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An Overview on Micro Irrigation-Accelerating Growth of Indian Agriculture

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Abstract : The adoption of Micro Irrigation (MI) technologies in India has helped in achieving higher cropping and irrigation intensity with significant savings on resource savings such as labour, fertilizer and improved crop yields. These technologies have received considerable attention from policymakers, growers and researchers over the years for its perceived ability to contribute towards agricultural productivity and economic growth with the well-being of the growers of the country. Keeping the pace with untapped theoretical potential to cover government had launched flagship programs/centre sector schemes with earmarked budget to capture the potential under these waters saving techniques envisaged under these technologies by way of providing financial assistance to the beneficiaries for adopting these technologies. Micro Irrigation technologies have been in the special attention of the policymakers over the years. India being an agrarian economy having engaged 75% of the population directly or indirectly having skilled, semi-skilled and entrepreneurs in the sector with focused attention and financial allocations from the government under these technologies in covering the untapped potential under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) 'Per Drop More Crop component.' During the year 2004, a Taskforce on Micro Irrigation was constituted to estimate the potential of these technologies in India which was estimated 69.5 million hectares by the Task Force Report on MI however only 10.49 million hectares have been achieved so far. Technology collaborations by leading manufacturing companies in overseas have proved to a stepping stone in technology advancement and product up gradation with increased efficiencies. Joint ventures by the leading MI companies have added huge business volumes which have not only accelerated the momentum of achieving the desired goal but in terms of area coverage but had also generated opportunities for the polymer manufacturers in the country. To provide products matching the global standards Bureau of Indian Standards have constituted a sectional technical committee under the Food and Agriculture Department (FAD)-17 to formulated/devise and revise standards pertaining to MI technologies. The research lobby has also contributed at large by developing in-situ analysis proving MI technologies a boon for farming community of the country with resource conservation of which water is of paramount importance. Thus, Micro Irrigation technologies have proved to be the key tool for feeding the grueling demand of food basket of the growing population besides maintaining soil health and have been contributing towards doubling of farmers' income.

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