



MANAGE Agricultural Extension “Evening4Learning (E4L)” Webinar Series

Theme:



Agricultural Extension: An Exciting profession for Future (for UG students of Agriculture & PG students of Agricultural Extension)



Topic:

“Entrepreneurship in Agricultural Extension - Careers that Create Change”



Schedule:

21-08-2025, 16:00-17:30 PM



About the Program

The MANAGE Agriculture Extension “Evening4Learning (E4L)” Webinar Series is aimed at enhancing knowledge and professional engagement in the field of agricultural extension. The five-day series is structured with each day focusing on a distinct topic under a common theme, allowing participants to gain comprehensive insights into key areas of extension. The program is intended for a diverse audience, including postgraduate and doctoral students, agricultural faculty, and industry professionals. It covers broad themes ranging from entrepreneurship and sustainability to emerging technologies in agriculture.


MANAGE
Agricultural Extension
“Evening4Learning”
Webinar Series
August 18-22, 2025
16.00-17.30 PM (IST)

Theme : Agricultural Extension: An exciting profession for Future (for UG students of Agriculture & PG students of Agricultural Extension)



Speaker

Dr. P. Sethuraman Sivakumar

Principal Scientist

ICAR-CTCRI

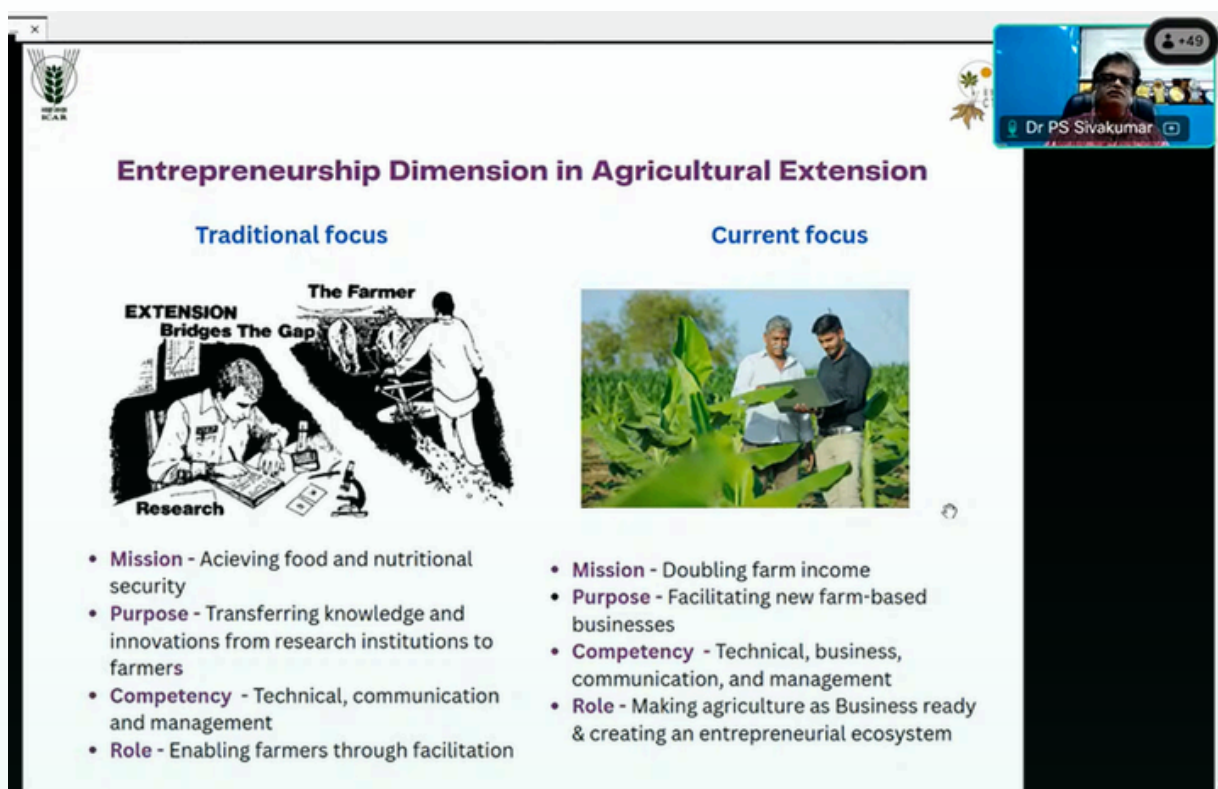
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 P. Sethuraman Sivakumar

Dr. P. Sethuraman Sivakumar is a Principal Scientist at ICAR-CTCRI, working in the Division of Innovations, Technology Management and Utilization. His areas of expertise include technology commercialization, business incubation, agripreneurship development, nutrition-sensitive extension, and market linkage. He has led several research and development initiatives related to tuber crops, seed systems, value addition, consumer behaviour, and scaling up of biofortified crops.

