



Agri Skills

Newsletter - March 2020

Sowing Skills...

...Harvesting Opportunities...



“ Skills are the foundation of modern life. They are the driving force behind successful careers and companies, thriving industries, and economies. Skills keep the world working. Through efforts of Skill India, we are certain to achieve a better socio-economic condition for today’s youth by making them more productive and addressing unemployment and underemployment in a way”

Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey
 Hon’ble Minister, Ministry of Skill
 Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE)



“ We have seen great potential, great energy & enthusiasm in the youth of the country & how they are adapting to new age skills, transforming their lives & contributing to the new India. If the program has been able to transform lives, it is because of the passion & grit with which the youth is participating in it. We are working closely with the States, Department and Industry to ensure a robust skill ecosystem which would empower the youth and create opportunities of employment for them”

Shri. R K Singh
 Hon’ble Minister of State, Ministry of Skill
 Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE)

Message From CEO

This special issue of the ASCI newsletter is devoted to the importance of skilling in agriculture to meet the economic repercussions of the global spread of coronavirus (COVID 19) disease. As the Manufacturing, Services & Construction activities in the populous urban cities of India are badly affected by the rapid spread of the disease, Agriculture which is the backbone of Indian economy once again has come to the limelight as a source of viable alternative livelihood for the poor. There is now a increased focus on agriculture in every policy forum and discussions due to its contribution in food security and employment generation. Never before the importance of skilled labour in agriculture received more focus as it is receiving now. The COVID 19 crisis calls for significant changes in the production process, marketing and organisation of the supply chains with the pressing need to improve efficiency and greater emphasis on food standards. There is also the crucial need for employment generation of migrant workers in different agro-based occupations. All these make upskilling and reskilling of a significant section of workforce very essential. The can bring about significant transformation in the training and learning processes. We expect a greater reliance on digital technology and digital media for the training of the candidates, as also a rising importance of on-job training and training at employers’ premises. Online training sessions, delivery of course materials, and assessments will become prominent mode of training. On the other hand, on-the-job training, training at employers premises will assume more importance in the changed economic scenario. ASCI has always been at the forefront of capacity building and working for increased resilience of farmers to mitigate the impact of any crisis. In the next section we discuss how skill building in agriculture can minimise some disruptive effects and help in reemerging from the economic crisis.

Dr. Satender Arya



Dr Anupam Sarkar

Head-Research

Agriculture Skill Council of India

COVID 19 outbreak & the urgent need for stepping up skill development efforts in the Agriculture & Allied sector

The global outbreak of COVID 19 has brought unprecedented challenges before Indian agriculture which is the source of livelihood for nearly half of India's workforce. This challenge has many dimensions. Most important of which are disruptions of harvest and post-harvest operations, disturbances in the supply chain networks, wastage of fruits, vegetables and other perishable farm products, and negative impacts on the production and exports in the plantation sector. At the heart of many of these problems is the shortage of farm labour. Therefore, in the post COVID recovery phase there will be a greater need for skilled labour in agriculture.

Agriculture is the backbone of the Indian economy and any rehabilitation/relief/regeneration packages for the economy will be incomplete unless the sector receives proper representation. The mitigation of crisis and post lockdown restructuring and regeneration of the economy calls for well thought out strategy in which agriculture plays a critical role due to several factors- containment of food price inflation, avoiding any crisis arising out of food shortage, ensuring basic income of vulnerable population like migrant labourers, landless tenants and creating gainful job opportunities within rural sector. Majority of the workers in the agricultural sector comes poor and vulnerable background. Thus, unless adequate attention is paid to their welfare there will be an impending economic and social catastrophe. In this context the role of skilled workers in agriculture assumes importance. As agriculture has significant backward and forward linkages in rural India skill development in this sector will create many direct and indirect job opportunities. Skill development in agriculture will help job creation, regenerate demand and rebound the economy in a shorter time frame. *Skill development in agriculture should receive utmost importance for rebuilding, rebooting, and revitalisation of the economy.*

The shutdown of economic activities, especially in urban centres has triggered large scale reverse migration across India from industrial hubs to native villages. A sizeable section of these migrant workers will prefer to stay back in villages due to reasons as simple as the high cost of living in cities, low savings, unhygienic living conditions in slums in big cities. There is a need for creating job opportunities for them in villages and smaller towns depending on the locally available resources. Skill development of these migrant workers in different agriculture professions will help them to sustain their lives and livelihood through these difficult times.

