

E-platform for agriculture gets a thumbs up



Shilpa Divekar Nirula
CEO, Monsanto India

The Budget has rightly focused on the growth of agriculture, farmers and development of rural India. By acknowledging the contribution of farmers towards food security and emphasising the need for income security, the Budget has surely given the much needed impetus to rural India where agriculture is a mainstay. Irrigation and crop insurance are two of the key inputs that will help improve farm productivity in India. The attempt to bring 28.5 lakh hectares under the 'Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana', a dedicated irrigation fund under the "Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana" are admirable first steps. The United Agricultural Marketing ePlatform which aims to connect 585 agri mandis by March 2018 and will allow farmers to sell their produce at any mandi of

their choice is an innovative step towards helping farmers realise fair and market determined prices for their produce thereby improving their incomes.

MKDhanuka
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Doubling the farmers' income in five years will have an encouraging impact on the financial conditions of farmers.

Further, launching of e-platform for marketing is a welcome step as farmers will be able to get the right price for their crop. Allocation of ₹9 lakh crore for agriculture loan to farmers and ₹87,000 crore to rural sector will increase the rural demand.

The government's thrust for growth of agriculture and rural sector development including implementation of schemes like soil health card, crop insurance and irrigation facilities will motivate



ing a 20 per cent year-on-year growth.

Shivendra Bajaj
Executive Director, Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises, Agriculture Group (ABLE-AG)

The Finance Minister's focus on agriculture will enhance expenditure on the rural and agriculture sectors. The soil health card scheme, Fasal Bima Yojana and common e-market platform will help in improving the agriculture sector. However, it is disappointing to see no encouragement for agri-biotech research by public or private institutions for augmenting the agriculture sector. We further believe that for transforming the Indian agriculture, counter the ill-effects of climate change, improve livelihoods and address food requirements of the nation technological intervention is of utmost importance.

farmer to continue his interest in agriculture.

RS Khanna
Chairman, Kwaliti Limited

There are many reasons to cheer. First is the government's initiative towards ensuring that farmer income doubles, second is the much required connectivity from farm to market, third is the 100% electricity by 2018 and most important, the much needed investment in animal husbandry, livestock breeding and cattle.

In a nutshell, the road ahead looks positive and even good news for the already booming dairy sector.

The government's announcement of ₹850 crore on animal husbandry, cattle and livestock breeding will bring in relief for the farmers.

This will help increase milk production and our target of achiev-