Changing role of Agricultural Extension

Traditionally, agricultural extension focussed on technology dissemination, advisory support, and productivity enhancement. However, evolving policy and economic contexts now emphasize on outcomes such as doubling farmers' income, value addition with market integration, and the promotion of farm-based entrepreneurship and agri-business ecosystems. As a result, extension professionals are expected to move beyond conventional advisory functions and actively facilitate farm business development, value chain strengthening, and the growth of agri-startups.



Entrepreneurship Dimension in Agricultural Extension

Traditional focus

Current focus

EXTENSION Bridges The Gap

The Farmer

Research

- **Mission** - Achieving food and nutritional security
- **Purpose** - Transferring knowledge and innovations from research institutions to farmers
- **Competency** - Technical, communication and management
- **Role** - Enabling farmers through facilitation

- **Mission** - Doubling farm income
- **Purpose** - Facilitating new farm-based businesses
- **Competency** - Technical, business, communication, and management
- **Role** - Making agriculture as Business ready & creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem

Dr PS Sivakumar

Role of Entrepreneurship in Agricultural Extension

Extension professionals can play a significant and impactful role across the following five critical dimensions:

1. **Technology-to-Product Translation:** Converting research outputs into marketable products and services.
2. **Strengthening Local Support Systems:** Ensuring the availability of quality input supply, advisory services, seed systems, and quality assurance mechanisms.
3. **Value Chain Development:** Addressing gaps in storage, logistics, and transportation, processing, and marketing.
4. **Local Innovation Commercialization:** Scaling traditional knowledge and farmer innovations through incubation and partnerships.
5. **Inclusive Rural Development:** Promoting enterprises focused on women, tribal communities, SC/ST groups, and marginalized farmers.

Why Entrepreneurship in Agricultural Extension Matters

- Translating technology into product
- Strengthening local support systems
- Creating sustainable value chains
- Driving innovations through Local Knowledge Systems
- Empowering communities for inclusive development

Career options in Agricultural Extension Entrepreneurship

1. Farm Advisory and Agri-Input Entrepreneurship

- Agri-clinics and custom hiring centres
- Food processing business advisory services
- Organic and natural farming consultancy and certification
- Soil testing, drone spraying, and quality certification services

2. Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and Cooperative based Entrepreneurship

- Branding, collective marketing, and value addition
- Establishment and management of FPOs
- Supply chain and logistics management
- Business planning and DPR preparation

3. Agri-Tech and Digital Extension Startups

- Farm advisory apps and digital platforms
- IoT-based advisory systems
- Platforms for Market intelligence, weather forecasting, traceability, and fintech solutions
- Subscription-based advisory models

4. Food Processing and Value Addition Enterprises

- Small-scale processing units (chips, powders, juices, mushrooms)
- Branding and promotion of local GI- tagged or traditional products
- Linkages with corporate buyers and exporters for Nutrition based entrepreneurship

5. Rural Development & Social Enterprises

- Enterprises addressing poverty, nutrition, waste management, and livelihoods
- NGOs and social startups operating between charity and profit models
- Community-driven extension programs

Career Options in Agri-Extension Entrepreneurship

Farm Advisory & Agri-Input Entrepreneurship

FPO & Cooperative-Based Entrepreneurship

Agri-Tech & Digital Extension Startups

Food Processing & Value-Addition Enterprises

Rural Development & Social Enterprises

Dr PS Sivakumar

Competencies required in Entrepreneurship

There is a growing need for extension professionals to develop an integrated set of competencies which includes:

- Technical expertise in agronomy, post-harvest management, and climate-smart agriculture
- Business planning, financial literacy, and marketing skills
- Digital and data-driven competencies
- Social skills such as networking, leadership, and communication
- Innovative and entrepreneurial mind-set