In the post COVID-19 world there will be a heightened concern for food safety and standards, a greater mechanisation of farm operations and automation of supply chains, rise in the use of online trading platforms, rising importance of risk management, and observation of personal safety and protection at workplace. Our farming community needs proper upskilling to brace for these changes. Enterprise development of the youth in farm sector during this crisis assumes critical importance when opportunities for gainful employment in the manufacturing and service industries in cities become fewer and hard to come by. More thrust now needs to be paid on improving behavioural, managerial, technical, and marketing competence of the job seekers.

One positive aspect of emerging out of the present scenario is the need for establishing direct supply chains from farm aggregated produce to consumer societies. Many Farmer Producer organisations have played an active part in the delivery of essential farm produce to urban consumers. The gains can be sustained during normal times as this creates new business opportunities for the farmers/ farmers' organisations. The government and the bankers need to be extra careful about keeping up the flow of agricultural credit which assumes particularly important in these troubled times when banks become overly risk-averse. Prioritising loans for trained candidates depending on the project viability is needed for generating self-employment opportunities in agriculture.

In the end, we again reiterate that if skill development in agriculture is accorded its due importance it can not only rejuvenate the sector but also provide economic cushions to jobless workers in other sectors and help the economy to bounce back to a higher growth track.

Impact of COVID-19 crisis on different segments of agriculture and skill needs

Segment	Impact	Skill-based solutions
Food crop production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour shortage for the farm operations Disruption in the transportation of food Inadequate storage and food wastage, Low farm-gate prices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skill training on precision farming and farm mechanisation to improve efficiency and timeliness Skilling farmers to use online platforms for selling and realisation of better prices
Fruits and Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Huge wastage and losses due to lack of storage, transportation, and dip in the prices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skill training is necessary for improving the quality of the product, increased shelf life, and better supply chain management
Oil Seeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Import of oilseeds hampered due to closed ports and docks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could take this opportunity for self-reliance in oilseed production through skill training
Dairy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disturbances in procurement Wastage of produced milk due to lack of transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upskilling of dairy farmers on various job roles in dairy for better handling and milk supply chain
Livestock, Meat, Poultry and Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poultry sector badly hit and prices reached floor Fish sector is badly hit due restrictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skill training needs to given on livestock raising, production of meat and eggs maintaining safety and standards feeding, breeding and disease control best aquaculture practices, processing and Fish retail
Seed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delay in the renewal of seed production licenses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on quality seed grower and other workers in seed factory to increase production
Agri Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neglected in terms of less manpower and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualified unemployed youth can be trained in agri extension modules
Agri Warehouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns over maintain quality of stored foodgrains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training in various job roles in warehouses/ cold storages for hygienic storage
Supply Chain and Commodity Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Movement of food grains badly affected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of direct supply chains from farm aggregated produce to consumer societies Basic training on entrepreneurship development, online marketing, credit linkage
Plantation (Spices, Coffee, and Tea)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have to work with less number of workers due to norms for social distancing Export has been hit hard since the major markets in Europe has become a hotspot of Corona 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on environmental health and safety for higher export Training for improved efficiency to meet shortage of labour

State Engagements

- ▲ Participation at Asian Development Bank Funded “Maharashtra Agribusiness Network Project” MAGNET Project Implemented by Maharashtra State Agriculture Marketing Board for discussing incorporation of stakeholder’s suggestion on FPO Value Chain Development in Proposal designing and Skill based Capacity building of FPO and functionaries for effective business plan implementation.



Meeting for MAGNET Project, Maharashtra

- ▲ Meeting held with Mr. Ashok Gupta, Executive Member and Harbir Dhanoa, Secretary, Mohali MSME Industries Association on 3rd Mar'2020 pertaining to NAPS, Demand Aggregation and Agriculture SSC's Placement Portal. Workshop for their members to be organized soon.



