

LOCATION OF AGRO INDUSTRIES

Case Study of Fruit & Vegetable Processing *

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IN recent years, economists have shown interest in the phenomenon of metropolitan agglomeration of industries, to which town planners and urban demographers have already drawn attention of the society. While John P. Lewis¹ urges the Indian planners 'to aggressively experiment with a town-centred industrial location', E. A. Johnson² visualizes an important development role for small towns with population less than 20,000. The latter pleads for the creation of 12 to 14 thousand small market towns to which half a million Indian villages will be functionally related. And he argues that agro industries can play a useful role in this town-making process.

Not only Johnson but many others also believe that agro industries using weight/bulk losing agricultural raw materials, have locational advantage near the source of their basic raw materials. More specifically, fruit and vegetable processing industry is believed to have locational advantage in small towns in the fruit/vegetable growing areas. But in view of the predominant concentration of the Indian fruit and vegetable processing industry in the consuming centres³ it is worth investigating the locational disposition of this industry. A thorough investigation of the locational economics of this industry becomes all the more necessary when one finds that those who urge for its locational reorientation in favour of fruit/

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¹ LEWIS, JOHN P., *Quiet Crisis in India*, 1962.

² JOHNSON, E. A., *Market Towns and Spatial Development*, National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi, 1965.

³ Attention to this concentration has been drawn, among others, by the Planning Commission, *Programmes of Industrial Development 1961-66*, p. 698; S. K. Mukherjee and S. R. Tandon in their symposium papers on *Fruit and Vegetable Preservation Industry*, Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore, 1956; B. S. Rao, *Survey of Indian Industries*, Oxford University Press, 1958.