

## AIR Spotlight - Doubling the Farmers' Income

AIR Spotlight is an insightful program featured daily on the All India Radio Newsonair. In this program, many eminent panelists discuss issues of importance which can be quite helpful in the [IAS exam](#) preparation. In this article, the discussion is on Doubling the Farmers' Income.

### Participants:

1. Harvir Singh, Agriculture Expert
2. Sanjeeb Mukherjee, Journalist

### Context:

India has completed 75 years of independence. Against this backdrop, this article analyzes the government's goal of doubling the farmers' incomes.

### Doubling the Farmers' Income

The Prime Minister has announced the government's goal of **doubling the farmer's income by 2022**.

- Agriculture supports the sustenance of more than half of India's total population. Doubling farmers' incomes in such a short period is an overwhelming task for decision-makers, scientists, and political makers due to their continuous role in employment, income, and, above all, in national food safety.
- Doubling the farmers' income is possible through the increase in total production and the best realization of market prices, reducing production costs, product diversification, post-harvest efficient management, etc.

### Need for Doubling Farmers' Income:

- Around 85% of the farmers in India are small, marginal, and landless whose annual incomes are relatively very less.
- Due to agricultural losses, and low farm incomes, the number of [suicides by farmers in India](#) has also increased sharply.
- India's previous agricultural sector development strategy mainly focused on increasing agricultural production and improving food security.
- To promote farmers' welfare, ease agricultural difficulties, and achieve equality between farmers' income and non-agricultural income, farmers' income must be doubled.

### How can doubling farmers' income be done?

- Farmers in India can have a holistic approach for better farming income like income from the crops, dairy, and from other livelihood resources, the government of India is also encouraging farmers by setting up the **Ministry of Animal Husbandry**.
- The fishery industry can also be one of the sources to increase income, especially inland fishery. For example, Haryana is doing well in inland fishery.

- Farmers can come together and form cooperatives which will help farmers acquire skills and reduce input cost by bargaining and increase output price as huge amounts of production can be together. For example, **Amul**.

#### Other important initiatives by central and state governments:

- **Ministry of Co-operation's 'Sahkar se Samridhhi'** (Prosperity through Cooperation) – A New Push to Co-operatives: It will provide a separate administrative, legal and political framework for strengthening the cooperative movement in the country, simplify the business process of cooperatives and promote the development of multi-state cooperatives (MSCS). **Read more on the [Ministry of Cooperation](#) in the linked article.**
- The **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana** is also known as the [PM KISAN](#) program. This is the first basic universal income program targeting many small and marginal farmers. It is a scheme with 100% funding from the Central Government of India and is being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare. The program was launched in December 2018, initially providing income support to all small and marginal farmers. The program was then extended to all farmers in May 2019. The Union Budget allocated Rs 75,000 crore to the program in 2021.
- **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana** provides insurance against crop and income loss and encourages investment in farming. **Know more about the [Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana](#) in the linked article.**
- **'Farmer Producer Organizations, (FPO)'** involves collecting producers, especially small and marginal farmers to form an effective alliance to collectively address many challenges of agriculture, such as better access to investments, technology, inputs, and markets. FPO 'Farmer Producer Organization' is a type of PO (Producer Organizations) where members are farmers.

#### Challenges:

Some of the issues that arise while envisaging doubling farmers' incomes are:

- Adoption of technology
- Crop diversification
- Increased productivity
- Environmental degradation
- Agricultural sustainability
- Farmer's income

#### Way Forward:

- Farmers' low incomes and annual fluctuations are the main causes of agricultural difficulties.
- To secure the future of agriculture and improve the livelihoods of half of the Indian population, full attention must be paid to improving the welfare of farmers and increasing agricultural incomes.
- States and UTs need to be mobilized to achieve the goal of doubling farmers' incomes and to pay active attention to farmers' capacity building (technology adoption and awareness), which becomes a catalyst for increasing farmers' incomes.

- As India is a diversified country and most of its agriculture depends on the monsoons, it must intervene based on the comparative advantages of each region and its different agro-climatic characteristics, including research, technology expansion, and post-harvest management, processing, and marketing; by 2022, the country can achieve the goal of doubling farmers' incomes.