Support Systems and Government Initiatives

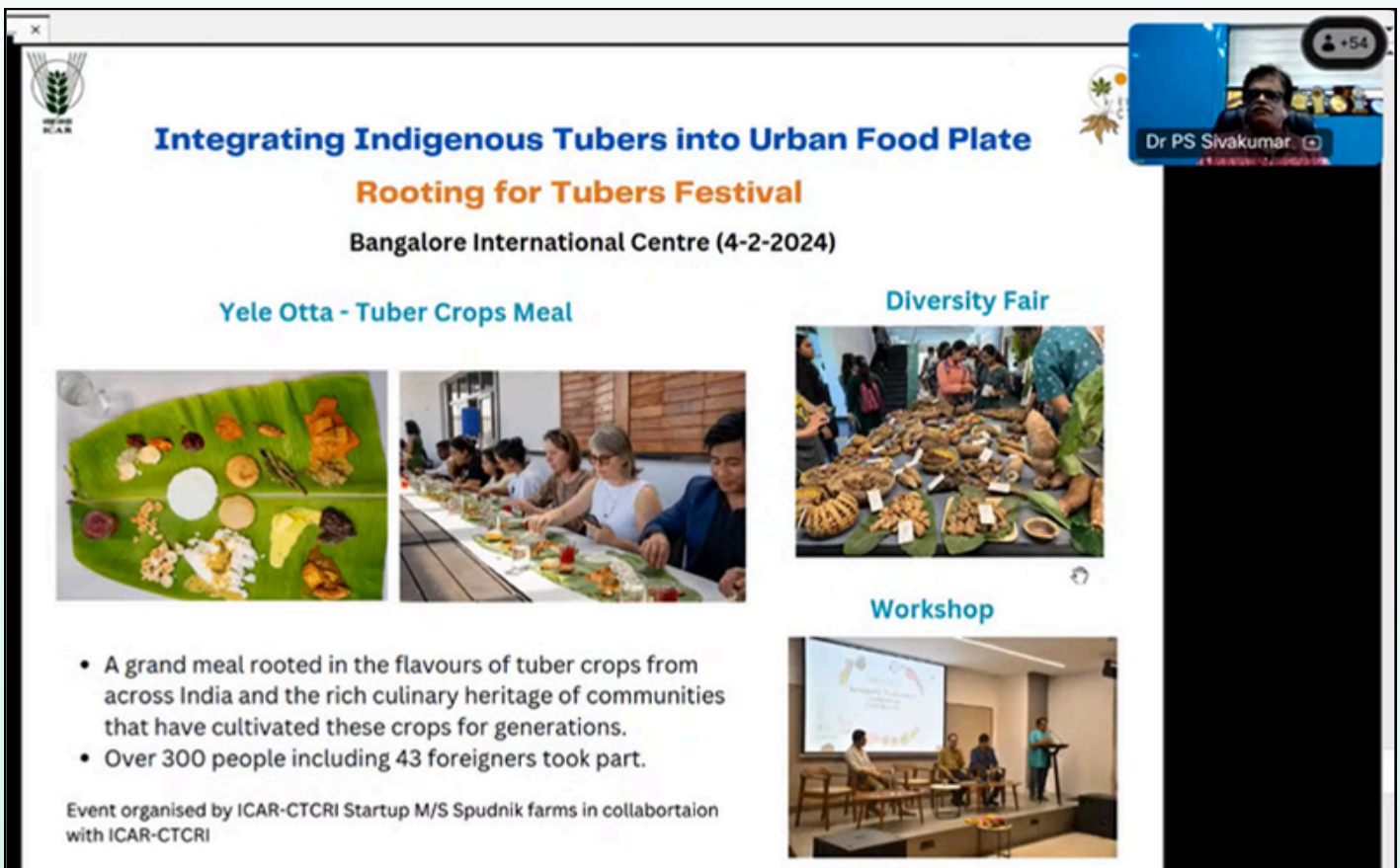
Several national and institutional mechanisms support agri-entrepreneurship and farm-based enterprises, including:

- RKVY- RAFTAAR Agri-Business Incubators
- NABARD and MSME support schemes
- PMFME Scheme for micro food processing
- Atal Incubation Centres and ICAR incubators
- Institutions like MANAGE, NIAM acts as Incubation and mentoring hubs
- Private accelerators like Villgro, Agri-Udaan, Social Alpha

These institutions provide support for idea validation, funding facilitation, business development, and market linkage.

Case study 1: Commercialization of Kunbi Muduli

Kundi Muduli is a traditional taro-based food consumed by tribal communities in the Uttara Kannada region. The startup Spudnik Farms Private Limited leveraged this indigenous product by developing a range of value-added taro products and establishing a processing unit within the tribal area, thereby creating a self-sustaining local enterprise. Through a formal collaboration for product development and strong extension support, these products were introduced to wider markets.



