International Journal of Research in Social Sciences
Vol. 7 Issue 3, March 2017,
ISSN: 2249-2496 Impact Factor: 7.081
Journal Homepage: http://www.ijmra.us, Email: editorijmie@gmail.com
Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Refereed Open Access International Journal - Included in the International Serial Directories Indexed & Listed at: Ulrich's Periodicals Directory ©, U.S.A., Open J-Gage as well as in Cabell's Directories of Publishing Opportunities, U.S.A

AGRICULTURAL DIVERSIFICATION PROBLEM AND PROSPECTS IN SIRSA, HARYANA

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ABSTRACT-

A monotonous cropping system of rice-wheat was adopted by the farmers to increase the large income benefits. But on the other hand, monoculture cropping pattern increases the over-exploitation of natural resources pose serious threats to the sustainability.. Diversification of agriculture has to be promoted for overall development in agriculture and integrating it with livestock, poultry, fisheries, dairy farming, floriculture and horticulture. The study examines the attitude of farmers towards diversification and the problem and prospects in farming system. The present study based on primary data. The primary data related to farmer's attitude on diversification and problems & prospects has been collected from farmer's survey method of Sirsa district, Haryana.

Introduction:-

Green Revolution accelerated the increase in crop yields that pace with population growth. The growing demands for agricultural production has forced the farmers to adopt intensification of agriculture practices along with the increasing use of high yielding crop varieties for maintaining higher levels of production. The Green Revolution is associated with introduction of input-responsive varieties that result a drastic increase in the use of fertilizer, expansion in irrigation, higher cropping intensity and increased use of pesticides. But in Haryana monotonous (mono

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crop) cropping systems of rice-wheat was adopted by the farmers to increase the large income benefits. But on the other hand, monoculture cropping pattern increases the over-exploitation of natural resources pose serious threats to the sustainability. So that there is need diversification and commercialization of crops at the farm level to increase crop rotation towards commercial and high value crops e.g oilseeds, pulses, maize, fruits and vegetables in place of rice and wheat traditional cropping pattern. Diversification in agriculture promotes the variety of farm product with a view to bring about a shift from prevailing production pattern which provide stability in farm income and minimise the risk factor. Diversification of agriculture has to be promoted for overall development in agriculture and integrating it with livestock, poultry, fisheries, dairy farming, floriculture and horticulture. But the main problem facing the farmer's attitude in decision making is about the profitable levels of diversification of crop farming. The lack of training and stubborn attitude of farmers towards change in their farming system and problems they foreseen in bringing about such a change may be responsible for these imbalances. Thus for sustainable agriculture an integrated approach is adopted by the state government for diversification and motivate the farmers to divert area from paddy and wheat to alternative crops and sub sectors.

Objective of the Study:- The specific objectives of the present paper are following

1. To know the attitude of farmers towards diversification in farming system.
2. To examine the problem and prospects of diversification in farming system.

Research Methodology:-The present study based on primary data. The primary data related to farmer's attitude on diversification and problems & prospects has been collected from farmer's survey method. In order to find out the empirical result, field survey has been carried out. Sample for the primary survey has been drawn by adopting multistage sampling procedure for selecting districts, blocks, villages and sample farmers. For the study Sirsa district has been selected to study the farmer's attitude on diversification and problems & prospects. From seven blocks one village from each block has been selected from the district randomly. Due to factor endowment in district these villages were selected for the study block Sirsa-Suchan, Dabwali-Mangiana, Ellenabad – khare Surera, Baragudha- Jhiri, Rania-Khaja Khera, Odhan-Jlalana, Nathusari Chopta- Bakrianwali. List of farmers from each village has been prepared and 40

farmers from one village have been selected and total sample of 280 farmers were taken for the study. The analysis of the study has been based on personal interview method from the sample cultivating farmers. On the basis of finalized interviewed schedule. To analyse the result percentage, mean was used for meaningful inferences.

Result and Discussion:-

Attitude towards Diversification:- Green revolution in the decade of 60s proved a successful experiment in increasing the level of food production. The post green revolution period saw diversification of the agricultural sector towards the crops that have experienced higher growth in the yield, which was characterized as technology-led diversification. Much of the area was diverted towards high value food-grain crops including rice, wheat and maize. This has led to emerging scenarios of specialization in many states of the country. The diversification of agriculture towards high value commodities like fruits, vegetables, diary, poultry, meat and fish products etc. is suggested as a viable solution to stabilize and raise farm income, enhance agricultural growth, increase employment opportunities and conserve natural resources this is depend upon the attitude of the farmers. The following table shows the attitude of farmers of Sirsa district towards diversification in farming.

Table-1

Attitude of farmers towards diversification in farming

Sr. No	**Attitude**	**Farmers**	
		Frequency	**Percentage**
1	Unfavourable (Below 2.5 scores)	110	39.28
2	Neutral (2.6-3.5 scores)	55	19.65
3	Favourable (3.6-5.0 scores)	115	41.07

Source: Field Survey

It was observed from the table 1 that 39.28 percent of farmers had favourable attitude towards diversification in farming. However, 41.07 and 19.65 percent of the respondents were found to have favourable and neutral attitude towards diversification in farming system respectively.

