



Impact of COVID 19 on Agriculture Globally

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Corona viruses are a family of viruses which are zoonotic, means they are transmitted between animals and people, if they come in contact.

Investigation showed that SARS-COV was transmitted from civet cats to human and MERS-COV from dromedary camels to humans. COVID means CO=Corona, VI=Viruses, and D=Disease. The impact of COVID-19 on the agriculture is devastating, complex and varied across diverse segments that form the agricultural value chain. This impact will reverberate across the larger economy and will linger longer than few months.

Commercial crops are drastically hit as they tend to be more dependent on migrant labour. The Shortage of migrant labour has resulted in a sharp increase in daily wages for harvesting crops. In several areas, the rise is as high as 50%, making it unremunerative for produce since prices have collapsed due to either lack of market access including the stoppage of transportation and closure of borders. This is per contra to areas where migrant labours have gone back to their homes from urban and peri-urban areas and this has led to a sharp reducing price in agricultural wages. This is the case of crop live *Allium cepa* (onion), *Mangifera indica* (mango), *Gossypium hirsutum* (cotton), inland fisheries, vegetables, flowers etc. The price hike in labour cost and lack of access shows that former are starting at heavy losses. They are allowing the crop to rot in the fields a better 'stop loss' mechanism.

To tackle this situation, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), New Delhi, issued state specific guidelines about harvesting and threshing of *rabi* crops along with the advisories on handling post-harvest operations like storage and marketing of the farm produce more efficiently. The ICAR has intensified its efforts in the farmer's participatory research towards doubling the

farmer's participating research towards doubling the farmers participatory research towards doubling the farmers income by 2022, increasing the agriculture production, productivity and profitability in the agricultural sector so that farmers may recover losses that took place away to lockdown during COVID-19 pandemic disease.

The efforts made by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research will have an impact on markets and prices. Dairy is prominently featured in out of home eating, and there may be disruption in food service sales. There have also been bottle necks at ports in foreign countries as ship wait to be offloaded with United States dairy and other farm products Until further notice there may be only electronic trading, as floor traveling is shut down at international level.

Supply chain slows down that would also impact on fertilizers, fuel and other input movement and availability as we herald further. The Americans Veterinary Medical Association has suggested the potential for animal pharmaceuticals products to be in short supply for at least some of the larger drug manufacturers. In an extreme case we could have concerns with utilities like electricity, natural gas etc. on input availability or labour shortage.

COVID-19 has shown a much higher level severity for those in their sixties or older. It elucidates that preventive and protective recommendations from the CDC and state including local public health experts are critical for our farmers health. A full 11.7% of our principal farm operators are age 75 and older, as per 2017 Census based on agriculture. Further throughout mid-west, farmers are a relatively older population whereas in India average age of farm operators is almost 58 years- at least a full 10-year-older than workers in most other sectors. And, unlike other industry workers, farm operators, 26% are age 65 years and above.

The farm work force was not infected as higher level due to strong immunity so their infection rate remains low. Farm workers have become out of work and reached to starving condition though they were stood by the Governments, (Center/state/local), NGOs, Societies etc. The fear of this event and lack of information may also lead to higher level of absenteeism.

Our governments (center/state) tried to meet the demand of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), N-95 respirators, protective gloves which have now become common place in dairy operations as protective means to improve milk quality and protective means to improve milk quality and protect the health of animals and people.

If we consider other disruption, find social gatherings, schools, colleges, melas were also disturbed. The facilities of e-marketing, on-line teaching, internet connectively was poor in rural areas, the social distancing was mandatory due to COVID-19 that has affected agricultural areas. The rural areas people should be kept informed by the experts and must go by the recommendations of federal, state and local authorities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed another, major risk of our global food system with its long supply chains and endless nodes.

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