The image shows a presentation slide with the following content:

- ICAR Logo** (top left)
- Integrating Indigenous Tubers into Urban Food Plate** (main title)
- Rooting for Tubers Festival** (sub-title)
- Bangalore International Centre (4-2-2024)** (location and date)
- Yele Otta - Tuber Crops Meal** (caption for the first image)
- Diversity Fair** (caption for the second image)
- Workshop** (caption for the third image)
- Dr PS Sivakumar** (video call participant name)

Yele Otta - Tuber Crops Meal

Diversity Fair

Workshop

- A grand meal rooted in the flavours of tuber crops from across India and the rich culinary heritage of communities that have cultivated these crops for generations.
- Over 300 people including 43 foreigners took part.

Event organised by ICAR-CTCRI Startup M/S Spudnik farms in collaboration with ICAR-CTCRI

Innovative promotional initiatives, such as tuber crop festivals in Bangalore, including a sadya-style meal prepared entirely from tribal tuber crops and a tribal diversity fair successfully positioned these products among urban and upper-middle-class consumers, including international audiences. The initiative has attracted multiple rounds of international funding, highlighting the importance of combining extension services with entrepreneurship and market-oriented skills.

Integrating Indigenous Tubers into Urban Food Plate
Rooting for Tubers Festival
 Bangalore International Centre (4-2-2024)

Yele Otta - Tuber Crops Meal

- A grand meal rooted in the flavours of tuber crops from across India and the rich culinary heritage of communities that have cultivated these crops for generations.
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Diversity Fair

Workshop

Dr PS Sivakumar

Case study 2: Commercialization of Arrowroot (Palua) ladoo

The startup, Oditribe Private Limited from Odisha, focused on the GI-tagged traditional product, Palua Ladoo, which is culturally significant among local tribal communities. Previously produced in poor-quality forms, the enterprise entered into a formal collaboration with a research organization to improve product quality and standardization. This intervention upgraded the indigenous GI-based product, leading to the creation of a successful business venture and enabling entry into international export markets.

Case 2: Commercialisation of Arrowroot Ladoo

we craft our laddoo with love and authenticity.

Palua laddoo is a product of M/S. Oditribe Innovations Pvt. Ltd., developed under the ICAR-ICTCRI Agri-Business Incubation program at the Techno-Incubation Centre, Regional Centre of ICAR- Central Tuber Crops Research Institute, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Technology Mentors
Dr. B. K. Mishra, Principal Scientist, ICAR-CTCRI
Dr. B. K. Mishra, Head, Crop Production, ICAR-CTCRI

For further information about the product, please contact

Oditribe Innovations Pvt. Ltd. | The Startup
10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

- Palua laddoo - Traditional food product of Odisha
- Reformulation through incubation by M/S Oditribe

Key Highlights

1. Agricultural extension is transforming from conventional advisory service to forward-looking profession that drives entrepreneurship, strengthens value chain, and contributes directly to farmers' income.
2. Modern extension roles now go beyond technology dissemination, focusing on technology-to-product translation, value addition, market integration, promotion of agri-startups, and fostering inclusive rural enterprises.
3. There are a wide range of career opportunities, including farm advisory and agri-input services, FPO- and cooperative-based enterprises, agri-tech and digital startups, food processing and value-addition ventures, and rural development and social enterprises.
4. Effective extension entrepreneurship requires an integrated competencies combining strong technical knowledge in agriculture with business and financial planning abilities, digital competencies, communication and leadership skills, and an innovative entrepreneurial mind set.
5. A robust ecosystem of government schemes, incubators, and mentoring institutions such as MANAGE, ICAR-linked and Villgro incubators supports extension entrepreneurs through idea validation, funding facilitation, business development, and market linkages.
6. Examples of commercializing traditional tribal foods, such as Kunbi Muduli and GI-tagged product Palua Ladoo, illustrated how combining extension support with entrepreneurship can successfully scale indigenous products to national and international markets.

Interactive discussion

1. What are the career and entrepreneurship opportunities available in the fisheries sector?

The fisheries sector offers expanding opportunities, particularly in business development and entrepreneurship. Aspiring professionals can explore specialized business and entrepreneurship programs offered by institutions such as MANAGE to build managerial and enterprise-oriented skills.

Further, fishery exports are growing rapidly, driven by strong international demand for processed and value-added fish products. For hands-on entrepreneurial support, institutions such as ICAR-CIFT, ICAR-CMFRI, and CIFE provide incubation facilities, technical expertise, and business mentoring. Engaging with these organizations can help individuals successfully pursue careers or establish enterprises in the fisheries domain.