Table-2

Intensity of response on attitude towards diversification in Farming

Sr. No	Attitude	Farmers	
		Frequency	**Percentage**
1	Strongly favourable (40-50)	48	17.12
2	Favourable (31-40)	99	35.36
3	Neutral (21-30)	52	18.57
4	Unfavourable (11-20)	71	25.38
5	Strongly unfavourable (Up to 10)	10	3.57
	Total	280	100

Source: Field Survey

The data in table 2 indicated that 17.12 and 35.36 percent of farmers had strongly favourable and favourable attitude towards diversification in farming respectively. However 3.57 and 25.38 percent of farmers were found to have strongly unfavourable and unfavourable attitude towards diversification. Only 18.57 percent of farmers were neutral category. It means that 52.48 percent had favourable attitude where as 28.95 percent were in unfavourable category. It indicated that farmers attitude towards diversification was favourable and positive.

Table 3

Choice of farmers for kind of diversification in farming

Sr. No	Kind of Diversification	Frequency	Percentage
1	Vegetables	154	55
2	Dairy	153	54.64
3	Flowers	103	36.78
4	Sugarcane	77	26.07
5	Mushroom	53	18.92
6	Pluses	33	11.07
7	Poultry	7	2.5
8	Fruits	3	1.07
9	Fish Farming	1	0.35
10	Bee Keeping	1	0.35

Source: Field Survey

It was revealed from table 3 that 55 percent of farmers had their choice of growing vegetable followed by dairy (54.65%), flower (36.78%) sugarcane (26.07%), mushroom (18.92%) and pulses (11.07%). Whereas only 2.50, 1.07, 0.35 and 0.35 percent of the farmers wanted to diversify in poultry, fruit crops, fish farming and bee keeping, respectively. The data indicated that the farmers of Sirsa district wanted to diversify in high value crops and enterprises.

Problem and Prospects of Diversification in Farming:-

Table 4

Problems in Diversification as state by farmers

Sr.No	**Type of problem**	**Nature of problem**						**Total Score**	**Rank**
		Serious		**Somewhat Serious**		**Not serious**			
		F	%	F	%	F	%		
1	Lack of support price	204	72.86	53	18.93	23	8.21	741	I
2	High credit requirement	201	71.79	54	19.29	25	8.92	736	II
3	Lack of technical guidance	108	38.57	38	13.57	134	47.86	534	III
4	High labour requirement	99	35.36	34	12.14	147	52.5	512	IV
5	Complicated method of growing /rearing/doing	99	35.36	18	6.42	163	58.22	496	V
6	Lack of storage facilities	76	27.14	33	11.78	171	61.08	465	VI
7	Inadequate irrigation facilities	29	10.35	42	15	209	74.65	380	VII
8	Water logging	11	3.92	36	12.86	233	83.22	338	VIII
9	Lack of market facilities	6	2.14	36	12.86	238	85	328	IX
10	Inadequate transport facilities	4	1.43	34	12.14	242	86.43	322	X

Source: Field Survey

The data in table 4 pertains to the problems foreseen by farmers in Diversification of farming. The major ‘serious’ problems faced by the farmers were ‘lack of support price’ followed by

'high credit requirement' and 'lack of technical guidance'. 'High labour requirement', complicated method of growing/rearing/doing' and 'lack of storage facilities' were related as 'somewhat serious'. Whereas , 'inadequate irrigation facilities ' 'water logging conditions' ,'lack of marketing facilities' and 'inadequate transport facilities' we are considered 'not so serious problems in diversification of farming .

Table 5

Prospects of diversification

Sr. NO	Prospects of diversification	Farmers	
		Frequency	**Percentage**
1	Low(<10.07 scores)	140	50
2	Medium (16.08-43.91 scores)	73	26.07
3	High(>43.91 scores)	67	23.07

Source: Field Survey

In table 5 revealed that 50.0 per cent farmers rated low prospectus in diversification of farming followed by medium (26.07%) and high (23.93%). It may be due to the poor financial conditions of the farmers as well as high investment in diverting form crops.

Table-6

Prospects of Diversification to different crops and enterprises

Sr. No	Prospects of diversification	Farmers	
		Frequency	**Percentage**
1	Low(<3.69 scores)	44	15.71
2	Medium (3.70-13.63 scores)	92	32.86
3	High(>13.63scores)	144	51.43

Source: Field Survey

Table 6 indicated that pig farming, fish farming and pulses have low prospects whereas , vegetables , cotton, fruits, dairy and mushroom had high prospectus .In case of poultry, flowers and bee-keeping crops there were medium level of prospectus in diversification of farming .

Table-7

Present status of Diversification

Source: Field Survey

The data in table 7 revealed that 15.71 percent of the farmers had low level of diversification followed by medium 32.86 percent and high 51.43 percent on their farms. The low level of diversification indicated that the problems such as lack of support price, high credit requirement and lack of technical guidance hinder the process of diversification. The prospects were geared to change from traditional system of farming. The only remedy is to create congenial environment and develop proper infrastructure in the right sprit.

CONCLUSION:- The result of the study indicated that it was found that less than half of the farmers had favourable attitude towards diversification in farming system. Majority of the

Sr. No	**Prospects Categories**	**Kind of Diversification**
1	Low	Pig farming, Fish farming, pluses
2	Medium	Poultry, flowers, bee keeping
3	High	Vegetables, cotton, dairy, fruits, mushroom growing's

farmers are diversified the cropping system and adopted the sub sectors of diversification. The farmers change their attitude in economic returns from the agriculture. But the majority of the farmers revealed the low prospects of diversification in farming system. There is need to change the attitude of the farmers of diversification in farming. The farmer's attitude for agriculture diversification changes through training and provide them the knowledge related to new technology. The government should also promote agro-based industries. Efforts should be made to set up public investment in extended agriculture in terms of accelerating the switch from

cereals to oilseeds, pulses, horticulture, floriculture, fishery, bee keeping, and cultivation of medicinal and energy plants.

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