

We need to adopt a multi-pronged strategy to make Agriculture viable and profitable

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The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has said that we need to adopt a multi-pronged strategy to make Agriculture viable and profitable and the farm income must be supplemented by non-farm occupations and value addition through food processing. He was addressing Scientists, Farm Experts and Farmers at the Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA), in Hyderabad today. The Deputy Chief Minister of Telangana, Shri Mohammad Mahmood Ali and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

Observing that agriculture is the backbone of our economy, The Vice President said unless this sector performs well consistently, the trajectory of the country's progress will not be smooth. He further said that change is required in Agriculture as there is a change in climate, change in market conditions, change in world order and change in food habits. Allied services like fisheries, poultry, horticulture, food processing and packaging need to be promoted to improve farmers' income, he added.

The Vice President said that the need of the hour is to make agriculture profitable and sustainable with consistent increase in its growth rate. All the stakeholders involved in agriculture must come to the rescue of the Annadata or else we will be failing in our moral duty, he added.

The Vice President said that vagaries of weather - from high intensity rainfall events to prolonged dry spells have drastically impacted agriculture. He further said that hailstorms, heat waves and perennial droughts are some of the causes for agrarian distress. The uncertainties are driving farmers' into debt

traps and also leading to their suicides, he added.

The Vice President stressed on the need to address the agrarian crisis in a systematic way so that the farmers become prosperous. He further said that creating awareness among the farmers on traditional and modern methods of water conservation will help in effective water budgeting for agricultural activities. Protection of cattle health is important to increase farmers' income, he added.

Highlighting the need to have homegrown food security, he said that no country which was dependent on others for its food security has been successful. Let us rise to occasion and pledge to sustain famers' livelihoods so that they can live with their heads held high, he added.

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