2. What type of funding and grant opportunities are available for MSMEs?

Funding for MSMEs is available from multiple sources and is not confined to a single ministry. The suitability of grants or loans depends on the type, scale, and stage of the enterprise. Therefore, approaching a business incubator is recommended, as it can help identify and tailor funding options aligned with the specific needs of the startups.

Beyond schemes offered by the MSME Ministry, financial assistance may also be available through departments such as Rural Development and the food processing sector. Incubators play a key role by guiding entrepreneurs to appropriate funding channels and supporting the preparation of essential documents, including Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), typically at a nominal cost. This approach is often more cost-effective than engaging private consultants who usually charge a percentage of the project value. Overall, extension-led entrepreneurship is a rapidly emerging area with considerable potential, and aspiring entrepreneurs are encouraged to explore diverse funding sources with the support of incubator ecosystems.

3. What are the most common mistakes made by new agri-entrepreneurs?

One of the most common mistakes among new agri-entrepreneurs is confusing a good idea for a viable business opportunity. While passion and innovation are important, they cannot substitute for a clear understanding of the market. Many ventures fail because the idea lacks sufficient demand, an identifiable customer base, or adequate market size.

A sound business opportunity must be backed by evidence such as market size, existing competitors, pricing structures, and customer segments. This can be evaluated through market research using published reports or by conducting small-scale, localized surveys. An idea becomes a viable opportunity only when it demonstrates clear demand, profitability, competitive presence, and potential for scalability.

4. Which areas of agriculture offer the best scope for agri-entrepreneurship, both now and in the future?

The potential for agri-entrepreneurship is strongly influenced by government policies and emerging technological trends. At present, food processing presents substantial opportunities, particularly in states like Kerala where policy support and funding are directed toward value addition and processing-based enterprises.

Another rapidly growing area is digital agriculture, including agri-advisory platforms, IoT-enabled solutions, and data-driven technologies that deliver customized services to farmers. These innovations are gaining widespread adoption and attracting investment. Although opportunities exist across all agricultural segments, food processing and digital agriculture currently offer the most promising avenues for agri-entrepreneurship, both now and in the future.

5. Which organizations or farmer groups are involved in farm-based contracting or market linkages, and what role can technology platforms play in supporting them?

Farm-based contracts are most effective when farmers are organized into groups, FPOs, or collectives, as organized retailers prefer bulk supply and reliable production databases. Digital platforms and farmer databases strengthen supply chains by directly connecting producers with buyers. With support from business incubators which provide technical, funding, and market-linkage assistance such initiatives can scale sustainably and create strong agri-entrepreneurship opportunities.

6. Although entrepreneurship opportunities exist in hilly regions, high product perishability often discourages people from pursuing them. What guidance or solutions are available to address this challenge?

Entrepreneurship in hilly areas can overcome perishability challenges through crop specific branding, organized market linkages, and cold-chain infrastructure. High value crops can be promoted through collective branding and linked to procurement agencies, while cold storage and logistics help reduce post-harvest losses. Since direct market access is often limited, support from incubators, intermediaries, and business promotion agencies is essential. Overall, facilitation and customized, end-to-end support are critical for building sustainable agri-enterprises in hilly regions.

7. What are the key insights into post-harvest management and value addition of horticultural crops for small and marginal farmers?

Post-harvest management encompasses all activities from harvest to consumption and is a high-investment, high-impact sector due to the perishability of horticultural crops. Technologies that extend shelf life—such as cold storage, improved packaging, and suitable varietal selection—attract significant industry and research support, especially for export markets. Although adoption can be costly for small and marginal farmers, government schemes, incubators, research institutions, and public-private partnerships provide essential financial, technical, and market support, making post-harvest management a promising avenue for sustainable agri-entrepreneurship.

YouTube Link:

<https://youtu.be/vzXky7Cgsno?list=PL6mI4tMrzHzTysRywAR7lDXaXQ5ZH5jL&t=1>

E4L Report Prepared by:
Dr. Vavilala Priyanka
MANAGE Fellow

8. What are the ways in which NGOs can obtain project funding for agri-business initiatives?

NGOs can access agri-business project funds by partnering with government agencies and related institutions. Government bodies often channel funds through research or nodal institutions, which then implement projects on the ground through NGOs via Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs). NGOs also benefit from convergence of multiple government schemes, along with technical support and official endorsements that enhance credibility. Such partnerships provide access to funding, capacity building, and long term collaboration for agri-business development.

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