

Book Review

Ajit Kumar Singh, *Agricultural Development Natural Resource Management*, Mittal Publication, New Delhi, 2021, pp. 486, Price ₹1800.

The book is a compilation of twenty-eight papers divided into two parts. The first part of the book is based on the situation of agricultural development. This part of the book is divided into four sections.

A first section focuses on the pattern of agricultural growth in India as a whole, as well as across states. This section of the volume has five papers. The section provides an overview of changing agriculture and agrarian relations in India. It explains how agricultural labor is shifting from agriculture to non-agriculture. This section also indicates the variations in the use of technology in agriculture development at state level. It is suggested that the focus of agriculture policies should shift from irrigated areas to dry areas. This section analyzes the state-by-state growth rate in agricultural production and trends in agricultural area, output, and yield of food grains. Inter-regional disparities in the levels of agricultural development are described and it has been suggested that an inclusive pattern of agriculture growth is required. In the study, it is observed that a 'refused' labor force has a positive impact on the productivity of agriculture.

The second section covers papers regarding agricultural policy and institutional factors. This section contains six papers. The section discusses how to develop state-specific plans based, as Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh have varying conditions when it comes to agriculture. A detailed analysis has been provided in this book that finds that horticultural crops have higher net returns than food grains. A number of papers are based on field surveys and case studies, which provide a thorough basis for learning about the reality of farming. This section discusses all aspects of livelihood issues for farmers on the basis of field size. Agriculture marketing as well as service delivery of agricultural inputs are major challenges for many farmers. It has been highlighted that farmers face a problem with seed and fertilizer quality during the sowing season. The detailed analysis has been done in this section.

The third section discusses agricultural growth. Six papers are included in this section. This section of the book focuses on the interrelationship between agriculture and industry at the regional and district levels. This section discusses the economic factors that seem to have caused the shift in cropping patterns. It also points out that agriculture credit is an extremely influential factor in the rural areas. Agriculture development is influenced by farmer debt and agricultural credit. The impact of agriculture credit and farmer's indebtedness on agriculture production has been carefully examined in this section. Further in this section, the author discusses how increasing input costs and decreasing output prices contribute to a decrease in agricultural profits. In addition, it is highlighted that government

schemes do not reach the majority of farmers, so their impact is less than expected. The holding size of land decreases as the number of families increases.

A fourth section of the volume consists of four papers on regional patterns of agricultural growth. The analysis of regional disparities regarding cropping patterns is covered in this section. The book recommends that policymakers should give priority to districts with low productivity when determining policies and implement agricultural development policies with no biases. The cooperative banks and the institutional credit societies need to increase their involvement in agricultural development. Agriculture development depends heavily on soil. In some districts, agriculture is primarily concentrated on rocky and dry plateaus. There are some regions where soil quality needs to be improved for agriculture to prosper.

The second part of the volume contains seven papers on different aspects of land and natural resource management. In certain states, the heavy pressure of increasing human and livestock populations on limited land resources has resulted in serious imbalances in land use. This section covers information regarding environmental degradation. It has been observed that environmental degradation leads to low agricultural productivity. Land management is necessary to stabilize agricultural productivity in the process of sustainable development. The development of water resources is a key component of sustainable development. Regional planning is required to apply the water management programme in the various regions. Finally, management and development of livestock resources in different zones are imperative for the development of rural areas. There has been a discussion regarding the growth of livestock, veterinary facilities, the need for feed and fodder, excessive demand for livestock, and improving the quality of livestock by cross breeding.

Within this book, a variety of perspectives are presented regarding the development of agriculture. This book is good resource material for researchers and those interested in the subject of agricultural development.

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