Integrated Farming System: A Sustainable Approach

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Abstract

The economy of India is predominantly rural and agriculture oriented supporting 70 per cent of its population (Census, 2011) where agriculture and allied sector accounted 13.75 per cent of GDP in the year 2012-13, and comprise about 50 per cent total workforce. Declining trend in the average size of the farm holding poses a serious challenge to the sustainability and profitability of the farming community. To feed the increasing population of the country farmers need to take initiative for Integrated farming system where farmer can use his resources properly. Integrated Farming system is a valuable approach to addressing the problems of sustainable economic growth for farming communities in India, where it refers to agricultural systems that generally integrate crop and livestock enterprise. It could be crop-livestock integration, crop-fish integration, livestock-fish integration etc, so many combinations are possible based on the local demand of the peoples and resources available with the farmers. The basic aim of integrated farming system is to derive a set of resource development and utilization practices, which lead to substantial and sustained increase in agricultural production. The benefits of integrated farming systems:1) Productivity 2) Profitability 3) Sustainability 4) Balanced food 5) Environmental safety 6) Income round the year. The role of integrated farming systems can be easily overlooked as it creates efficiencies in family labour usage, use of residues and farm nutrient recycling. An ideal interactions between the various enterprises of integrated farming system and natural resources leads to economic benefits, as well as the impacts on the livelihood of small farmers and the environment.

Keywords: Integrated farming system, sustainability, productivity, profitability