Approaches for Linking Markets and Farmers to Foster India’s Rural Development

Rama B. Radhakrishna,
Associate Professor
Department of Agricultural and Extension Education
318 Agricultural Administration Building
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA 16802
Tel: (814) 863-7069/Fax: (814)-863-4753
E-mail: brr100@psu.edu

Daney G. Jackson
Director of Penn State Cooperative Extension
217 Agricultural Administration Building
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA 16802
Telephone: 814-865-5410/Fax: 814-863-7905
Email: dgj3@psu.edu

Abstract

In the last decade, the agricultural situation in India has undergone a tremendous change in the light of liberalization and establishment of World Trade Organization (WTO). Responding to issues of globalization, and keeping farmers, agribusiness people, and extension educators in a state of preparedness is critical to address the challenges posed by globalization. It is important, therefore, to identify approaches that can provide continuous, relevant, and export oriented technologies to small and marginal farmers. What approaches we should use to identify, develop, implement, and evaluate linkages between farmers and markets? Who are the stakeholders and in what ways these stakeholders could provide input to developing the linkages? Do information technologies have a role to play in fostering the linkages between farmers and markets? What role agricultural extension can play in bringing about effective linkages between farmers and markets?

The purpose of this poster presentation was to identify approaches for linking markets and farmers. First, the three program development/delivery approaches (institutional, informational, and developmental proposed by Boyle, 1981) to link farmers and markets are described. Inherent in these three approaches are situation analysis, identification stakeholders, and systematic needs assessment relative to linking farmers and markets. Input from farmer’s groups and societies are also sought to identify potential needs. In addition, partners and collaborators needs to be identified based on mutual interest, resources available, etc. The collaborative efforts, to be successful, should be at the micro level.

The proposed approaches to link markets and farmers will spark initiative and interest among key stakeholders. Knowledge transfer in the areas of post harvest technology and quality control is very important if we are to make headway in linking farmers and markets. In addition, there is a vast need for preparing Indian farmers and producers to meet the challenges of global competitive markets.

Keywords: Linking Markets, Rural Development, India