Meeting at MSME Industries Association, Punjab

- ▲ Participation in Skill Punjab Conference organized at IIT, Ropar, Punjab, wherein skilling proposals for next year and skill university were discussed.
- ▲ Meeting was held with Dr Saurabh Garg, IAS, Principal Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment and Dr Muthukumar, IAS, Director Agriculture and Food Production regarding inclusion of Departments' Training Centre and ATMA's for running NSQF aligned job role, Mode of Operation is to be finalized.



Skill Punjab Conference, Punjab

- ▲ Participated in one-day workshop held at SAMETI Raipur, Chhattisgarh on skill development activities in agriculture and allied sector.
- ▲ Interaction with various Seed Input Companies like RASI Seeds Pvt. Ltd., MAHYCO, US Agri Seeds Pvt. Ltd. and BUYER Crop science and initiated demand Job aggregation and inviting for further engagement.



Workshop at SAMETI, Raipur

- ▲ Discussion held with Pashupati Agrovet Pvt. Ltd. and Sonalika International regarding opportunity in apprenticeship under NAPS for Layer Farm Worker in Poultry segment and for Tractor Mechanics under Farm Mechanization respectively.
- ▲ Participation at one-day Technical Workshop on 13th Feb at ASDM in presence of ADB Consultant, GIZ, KOREA TECH on proposed Skill University at Mangaldoi, Assam.
- ▲ Meeting held with Mr. Krutibas Patra, Advisor to Agriculture and Farmers Empowerment, Govt. of Odisha regarding opportunity for skill training in Agriculture and allied sectors in state.

Engagement with Ministry of Agriculture

Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare focusing on Skilling of farmers and rural youth in Horticulture segment at a large scale. Currently the focus is on providing advanced skill on Gardening and Floriculture among rural youth.

During this fiscal year, total 251 Institutes have commenced the training program with enrolment of around 9,600 candidates under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana Scheme / MIDH.



RKVY Training at Jalgaon

QP & NOS Development



QP revision workshop, Bengaluru

ASCI conducted a workshop on Revision & Rationalization of 10 QPs developed in the Poultry Sector at Bengaluru. The workshop saw active participation from the Central Poultry Development Organization (CPDO), various Industries and Academia.

The experts brainstormed and gave their valuable inputs basis which the revision work would be initiated.

Industry Outreach

- ▲ A two-day skill exhibition and employment fair was organized at Pandit Deendayal Hastkala Sankul at Varanasi on 12th & 13th Feb'2020 to encourage the youth of the state in skill development and to connect them with new employment opportunities. Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey, Hon'ble Minister, MSDE visited ASCI stall.



Global Sigma Summit at New Delhi



Kaushal Mahotsav at Varanasi

- ▲ ASCI participated in PMFAI – Global Sigma Summit 2020, an International Exhibition cum Conference on Entrepreneurship organized at ICAR-IARI, Pusa Campus, New Delhi which focused on Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency, Electric Vehicles, Agriculture & Water Technology, Applications & Innovations.

Rozgar Mela / Job Fair

ASCI organized Rozgar Melas in various states like Assam, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, etc. Agriculture companies like ITC, UNH Management Services Pvt. Ltd., Navbharat Fertilizer Pvt. Ltd., Clovers Organic Pvt. Ltd., Nava Kissan, Shivashakti Bio Technologies Ltd., AGSTACK Technologies Pvt. Ltd. Gramophone, Rasi Seeds Pvt. Ltd., Growfast Organic, Green Organic Desire Pvt. Ltd, etc. participated in Rozgar Mela wherein more than 800 candidates were shortlisted.



