agrarian rural families. The situation, however, started turning adverse for the sector around mid-nineties, with slowdown in growth rate of output, which then resulted