Rozgar Mela at Rajasthan

Training of Trainer & Master Trainer

Total 638 Trainers participated in 24 ToT/ToMT Program during Jan - Mar'2020

1. Bihar Agricultural University, Sabour, Bihar on 6th Jan'2020
2. Bihar Agricultural University, Sabour, Bihar on 7th Jan'2020
3. Bihar Agricultural University, Sabour, Bihar on 8th Jan'2020
4. Bridge Point Skills and Network Pvt. Ltd., Ramgadh, Uttar Pradesh on 13th Jan'2020
5. Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar, Haryana on 17th Jan'2020
6. Taggane Training and Research Institute, Uttrakhand on 17th Jan'2020
7. Asirbadh Hospitality Private Limited, Ranchi, Jharkhand on 25th Jan'2020
8. Rigpa Edusolution Pvt. Ltd., Tripura on 26th Jan'2020
9. Global Agriculture Innovation & Research Center, Aurangabad, Maharashtra on 3rd Feb'2020
10. Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Raipur, Chhattisgarh on 11th Feb'2020
11. Nagarjuna University, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh on 11th Feb'2020
12. ICAR-Agricultural Technology Application Research Institute, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh on 15th Feb'2020
13. Nagarjuna University, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh on 15th Feb'2020
14. Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh on 15th Feb'2020
15. Unifiers Skills Training Center, DAV College, Dehradun, Uttarakhand on 15th Feb'2020
16. Global Agriculture Innovation & Research Center, Aurangabad, Maharashtra on 29th Feb'2020
17. BSNL Skill Centre, Dibrugrah, Assam on 5th Mar'2020
18. Sri Sri Institute of Agricultural Sciences and Technology Trust, Bengaluru Urban, Karnataka on 7th Mar'2020
19. Asirbadh Hospitality Private Limited, Ranchi, Jharkhand on 23rd Mar'2020
20. Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation, Nandyal, Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh on 12th Mar'2020
21. Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation, Katrenikona Mandal, East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh on 12th Mar'2020
22. Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation, Madanpalle, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh on 14th Mar'2020
23. Central Institute for Subtropical Horticulture, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh on 18th Mar'2020
24. Ascensive Educare-Guwahati, Kamrup Metro, Assam on 18th Mar'2020



ToT at Bengaluru



ToT at BAU Sabour



ToT at Kanpur



ToT at Chittoor

Training of Assessors (ToA)

The 6 days Training of New Assessors program organised at Institute of Agricultural Technologists (IAT), Bengaluru. The program was scheduled from 17th Feb wherein 53 assessors have participated. The program is a combination of orientation on domain and platform skills/soft skills pedagogy training, followed by assessment. Post successful qualification of assessment, these assessors would be called as certified assessors in respective agriculture domain job roles.



ToA at Bengaluru



ToA at Ahmedabad

RPL Program



RPL Training at Jalna

In addition to this, after completion of training, the consortium training partners' Business Advisory Services team has also supported select farmer groups in developing viable business plans and submit them to the Annasaheb Patil Arthik Magas Vikas Mahamandal Maryaditas a means of demonstrating the implications and feasibility of the training programme through collectivisation of farmers' resources and efforts to achieve socio-economic growth.

Since its inauguration, 2,60,072 of the assessed farmers have been certified as Group Farming Practitioners.

Maharashtra State Skill Development Society is implementing Maharashtra Agri Skilling Program (MASP) an Agri-Skilling program for small land-holders is being implemented in the state of Maharashtra under the aegis of the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana – PMKVY 2.0. The key objective of the program is to train 2,82,000 small holder farmers in group farming practice and encourage them to form Farmer Producer Organisations so that they are able to access sustainable livelihoods and improved incomes.



RPL Training at Sindhudurg

Apprenticeship

- ASCI launched its Placement Portal at three different locations i.e. Maharashtra, Assam and Jharkhand. The launch of placement website was joined by different industry members, Training Partners and candidates. The website would be a platform to connect with employers and candidates wherein companies can post the vacancies and candidates can apply depending on their preferred location and segment to work for.



Placement Portal Launch, Pune

- ASCI appointed additional 30 candidates in apprenticeship program under NAPS for the job role of Agriculture Field Officer at Origo Commodities Pvt. Ltd. ASCI has already appointed 29 apprentice in same job role at Agzon Agro Pvt. Ltd.

Governing Council Meeting

28th Meeting of the Board of Governing Council on 17th Mar'2020 at Coonoor, Tamil Nadu. The board was apprised about the new initiatives and collaborations like; Train the Trainer (ToT) / Training of Master Trainers (ToMT) program, Universities MoUs, training program with Ministry of HRD, Content Development and Rojgar Mela / Placements.

The board of directors also met senior management in UPASI and some tea manufacturing factories.



28th GC Meeting, Tamil Nadu

Agriculture Skill Council of India

6th Floor, GNG Building, Plot No. 10, Sector - 44, Gurugram, Haryana - 122 004

Tel: 0124 4670029/ 4814673/ 4814659

Website: www.asci-india.com | E-mail: ceo@asci-india.com



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